California Broadband Council Meeting

October 25, 2023

9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Meeting Recap and Transcript

[SB 143 (Chapter 196, Statutes of 2023)](#) has extended the ability to conduct remote teleconference meetings under GC 11133 through December 31, 2023. The CBC conducted hybrid teleconference meeting on October 25, 2023 and provided a physical meeting location for the public to view and participated in CBC meeting.

The California Broadband Council (CBC) met on Wednesday, October 25, 2023 at 9:30am in CoveredCA's Tahoe Board Room at 1601 Exposition Boulevard in Sacramento. Members of the public, presenters, and ex-officio members had the option to join in person or via virtual conference.

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome

Madame Chair Liana Bailey-Crimmins welcomed Council members and attendees.

Housekeeping & Roll Call

A quorum was established for the meeting.

Name	Organization	Member / Designee	Present	Absent
Chair Director Liana Bailey-Crimmins	**California Department of Technology**	Member	X	
Ms. Sarah Smith	**Senate Energy, Utilities, and Communications Committee Appointment by Senator Bradford**	Designee	*Online, X*	
Commissioner Darcie Houck	**California Public Utilities Commission**	Member	X	

Deputy Director Marvin Green	**California Office of Emergency Services, Logistics Management**	Designee	X	
Dr. Kristina Mattis	**California Department of Education**	Designee	*Online , X*	
Jim Martone	**Department of General Services**	Designee	*Online , X*	
Deputy Secretary Lori Pepper	**California Transportation Agency, Innovative Mobility Solutions**	Member	X	
President and CEO Sunne McPeak	**California Emerging Technology Fund**	Member	X	
Deputy Secretary Michael Flores	**Department of Food and Agriculture**	Designee	X	
Program Manager Josh Chisom	**California State Library**, **Broadband Opportunities**	Designee	*Online , X*	
Deputy Secretary Loretta Miranda	**Office of Tribal Affairs**	Designee	*Online , X*	
Mr. Mitchell Mattos	**Assembly Member Mike A. Gipson**	Designee	*Online , X*	

The following CBC member made additional comments:
- Darcie Houck
- Sunne McPeak

- Sarah Smith

Agenda Item 2 – Executive Report

Deputy Director Scott Adams provided a high-level recap of various Broadband for All programs and initiatives, including the Broadband for All Efforts, Adoption and ACP Enrollment Efforts, Digital Equity and BEAD planning, and Partner and Stakeholder Engagement. He briefly reviewed collaborations and engagements between OBDL, CPUC, and other various state agencies and stakeholders.

The following CBC member made additional comments:
- Sunne McPeak

Agenda Item 3.1 – Broadband for All Updates

Deputy Director Scott Adams reviewed the 2023 focus and highlights of Broadband for All. He briefly walked through the complete and ongoing action items in addition to describing the action items moving into 2024.

The following CBC member made additional comments:
- Lori Pepper

Agenda Item 3.2 – Middle-Mile Broadband Initiative Update

Deputy Director Mark Monroe provided a Middle-Mile Broadband Initiative progress report and provided clarity on how the full middle mile network reaches unserved and underserved communities.

The following CBC members and presenter made additional comments:
- Liana Bailey-Crimmins
- Sunne McPeak
- Sarah Smith
- Rob Osborn

Agenda Item 3.3 – Last-Mile Program Update

Commissioner Darcie Houck from the California Public Utilities Commission provided a 2023 Broadband Investment Last Mile Initiative Snapshot on the various Last-Mile Programs, including Technical Assistance, Loan Loss Reserve Fund, Federal Funding Account, and California Advanced Services Funds.

The following CBC members and presenters made additional comments:
- Sunne McPeak
- Rob Osborn

- Sarah Smith

Agenda Item 3.4 – Affordable Connectivity Program

Sunne Wright McPeak from the California Emerging Technology Fund provided an update on enrollment in the Affordable Connectivity Program. She highlighted the partnership that were involved in the Get Connected! CA Mobilization effort and shared next steps. As of Monday October 23, forty-five percent of eligible California households have enrolled in the ACP program.

