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DIALOGUE

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Broadband and 2020 census

Limited broadband access is a serious challenge (“Rural broadband speeds slower than suspected,” Nov. 2) that needs to be addressed so rural communities don’t get left behind and residents living there get counted. The issue carries even more weight heading into 2020.

The Constitution requires a count of all people living in the United States every 10 years. The census ensures fair political representation and provides data community leaders use to make decisions about schools, housing, transportation, and more.

With the next count in 2020, the Census Bureau for the first time will rely on the internet to reach those who do not return mailed forms. That puts rural communities at risk for true representation, since most rural Pennsylvanians are less likely to have internet access.

We may not be able to close the digital divide quickly. But a fair and accurate count means having an effective field program to target rural households, or our state will face the ramifications of an undercount for the next decade.

■ **Erlin Casey**, Philadelphia

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