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**COUNTY OF MENDOCINO  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

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April 6, 2021

Governor Gavin Newsom  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Broadband For All Funding Plan – SUPPORT

On behalf of Mendocino County, we respectfully request a one-time appropriation of \$8 billion to make a serious, concentrated effort to help close the Digital Divide.

Closing the Digital Divide has, for too long, been a goal that seemed impossibly far out of reach, given our state's rugged geography, far-flung communities, and economic inequality. But a recent report found that the cost of building 100 Mbps fiber connections to every unserved home and business in the state might be done with an investment of \$6.8 billion. An additional \$1.2 billion investment would help Californians take advantage of all that broadband promises.

Mendocino County has the 7th lowest broadband access percentage at the current California speed standards of 6/1 Mbps. AB 1665 called for each State region to attain 98% broadband access by the end of 2022. For Mendocino County to reach 98%, we must deploy infrastructure and services to an additional 8,059 households. As an investment in critical infrastructure, this one-time appropriation represents a rare solution that would help attain this critical goal.

Of the funding we are requesting, \$6.8 billion would construct open access middle mile and 100/10 Mbps last mile fiber optics to all unserved and underserved homes and businesses, both of which are necessary to get broadband to people where they live and work. But we know that simply providing access cannot be the end of our efforts, so we are requesting the infrastructure investment be paired with \$1.2 billion for programs to increase adoption. These efforts could include providing devices, digital skills training, service subsidies, and language access necessary for Californians to be able to use adopt broadband.

Expanding broadband access is the ideal use for the state's one-time revenues and the flexible funding provided by the American Rescue Plan Act. By transforming the educational, economic, and quality-of-life landscape of our state, it would provide immediate benefits to the people and businesses in California while significantly expanding the economy in the long-term.

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Using the state's financial resources to expand broadband is a public good that is both moral and practical. Committing \$8 billion to this effort would be the state's most serious effort yet to try to close the Digital Divide once and for all.

Sincerely,



Dan Gjerde, Chair Board of Supervisors

CC: Senator Mike McGuire, 2<sup>nd</sup> California Senate District  
Assemblymember Jim Wood, 2<sup>nd</sup> California Senate District  
Congressman Jared Huffman, 2<sup>nd</sup> California Senate District  
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)  
Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)  
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange (SYASL)