The following CBC members and presenters made additional comments:
- Darcie Houck
- Sarah Smith
- Scott Adams
- Rob Osborn

Agenda Item 4 – NTIA IIJA Programs – State Digital Equity Planning and BEAD

Deputy Director Scott Adams from CDT and Director of Communications Division from CPUC Rob Osborn provided updates of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Programs. Deputy Director Scott Adams highlighted that 51 states and territories applied for the Digital Equity Plan No-Cost Extension. He also shared the State Digital Equity Plan (SDEP) approach on planning and implementation informed the various required components of the SDEP, and briefly outlined the potential uses of the Capacity Grants. He also provided high level findings from the Statewide Digital Equity Telephone Survey, the Digital Equity Online Survey, and the Digital Equity Ecosystem Mapping (DEEM) Tool. Lastly, Deputy Director Adams closed his portion outlining the SDEP implement strategy and key activities, the SDEP public comment process, and SDEP projected timeline. Director Rob Osborn spoke briefly on the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Timeline and process. He highlighted a few upcoming BEAD workshops and forums taking place in October and November.

The following CBC members made additional comments:
- Liana Bailey-Crimmins
- Sunne McPeak
- Darcie Houck

Agenda Item 5 – Legislative Update

Deputy Director Scott Adams provided an legislative update on [AB 414 (Reyes) Communications: Digital Equity Bill of Rights](#).

Following Deputy Director Scott Adams, Director Rob Osborn from the California Public Utilities Commission shared legislative information regarding [AB 286 (Wood) Broadband infrastructure: mapping](#), [AB 965 (Carrillo) Local government: broadband permit applications](#) and [SB 387 (Dodd) State property: sale or lease: broadband development](#).

The following CBC members made additional comments:
- Sunne McPeak
- Darcie Houck

Agenda Item 6 – 2024 Meeting Schedule

Deputy Director Scott Adams proposed to Broadband Council Members the 2024 focus and meeting schedule. The Council voted to hold quarterly meetings on the fourth Wednesday of the month on January 24, April 24, July 24, and October 23.

Agenda Item 7 – Public Comment

Staff proceeded to address public comments, starting with in-person comments, then those with their hands raised on Zoom, and then comments sent in via email.

The following members of the public made comments in person:

Paulina Chavez
Mia Hatfield
Thamar Pena
Jorge Rivera
Ulises Zatarain
Katie L.
Amber Johnson
Lili Gangas
Kathy Meza
Elmer Roldan
Ray Lopez-Chang
Carla Lopez Valdes
Claudia Oliveira
Patrick Messac
Georgia Savage

Diego Rodriguez
Lindsey Skolnik
Brandy Huffman
Maria Villamil
Elizabeth Aguilar
Paola Schenkelberg
Sophia Sandoval
Leslie Partida
Daoud Stevenson
Gaby Andrada
Alessandro Negrete
Shayna Englin
Tracy Rhine
Ashley Cruz
Samanthan Nunez
Jawharah Stevenson
Shayna Englin
Tracy Rhine

Along with public comments made in-person, a written statement was provided to the California Broadband Council members. The document is attached after the transcript.

The following members of the public made comments via Zoom:

Michael Terlep
Chennie Sudana
Samia Zuber
Senator Steven Bradford

Two public comments received prior to the meeting in California Broadband Council Email Inbox.

Email Comment #1: Andrew Maurer, Resident Living Within CalFire Zone 267

"Existing wireline, fiber, or transmission routes are now failing or will fail for the 3rd time, due to severe entanglement with pole vegetation. If any new broadband transmission deployment is done using existing poles, it must mandate seasonal vegetation trimming funded by government agency code enforcement. Current lower pole cabling connects E-911, CodeRed Alerts, premise alarm, safety-of-life telephone service (VoIP and/or copper residence service)."

Email Comment #2: Kevin Horejsi

"I would like to make you aware of a problem that is occurring throughout the state and is specifically effecting me. I own a condo built in the early 90's. The condos are 6 row houses with a utility closet on the outside of one garage. We have original coax and telephone lines. There is a fiber company that has public access in our street and owns a box from a former company in our outside utility closets. The HOA board has been refusing for almost a year and a half to allow the company access and allow me and my neighbors to get fiber. The fiber company is putting up all their money and even offered over $15,000 dollars to allow them to install. It is rather ridiculous that I would have to hire a lawyer which I can't afford just to have access to good quality wiring. I'm sure this is a problem among a lot of Condo units. Not only condos are effected but renters can also be effected by not being able to get access to a service that is at their doorway. There needs to be in place some type of right to access law if a broadband company is willing to pay to bring the service to your residences. I hope you can understand my circumstances and hopefully find a solution legislatively. Thank you for your time."

