

INFRASTRUCTURE FAST FACTS

Joint Economic Committee

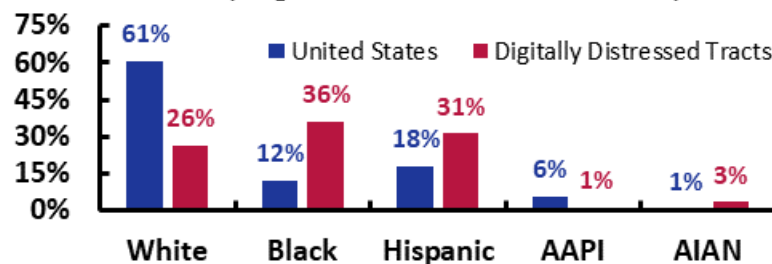
@JEC Dems

People of Color Are More Likely to Live in Digitally Distressed Communities

- Communities that are digitally distressed have a high percentage of homes not subscribing to any internet or subscribing to it only through a cellular plan, and a high percentage of homes with no computing devices or relying only on mobile devices.¹
- Digital distress is correlated with race. While 61% of Americans identify as white, only 26% of those in digitally distressed neighborhoods identify as white.²
- Meanwhile, 12% of Americans identify as Black, but 36% of those in digitally distressed neighborhoods are Black.³ Although 18% of Americans identify as Hispanic, 31% of those in digitally distressed neighborhoods are Hispanic.⁴
- Despite making up 1% of the population, 3% of people living in digitally distressed communities are American Indian/Alaska Natives.
- Disparities in access to internet have consequences. One recent study found that the shift to remote school during the COVID-19 pandemic set white students back by one to three months in math and students of color back by three to five months.⁵

Digitally Distressed Communities are Disproportionately Minority

Census tracts by digital distress and race/ethnicity, 2019



Source: ACS 5-yr 2015-2019

Notes: "White" refers to white, not Hispanic and "Black" refers to Black, not Hispanic. "AAPI" refers to Asian American, Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian alone. "AIAN" refers to American Indian and Alaska Native alone.

1 Gallardo, R. (2019, February 25). Digital distress: What is it and who does it affect? Part 1. Medium. <https://medium.com/design-and-tech-co/digital-distress-what-is-it-and-who-does-it-affect-part-1-e1214f3f209b>.

2 Gallardo, R. (2019, February 25). Digital distress: What is it and who does it affect? Part 2. Medium. <https://medium.com/@robertoge/digital-distress-what-is-it-and-who-does-it-affect-part-2-920c525d191>.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Meckler, Laura and Hannah Natanson, “ ‘A lost generation’: Surge of research reveals students sliding backward, most vulnerable worst affected,” The Washington Post, December 6, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/students-falling-behind/2020/12/06/88d7157a-3665-11eb-8d38-6aea1adb3839_story.html.