

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

June 11, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom, Governor
State of California
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor Newsom,

We write to express our strong support of your proposal to invest \$7 billion of state surplus funds and federal funds allocated to California in broadband infrastructure.

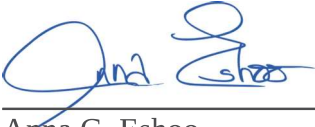
High-speed internet connectivity is essential for every Californian, regardless of geography, ethnicity, race, gender, or economic background. It's how Californians learn and do homework, earn a living via telework, receive healthcare from medical professionals, apply for government programs, communicate with government officials, and receive emergency information during disasters. The importance of connectivity has only become starker during the pandemic. As your proposal states, only 52 percent of Californians are using broadband at the modern benchmark speed of 100 Mbps. This digital divide impacts Californians in urban, suburban, rural, and Tribal parts of our state, and it is unacceptable.

We strongly believe that closing the digital divide will require a partnership across all levels of government. The federal government has and will continue to invest in broadband infrastructure and enact policies to enable deployment. Local and Tribal governments around the state are enacting policies to serve all residents, including by deploying their own networks. These community networks exist all over our state but need support to continue growing. Across the country, over 900 municipalities, Tribes, utility co-ops, public-private partnerships, and nonprofits have deployed community networks. Research by New America's Open Technology Institute shows that community broadband produces higher quality service at lower costs.

We're pleased by your proposal to buildout a statewide middle-mile network and to financially support community networks administered by municipalities, Tribes, and nonprofits. The statewide middle-mile will enable expanded broadband access by reducing upfront costs for public and private providers to reach Californians who lack access today. Financial support for community networks will ensure communities can build their own networks when other options aren't available.

We support this bold investment and stand ready to assist your efforts to ensure *all* Californians have access to high speed internet.

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



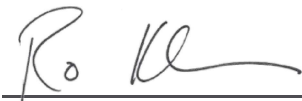
Doris Matsui
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



Jackie Speier
Member of Congress



Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Alan S. Lowenthal
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Philip Y. Ting, Chair, California Assembly Committee on Budget
The Honorable Members of the California Assembly Committee on Budget
The Honorable Nancy Skinner, Chair, California Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review
The Honorable Members of the California Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review