

**From:** Donna Begay  
**To:** [CA Broadband Council](#)  
**Subject:** Input to the Broadband Plan - due 11/20/2020  
**Date:** Friday, November 20, 2020 4:55:22 PM  
**Attachments:** DrDonaBegayTubatulabal Tribe input 11 20 2020 to BBC Plan.docx.docx

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I am hoping this is correct email address to submit input to the CA Broadband Council's plan on California Broadband for all - action plan.

Dr. Donna Begay, Tubatulabal Tribal Researcher and Cultural Practitioner

## **Commenting on “California Broadband for All Action Plan”**

Date of comment submittal: 11/20/2020 (Via email)

From: Dr. Donna Miranda-Begay

Title: Tubatulabal Tribe’s Researcher and Cultural Practitioner

Home Area: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on “California Broadband for All Action Plan” due date for comments is 11/20/2020. I have reviewed your proposed action plan and offer these comments and brief personal background and Tribal perspectives for improved California Broadband for All.

### **Comment 1, Page 3:**

“Income, age, education, disability status and ethnicity all correlate with lower broadband adoption.<sup>5</sup>” Recommend to include: In addition, other factors that contribute to lower broadband adoption include: population, technical infrastructure, and available broadband server provider business support.

### **Comment 2, Page 4**

“Example 1: A household of four with two adults attending occasional virtual meetings, sending e-mail, and doing research, and two kids attending school classes using Zoom, the combined required bandwidth could easily exceed the FCC’s minimums.<sup>12</sup>”. This is a very good example of current family household setting – good example.

### **Comment 3, Pages 4-9**

For the section “Core Challenges”, there should be a dedicated focus on California Native American Tribes and Tribal communities. In the State of California, the proper description for Tribes is “California Native American Tribes”. Recommend that the Governor’s Office Tribal Affairs Office provide this unique description that would include both federally and non-federally recognized California Native American Tribes and Indian Lands (reservation, rancherias, and allotments). With the COVID-19 pandemic, internet access has become so vital to California Native American Tribes in the preservation of indigenous language, culture, traditions, ceremonies, and survival.

### **Comment 4, Page 12**

“GOAL 3: All Californians can Access Training and Support to Enable Digital Inclusion

1. Provide technical assistance and support A. Identify opportunities for technical assistance to include support for local governments, tribes, nonprofits, and their partners to best leverage local, state, federal, and private funding opportunities.”

Recommend including Tribal non-profits and consortiums. In California, there is Inter-Tribal Council of California, California Indian Manpower Consortium, and Tribal TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) programs that are examples of Tribal consortium and Tribal non-profits that can assist Tribal families in California – both federally and non-federally recognized Tribes.

**Comment 5, Page 12**

“GOAL 3: All Californians can Access Training and Support to Enable Digital Inclusion

3. Strengthen partnerships and coordinate initiatives A. Leverage California Broadband Council meetings and the GoBiz broadband funding identification initiative to strengthen partnerships among anchor organizations such as schools, libraries, workforce development boards, county social service departments. B. Convene local government broadband coordinators and managers quarterly to identify barriers to local programming, new actions undertaken, and tools developed at the local level and to support intra-state collaboration.”

Recommend including California Native American Tribes, Tribal non-profits, and Tribal Consortium as potential partners in this initiative.

**Comment 6**

Overall, very good plan and I hope much success to the California Broadband Commission.

## Personal Background and Tribal Perspectives

Tribal communities are unlike other rural or urban areas. The Tribal Members who reside on reservation, rancheria, or allotment (public domain land) are challenged in timely, affordable, and sovereign approvals to obtaining improved access to broadband or other technology-based services. The location of reservations, rancherias, and allotment lands are typically located in very remote areas of California. A more thorough broadband task force should be set up to fully evaluate the current digital divide status and broadband access for Tribal communities. This taskforce should include input from U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), U.S. Indian Health Services (IHS) – California Area Office, U.S. BIA – Pacific Region – Indian Housing and Realty, California Governor’s Tribal Affairs Office, U. S. Telecommunication and board band service providers. In 2018, the FCC estimated that 35 percent of Americans living on Tribal lands lacked access to broadband services, compared to eight percent of all Americans (Reference - Udall, Senate Democrats Call on FCC Chairman to Expediently Address the Digital Divide in Indian Country, September 14, 2020): <https://www.indian.senate.gov/news/press-release/udall-senate-democrats-call-fcc-chairman-expeditiously-address-digital-divide> )

My home is in Weldon, California – about 1-hour northeast of Bakersfield, California. My home is located on the Tubatulabal Tribal land area – a village called “yii-tii-em-ep” (where the flat-water lives). This a 160-acre allotment awarded to my great-grand-father, Chief Steban Miranda, in the 1880s under the U.S. Dawes Allotment Act. There are about 10 Tribal families who reside on this property. Most of my relatives on this property do not have access to Internet due to cost.

In March 2020, my grand-nephews and I to drive around Lake Isabella to see if we can get a free wifi connection – picture below is one of my grand-nephews who was able to use his chrome book to connect to the free wifi from a local storage company. The prior free wifi was from local library, but it closed in March 2020 due to the COVID-19.



Today, I use local wifi provider and it costs about \$130 a month for wifi (includes VOIP phone) through a satellite connection. The performance is very slow. I had to get this connecting set up by early Summer 2020, due to my grand-nephews and I telecommuting for school and work due to COVID-19 pandemic. Picture below are my grandnephews logging into their distance learning system:



The area of Weldon, California is very remote and our neighbors who reside on Fay Ranch Road live off fixed incomes and have very limited access to the internet. Picture below is the fork in the road of Fay Ranch Road (paved road) and Reservation road (dirt road). On the fence is a sign for local wifi service. Also pictured is entrance of Miranda Allotment “yii-tii-em-ep”.



Beyond school and work, some of my Tubatulabal cousins have a business and need improved bandwidth. Under the U.S Constitution – Tribal Nations are to have economic opportunities and are sovereign nations. My Tribe is not federally recognized, this poses a big obstacle for any federal and state funding since these opportunities target federally recognized Tribes and Alaskan Tribal Villages.

Our Tubatulabal Tribe includes about 500 members who reside mainly in California. We have lost about 10 members of our Tribe to COVID-19. We have much to share both digitally and face-to-face. Time for improved broadband is not only needed in Tubatulabal territory, but for all California Native American Tribes to continue their existence in ancestral and traditional lands.