The following CBC members and presenters made additional comments:
- Michael Flores
- Mark Monroe
- Marvin Green
- Sunne McPeak
- Darcie Houck

Closing

Director Bailey-Crimmins thanked Council members, presenters, and attendees and noted the next meeting is Wednesday, January 24, 2024 at 9:30-11:30am. The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

(Meeting recording and presentation slides from the meeting will be posted to the Council's website)

Transcript

Thank you, everyone, and good morning, and welcome to the October 25th, 2023 California Broadband Council. I am Lianna Bailey-Crimmins, Director Department of Technology, and have the honor of chairing the California Broadband Council.

I want to first acknowledge Covered California for their welcoming arms into allowing us to use our beautiful facility and their team members in the AV room. And so, we can only do this because of the partnership we have with other state departments, so thank you very much for allowing us to use your facility today. The first order of business is roll call, so I'll go ahead and turn it over to Ms. Nguyen.

Thank you. Good morning, council members and members of the public. Please note SB 143, Chapter 196, Statutes of 2023, has extended the ability to conduct remote teleconference meeting under government Code 11133 through December 31st of 2023. The CBC will continue to conduct hybrid teleconference meetings for the remainder of the year and provide a physical meeting location for the public to view and participate in California Broadband Council meetings. And Council members please announce your presence as your name is called.

State Chief Information Officer and Director Bailey Crimmins.

Present.

Thank you.

Ms. Sarah Smith.

[Present]

Commissioner Houck.

Present

Deputy Director Green.

Present

Dr. Kristina Mattis.

Christina will be joining momentarily once she gets the link. But we are here.

Thank you.

Mr. Martone.

Present

Thank you.

Deputy Secretary Pepper.

Present.

Thank you.

Ms. McPeak.

Present.

Thank you.

Deputy Secretary Flores.

Here.

Thank you.

Mr. Chisom.

Present.

Thank you.

Deputy Secretary Miranda.

Present.

Thank you.

Mr. Mattos.

Present.

Thank you. Madam Chair. We do have a quorum. Can I have the housekeeping slide, please?

Now on to housekeeping items for council members and members of the public. This meeting is being recorded. We will be posting the recording of this meeting, slides, and transcripts to the Broadband for All portal. Attendees, please note that there is time allocated at the end of the meeting for public comments, either in person, via Zoom, phone in through Zoom and read through of public comments sent via email submitted prior to the meeting. Presenters, please cue Luke to advance your slides. Committee members, please use the raise hand feature on Zoom, or raise your hand in person to notify Chair Bailey-Crimmins to

call you to speak and if you are on Zoom, please select side by side speaker view, when PowerPoints are shared to see the speakers. Gallery view when PowerPoint slides are not shared, if you will like to see everyone else in the room. Closed captioning is available and use reactions tool towards the bottom of your screen to raise hand on Zoom or *9 if you are calling in by phone.

Madam chair, we do have quorum, and we can begin.

Thank you, Ms. Nguyen. Well, we have a full agenda today, but this also marks the last CBC meeting for the year of 2023 [corrected from 2024]. We have been around for many years, and have accomplished a lot of things, and so, as we look to the future of where we are going as a committee, I also would like to highlight as we're going through each of the agenda items to really celebrate the successes. It's always easy to get caught up in where we still need to go, and still the gaps. But there's it's been a lot that this committee has accomplished through a lot of partnership. And it's taken all of us to make this happen. So hopefully, today is one to also recognize everything that each of your teams have done to bring us here to today. So, with that, we'll go over what's expected in the agenda. We are going to have an executive report out from Mr. Scott Adams, and also a Middle Mile Broadband Initiative update from Mark Monroe. We also will be focusing on, you know, we've talked about Middle Mile, but at the end of the day, Broadband for All is about Middle Mile last mile connectivity programs and making sure that we are getting connectivity and broadband to households. And so today, we have several items focusing on Last Mile. And we also are going to hear more about what's going on related to the Affordability Connectivity Program, because, again, that's where it actually gets services to individuals out into the public. And then, lastly, we're going to hear about accomplishments today from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act specifically the State Digital Equity Plan, and we're also going to hear the accomplishments regarding the Broadband Equity access and deployment plan. Before we get started with the formal agenda, I'd like to offer my fellow members council members an opportunity to make any brief comments if they would like. All right, Commissioner Houck.

I just want second your comments and just recognize all of the accomplishments that both California Department of Technology and the CPUC have had over the last couple of years. We've done a tremendous amount of work. And I agree we still have a long way to go to get there, and we need to be engaging with communities to get that work done, but we have done a tremendous amount of work in this historic effort, and we have made significant progress, and I'm just looking forward to seeing that to fruition and getting all of California connected. So just want to second your comments Chair.

