

# MONTEREY COUNTY



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December 17, 2020

The Honorable Cecelia Aguiar-Curry  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 14 (Aguiar-Curry) Communications: broadband services: California Advanced Services Fund - SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry:

The County of Monterey is pleased to support your bill AB 14, which would authorize local educational agencies to report to the department their pupils' estimated needs for computing devices and internet connectivity adequate for at-home learning. The bill would require the department, in consultation with the Public Utilities Commission, to compile that information and to annually post that compiled information on the department's internet website.

The ongoing COVID pandemic has laid bare the massive gaps in internet connectivity at sufficient speeds for too many Californians. As more families have struggled to conduct distance learning, virtual work, access telehealth services, and safeguard small business participation in the virtual marketplace, the need to connect the State at sufficient speeds with adaptable technology has reached crisis proportion.

The 'Internet for All Act of 2021' prioritizes the deployment of broadband infrastructure in California's most vulnerable and unserved 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. AB 14 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 the 21st Century E-Marketplace.

The Act extends eligibility for grants administered by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to local and tribal governments, who are willing and able to quickly and efficiently connect households, community anchor institutions (including educational institutions, fairgrounds for emergency response, and healthcare facilities), small businesses, and employers. AB 14 offers a measured and meaningful approach to building a statewide fiber middle-mile network that will provide higher speeds and access to connectivity to all those who are unserved along the path of deployment.

For these reasons, Monterey County strongly supports AB 14 (Aguiar-Curry). Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Monterey County's Public Policy Advisor, Ashley Walker of Nossaman LLP at 916-442-8888.

Sincerely,

**DRAFT**

Chris M. Lopez  
Chair, Board of Supervisors

CC: Hon. Anna Caballero, 12<sup>th</sup> Senate District  
Hon. John Laird, 17<sup>th</sup> Senate District  
Hon. Mark Stone, 29<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Hon. Robert Rivas, 30<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)  
Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)