



California State Association of Counties



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statewide Coalition Celebrates \$7 Billion Broadband Funding Proposal
Bold Broadband Investment Will Improve Health, Equity, Education and Economy

SACRAMENTO – A cross-sector coalition representing education, health, local government and economic policy organizations deeply appreciates Governor Newsom’s proposed \$7 billion investment in broadband infrastructure and services to close the digital divide. This historic, three-year commitment will help ensure equitable access to public health, public safety, education, entrepreneurship and economic opportunities across California, regardless of geography or population.

The coalition includes California Association of School Business Officials, the California Hospital Association, California Forward Action Fund, California School Boards Association, California State Association of Counties, Rural County Representatives of California, Small School Districts’ Association and the Urban Counties of California.

A [report](#) commissioned by the CPUC found the cost of building 100 Mbps fiber connections to every unserved house and business in the state would be \$6.8 billion. If approved, Governor Newsom’s proposal, which includes both middle-mile infrastructure funding and last-mile supports, has the power to transform the educational, economic, and quality-of-life landscape statewide by providing unconnected properties access to reliable broadband.

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With millions of California residents without broadband subscriptions, including a disproportionate rate of underserved rural, tribal and communities of color, this record investment of one-time dollars represents bold steps toward closing the digital divide, setting the stage for California to once again be a leader in digital access.

QUOTES FROM COALITION PARTNERS:

“We are pleased with the extraordinary investment the state has committed in providing broadband infrastructure to the communities in need. This investment will help our families and students thrive, communities to progress and is meaningful enough to represent a sustainable path forward,” said Tatia Davenport, CEO California Association of School Business Officials.

“Using federal stimulus dollars—one-time money—to close the digital divide is an investment in infrastructure that will yield dividends across the state for years to come,” said CSAC First Vice President and Siskiyou County Supervisor Ed Valenzuela. “We thank Governor Newsom for this investment, which will improve lives in the short-term and increase the speed and size of the economic recovery, producing medium- and long-term gains for all levels of government and the state’s economy as a whole.”

“Sometimes when you dream big, you are rewarded. Today we saw a recommitment to bridging the digital divide and the promise to provide Broadband for All, especially for our most marginalized communities,” said Micah Weinberg, Director of the California Forward Action Fund. “We’re thrilled to see a \$7 Billion investment in broadband infrastructure, which California Forward, the California Economic Summit and the CA FWD Action Fund have long supported. We are proud to be a part of this broad coalition that was vital to moving this critical investment forward.”

“I am glad to see the real investment that our Governor is making to stabilize and support our children and their families,” said Urban Counties of California Board Chair and Santa Clara County Supervisor Susan Ellenberg. “Proactive approaches like these better ensure that our children will not only survive but thrive and become productive members of our communities – lessening the need for services and reactive approaches like policing and jails.”

“We are encouraged that the Governor recognizes that the lack of reliable broadband infrastructure is harming families and businesses in our rural communities,” said Rural County Representatives of California Chair and Mono County Supervisor Stacy Corless. “We appreciate his commitment to ensuring that all Californians have equitable, affordable access to high-speed internet.”

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