Thank you. Commissioner Houck. Oh, yes, Ms. Sunne McPeak.

Thank you, Madam Chair, I couldn't help but reflect on your comments, and now, Commissioner Houck's comments about all the progress, and I just wanted to share that each time I see US Senator Alex Padilla, because, as State Senator Alex Padilla, this was his idea, and I remember the call I got. He, he, he was very really concerned that there be sufficient focus on broadband getting people connected, as there was on the horizon a transition in the administration when Governor was being termed out. And I tell him you cannot imagine how much impact it's really had, so it's been 13 years and he, by the way, the proposal I gave him was such a large tent it would take this entire room to meet. He said, no, no, I don't want to do that, and he just stripped it down to who he wanted on the council. But I just want to commend you that it really has become the forum, and I walked through all of our friends out there who are going to be sharing their viewpoint. I love it. It's a party. It's a policy party, if you will, but it's a forum where everybody can come together. So, congratulations to you, to the Department of Technology, to the Public Utilities Commission for making sure we're all here and focusing on the people's work.

Very well said, thank you, Ms. McPeak. Any other comments from any other committee members. Is there any? Sorry.

I just, really quick, I also don't want to forget the Department of Transportation's work and coordinating with us. We wouldn't be able to get the fiber in the ground without the work that they've been doing as well.

Absolutely. Thank you.

Oh, Ms. Sarah Smith.

I think. Yeah, I want to congratulate everyone who has been a part of implementing some of the legislation that was passed in 2021, 2022, and 2023. I did want to note that I believe our ability to do virtual meetings is going to expire at the end of this year. And put a little plug in for having any in person venue that's downtown as the legislative session begins to restart. I don't know how accessible a location that's far away from the Capitol will be for any elected.

Thank you.

I will comment. We used to be in the capital, and that was arranged by the Legislature, so maybe there. Lots of hearing. Well, oh, it's being renovated. Sorry. Okay.

It's being renovated, but we have hearing rooms. And we do, there are quite a lot of hearing rooms at agencies that are around us.

So, Ms. Smith, we'll definitely reach out to you and make sure that the legislature and other individuals, because downtown is very convenient. So, we will work with you on the next location.

Thanks.

Thank you. And any other member comments before we go to the first agenda item. All right, I see none. So, the first order is to go ahead and have an executive report from Deputy Director Scott Adams.

Thank you. Chair Bailey-Crimmins, members of the Broadband Council and members of the public. My name is Scott Adams. I'm the Deputy Director of the Office of Broadband and Digital Literacy, and it's my pleasure to be here today to provide a very brief executive report on the work of our office. For those who might be joining new and are not familiar, our office on behalf of the Department of Technology, really supports the coordination and implementation of the Broadband for All program and the related initiatives that are all connected and interdependent to close the States digital divide. And really, you know those efforts that focus on access and, you know, deploying infrastructure and service, the efforts around affordability and making sure that California residents can afford service, and then adoption, which is the whole you know, last component related to digital literacy and skills training, and you know, technical support, etc. So, if we could go to the next slide, please. Real briefly, just wanted to present the council and the public to the fact that in the meeting, you know, at the beginning of the year we propose a work plan that we continue to monitor Broadband for All efforts, which include the implementation of the action plan, the Middle Mile, the Last Mile programs, the Affordable Connectivity promotion, and then really, focus on coordination of leveraging the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act funds which will help us further get to the goals of Broadband for All in California by coordinating with the CPUC, Broadband Council members, and a host of regional local stakeholders, partners and residents on digital equity and BEAD planning. And you know, a couple of highlights that I'd like to share with you is on the implementation of the Broadband Action Plan last year we reported 16 of the 24 Action Plan items were at a state of completion, and this year we would continue to monitor those that were identified as complete at the time, and excuse me, revise and update them as needed. And so a couple of examples, there is the you know, developing a digital stakeholder, digital inclusion stakeholder network. Over the last year we've been able to grow the number of folks that we engage and communicate with and interact with on broadband to over 5,000. And we've created an email update communication that goes out to 85,000 people, so that's a significant progress in terms of who we

