

COUNTY OF EL DORADO

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May 3, 2016

The Honorable Evan Low
Member, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 2175
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 2395 - OPPOSE

Dear Assembly Member Low:

On behalf of the County of El Dorado, I write to respectfully inform you of our opposition to your Assembly Bill 2395, which attempts to establish a framework for telecommunication providers to relinquish their traditional landline services.

The County of El Dorado is located in east-central California and encompasses 1,805 square miles of rolling hills and mountainous terrain. The County's western boundary contains part of Folsom Lake, and the eastern boundary is also the California-Nevada State line. The County is topographically divided into two zones. The northeast corner of the County is in the Lake Tahoe basin, while the remainder of the County is in the "western slope," the area west of Echo Summit. Fiber and broadband-based services are limited and, in many cases, not available to many communities throughout our rural County.

The deployment and expansion of modern telecommunication networks in the County of El Dorado remains a priority for the county to maintain our economic competitiveness and provide our schools, libraries, businesses and constituents with 21st Century connectivity. While on the surface AB 2395 offers consumers the promise of an alternative telecommunications service, often available through Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) or Internet Protocol (IP) and/or wireless services, these services primarily rely on technologies that are not yet deployed in our communities.

AB 2395 will allow legacy carriers to relinquish their decades-old obligations that guarantee basic two-way telephone service via a landline. The County of El Dorado is extremely concerned with the approach the bill takes, particularly as it relates to consumer protections and the ability for carriers to abandon their current subscribers without a guarantee that consumers will have access to these

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alternative services. Additionally, the California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) is responsible for enforcement and should the Commission fail to meet the very strict timeframes under the AB 2395 regulatory requirements, the relinquishment will be deemed automatically approved.

AB 2395 contains various other provisions of serious concern, including unknown economic and public safety impacts that may leave our rural and remote communities without any reliable communications services. The County of El Dorado is concerned that the bill does not ensure alternatives are affordable, provide good quality-of-service, and remain viable over the long-term.

For these reasons and others, the County of El Dorado has adopted an oppose position to AB 2395. If you should have any questions concerning our position, please do not hesitate to contact County of El Dorado, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer Shawne Corley directly at (530) 621-5117.

Sincerely,

Ron Mikulaco, Chair
Board of Supervisors
County of El Dorado

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Jennifer Galehouse, Deputy Chief Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Jennifer Swenson, Principal Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Frank Bigelow, California State Assembly
The Honorable Ted Gaines, California State Senate