

COUNTY OF EL DORADO

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March 8, 2016

The Honorable Dr. Jim Wood
California State Assemblyman
State Capitol, P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0002

RE: Support for Assembly Bill 1549

Dear Assemblyman Wood:

On behalf of the Board of Supervisors for El Dorado County, I would like to express strong support for Assembly Bill 1549, which would require the California Department of Transportation to inventory all conduits owned by the department that house fiber optic communication cables located on state highway rights-of-way, and to make that information public.

There is currently no way for a city, county, other local agency, or independent broadband service provider, to find out where Caltrans owns conduit that could be available for shared access, or where it has allowed others to install it. We find that AB 1549 is a good first step in building a comprehensive data resource. Having knowledge of conduit that is in Caltrans' rights-of-way, and a reasonable method of accessing the information, will be a tremendous benefit to specific projects that support the economic well-being of many California communities, including El Dorado County.

Broadband is a priority project for our county, as the current lack of reliable broadband infrastructure puts our community at a substantial economic disadvantage. The National Broadband Map published by the FCC (<http://www.broadbandmap.gov/>) ranks El Dorado County as 34th of 58 California counties in broadband speed. Access to broadband is now a pillar of competitiveness; allowing businesses to order supplies and sell goods, and for the education of a workforce to power the economies of tomorrow. El Dorado County considers broadband deployment to be a crucial component of economic growth and would also support an earlier start date for inventory data, as it is critically needed now.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Jeff McLaughlin, Economic Development Manager for El Dorado County, at 530-621-5595 or jeff.mclaughlin@edcgov.us.

Sincerely,

Ron Mikulaco
Chair, Board of Supervisors

cc: Larry Combs, Chief Administrative Officer
Jeff McLaughlin, Economic Development Manager