engaged with, who we interacted with and who we are communicating progress to on a regular basis. There's also the development of the Broadband for All portal which we continue to you know, expand its purpose as being a central repository of information for all of the Broadband for All programs, and have continued to enhance that. You'll hear later on some of the some of the updates on specific action items. But wanted to brief you on that as far as adoption and ACP enrollment efforts go, Council Member McPeak is going to give a bigger update. But the work of this body and partners across the State have yielded significant responses and results on enrollments that are right now, pretty much generating 20,000 plus enrollments to that program every single week. So looking forward to Ms. McPeak's update. On digital equity and BEAD planning, I think we just really want to share, and we'll share later, But CDT and CPUC work very closely to be as inclusive as we can given the timing and the funding available. But we've implemented a process over the last year, you know, virtual engagements in person engagements, other opportunities that you know in person engagements in every economic region in the State and, you know collectively, have been able to engage with over 50,000, residents of California. So, I know I said I would be brief, I will stop there. I'm happy to answer any questions.

Thank you, Mr. Adams. Any committee members that have comments regarding the executive report? Ms. McPeak.

I do. I just want to commend you, Madam Chair as Department Director and Deputy Director Adams and your team for the focus and the diligence. So, the question I have, because I think we're making very significant progress on the Broadband for All Action plan, what help do you want us to be thinking about for 2024 that you need? Where do you see the biggest challenges.

I think that's a really good question. And I'd like to think on that a little bit, and perhaps pick that up later on in the agenda when we propose a work plan, I think. You know, out of respect for the question, I would just presence it back to you know you mentioned the formation of broadband council back in 2010, identifying that the digital divide and digital inclusion is such a huge and persistent and challenging issue in the State, that you know, I think what we all could use a little help on is how to educate and communicate the challenges and the different pieces that are required, the dependencies that are required on the access side, on the adoption side, on the affordability side, and you know, leverage your expertise in both your organizations and your networks to help us continue to explain how challenging this issue is, and how important it is that all of us contribute to the solution.

Thank you. Any other questions, comments from the Council members. Do I have anybody online? Okay, perfect. We'll go ahead and go into the next agenda item, which is the Broadband for All year in review. We'll start with a brief instead of comments again from Mr. Adams.

Well, thank you very much. It's good to be back on this next slide. Director Bailey Crimmins and as the Chair, said we really do want to take a time to give this year-end review to celebrate the accomplishments of all of the different folks, and underscore that there's still work to go. But for 2023, this year has been a year of implementation. It's been a year of monitoring of state, wide engagement, interagency coordination, doing a lot of barriers and needs analysis, across the board and really focusing on outcomes alignment with other entities. If you go to the next slide, please. As it relates to the Broadband Action plan, you know, multi-agency coordination is key here, cause the action plan was obviously developed in just 4 months during the pandemic, but it assigns significant actions to various State agencies and entities. What we would like to report out is that in the green box on the left, that significant work has been done by the PUC to both modernize the universal service programs surcharge that funds those, I think. Robert, Commissioner Houck might want to provide a little clarification on that but it's a significant effort, and then the improvement of the California lifeline program. The CPUC has come out with a pilot, comparing lifeline with the ACP that's been very significant. Ongoing items that will continue to over into next year would be you know, mostly the realm of PU, which is continuing to monitor network reliability standards, consumer protection and equitable service, continuing to provide extensive guidance to local and tribal governments, while they had tremendous success that they'll talk about in their Last Mile programs, continue to improve the California interactive Broadband map in partnership with the ecosystem and the community, and then ongoing technical assistance. And then, lastly, would like to report that the Office of Emergency Services is also making significant work, and Mr. Green, you and your colleagues, we appreciate the time we spend in our working meetings with your team. But really, looking at the end of 2024 is the time what they will end update their work on connecting all the and a piece apps around the State. So that is a brief report on the action item updates, congratulations to those who continue to work forward on those. And Chair, I'll turn it back over to you.

Thank you very much, Mr. Adams. Any comments? Questions from any council members?

Yes. Ms. Peppers.

Thank you. I just, this is not really a question more of a comment and a thank you. The portal that had the Broadband for All portal, especially the Affordable Connectivity page, or the low cost page has been extremely helpful. This is not a transportation item, this is more just been talking to people who are trying to figure out how to get those programs to people and how to inform them, and one of my colleagues, her daughter, works with, I want to say Volunteers for America and she, you know, now they use that page to help the people who come to them and their clients. And you know, just in kind of anecdotally, as I talk to people and they're looking for ways of how to access and identify what programs might be available for different people they're working with. That has been such a helpful tool. So, I just want to say, Thank you. And really commend just the thought that has really gone into that portal.

