

**From:** Stephanie McNally  
**To:** [CA Broadband Council](#)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Public Comment December 17 Meeting from Canal Alliance.  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 16, 2020 4:10:47 PM  
**Attachments:** CA Broadband Council Meeting Public Comments from Canal Alliance 12\_16\_20.docx

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Hello CA Broadband Council,

I am submitting public comment on behalf of [Canal Alliance](#) a community based organization with a mission to break the generational cycle of poverty for Latino immigrants and their family by lifting the barriers to their success. I am not able to attend the meeting tomorrow and am sharing our recommendations to close the digital divide that is negatively impacting the health, education and opportunity for the Latino students and families we serve in our [youth education program](#).

Thank you,  
Stephanie



**Stephanie McNally, She/Her**  
ADVOCACY AND POLICY SENIOR MANAGER



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Good Morning Chair Amy Tong and Broadband Council Members,

My name is Stephanie McNally and I am the Advocacy and Policy Senior Manager representing [Canal Alliance](https://canalalliance.org). We are a community-based organization serving Latino immigrants and their families. Our mission is to break the generational cycle of poverty and lift the barriers to success through our youth and adult education programs.

We are submitting written public comment today to elevate the voices of the students and parents that are suffering the negative impact of living in a community without accessible and affordable broadband access. We are working with our local government to implement a mesh Wi-Fi network as a short-term solution to a huge inequity that is disproportionately affecting the low-income Latino community we serve. This short-term solution has produced limited outcomes and we need more support to close the digital divide to meet the educational, health, and professional needs of Latino students and their families.

We need you to take us to the next level in addressing the digital divide in low-income communities of color by investing in both short-term and long-term solutions that will address the critical gaps we face. In order to ensure that the students and families we serve have accessible, affordable, and reliable broadband connectivity, we recommend:

- Expanding coverage within underserved low-income communities in order to prevent digital redlining.
- Promoting data transparency from internet service providers (ISPs) and broadband companies on usage and marketing of their reduced-cost/free programs as well as efforts to expand these during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, requiring broadband companies to limit their requests for documentation to establish an account. The school district worked with our local provider to give lists of addresses of students who receive free and reduced lunch to reduce some of the unnecessary paperwork required to sign up for reduced cost/free broadband because families were scared to share personal information.
- Investing in long-term broadband connectivity solutions that build out future proof networks and infrastructure such as those proposed by Legislators during the 2020 Legislative session.
- Increasing marketing and accessibility of reduced-cost/free broadband access programs and develop qualifying low-income metrics for postsecondary students such as Cal Grant, Pell, or CA Dream Act eligibility.
- Suspending caps on upload/download speed within reduced-cost/free broadband access programs so multiple devices or multiple user households can have reliable connectivity. Many of our families live with multiple family members in the same household, which makes the situation worse when everyone is using the internet at the same time.

Thank you,  
Stephanie McNally, She/Her  
ADVOCACY AND POLICY SENIOR MANAGER

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