

COUNTY OF EL DORADO

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April 6, 2021

The Honorable Cecilia M. Aguiar-Curry
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 5144
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 14 Internet for All Act of 2021 (Aguiar-Curry) – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry:

On behalf of the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors, I am writing in support of California Assembly Bill 14, also known as the “Internet for All Act of 2021” (The Act).

AB 14 prioritizes the deployment of broadband infrastructure in California’s most vulnerable, unserved, and underserved rural and urban communities by extending the ongoing collection of funds deposited into the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) to provide communities with grants necessary to bridge the digital divide.

The Act recognizes that reliable internet connectivity is a critical necessity, and that this will remain the case even after the COVID-19 pandemic has subsided. This bill equips Internet Service Providers, Local Governments and Tribal Governments with the opportunity to expedite the connection of their communities to reliable broadband access indefinitely. Further, The Act ensures grants administered by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) from the CASF are awarded to applicants who are willing and able to quickly and efficiently connect households, community anchor institutions, small businesses, and employers.

The capacity to rapidly connect all California residents with evolving emergency information is essential to safeguarding public health and safety during these unprecedented times. An April 2020 Pew Research Study found that over half of United States adults say the internet has been essential for them personally during the pandemic. As record unemployment rates persist, internet access is vital for economic recovery and resiliency. This is especially important for our most vulnerable Californians, who remain disproportionately disconnected, including those who are low-income, living in rural areas, and Black or Latino.

The Internet for All Act of 2021 is a critical step toward expediting the deployment of broadband infrastructure throughout California. This bill provides a vital pathway to connect California’s workforce to gainful employment, harness the life-saving technology of telemedicine, democratize

distance learning, enable precision agriculture, and sustain economic transactions in times of emergencies. Because of The Act's great potential benefit to the prosperity and well-being of the people of El Dorado County, we wholeheartedly endorse its passage.

John Hidahl
Chair, Board of Supervisors

- c. Senator Brian Dahle
Assemblymember Frank Bigelow
Assemblymember Kevin Kiley