Thank you. Ms. Pepper. I really appreciate that. Any other comments or questions from any committee members? Alright, I see none online. Then, okay, we're going to go ahead and go to the next agenda item, which is the Broadband Middle Mile Initiative update from Mr. Mark Monroe.

Alight, can everybody hear me? There we go. Yeah. So good morning again, Mark Monroe, the Deputy Director for the Middle Mile Broadband Initiative and thank you all for the opportunity to provide an update and some important clarifications on the Middle Mile components of the State's broader Broadband for All effort. As I hope, I will be tracking CDT has approximately 83% of the network under contract for both construction and leases, at this point, however, over the past 3 months we've heard from our important stakeholder partners, and acknowledge that our stakeholder engagement and communications needs, communications really need to improve, so we're going to continue to be to working towards that. My goal today is to take this opportunity to engage the council members and the public in providing clarity on what is now the single 10,000-mile map and reemphasize the Administration's commitment to including additional funding in the Governor's budget for to build out the full network. One set of concerns we've heard is that the segments have been reprioritized. We believe the phased approach that was presented in July generated a lot of confusion. For example, the State route 580 corridor running through Oakland, it never stopped. Caltrans never stopped working on it. It's currently under preconstruction. And this as soon as this phase is done, it's expected to be, preconstructions expected to be done in 2024, mid 2024, and when that's done, Caltrans plans to go to move on to construction. There's also have been, you know, concerns that that miles may have disappeared from the map, and early on a segment, we will acknowledge this early on, a segments in Los Angeles, that this surrounded the gateway cities and under privileged areas

like Compton did disappear from the 10,000 mile map. This did occur, and we apologize for it. CDT experienced a technical GIS error, and only the leases and alternative methods that were displayed initially, meaning all construction in the area, which is significant, stopped being displayed on the map, initially. We corrected this and republished the map within 24 hours of having realized the error. And these areas remain a priority and preconstruction is currently underway continues to be underway as was originally planned including the original 800 miles from the 18 initial projects that were announced back in 2021. Once completed, construction on all these segments will begin. As most of you may be aware by now, construction cannot start until preconstruction work, such as planning, environmental permitting and design work, are all completed and currently the construction constructed segments in LA, in the LA area are expected to have preconstruction completed by December of 2024. And then, lastly, there have been some you know, concerns or assertions that CDT keeps changing, it's public facing a map that it has on its website. While the map routes have generally remained the same. There have been some variances where, where parallel routes were used to provide quicker service through leasing. We fail to be as clear as we should have been about some of these changes which we understand caused the concern this has understandably raised concerns, and we are working to be more clear and transparent about the map, and any past or future route variances. We note that route variances should be seen as a good thing in that they're really the result of having identified a way to build out and develop the network faster, and more efficiently while still reaching the same outcomes, the same corridors and the same communities that we've been targeting. So that's kind of a high-level update of that we wanted to provide clarification. You can, there's a map up on the screen here, and that we presented recently at the last quarterly MMAC meeting, and it shows how the this, the where the States needs are in terms of unserved communities, and where the, and how that overlays and other the states MMBI network is reaching all of those. So that's the end of my update. And happy to take any questions.

Thank you, Mr. Mark Monroe. Any questions from the committee members? I have a question, Mr. Monroe. First of all, thank you very much for the update. There's been questions about how much of the network is currently under contract. Is there any information you'd like to share with the California Broadband Council what your current progress is, in relation to getting the 10,000 miles closer to the opportunities that CPUC is looking for to connect individual households.

Yes. So well, thank you for that question. So, 83% of the network is under contract right now. And that includes approximately 65 or more than 6500 miles from leases and joint build arrangements, and purchases that we have, some people may remember we did a, I had mentioned some requests for innovative solutions. This is the technical term has been the RFI squared request for innovative ideas we went out to bid about a year ago and received a number of responses. And so that that's generated roughly 65, more than 65% of the network. It's all under contract right now. And similarly, at the same time, we went out to bid for a construction for the other for any other segments to understand how much it would cost, and where what options we had there, and so that makes up the difference there between the 65% and the 83% and in terms of the amount that we have currently under contracts, under contract through the construction contracts with Caltrans.

Thank you, Mr. Monroe. Ms. McPeak.

Oh, thank you, Madam Chair. Mark, thank you very much for that report, 85% is a pretty good number from my perspective. Great, great performance. And I, a year ago I remember sitting in a meeting like this and commending the department for doing the RFII and getting every, getting in those proposals which provided a lot of, a lot of innovation and opportunity. My question is in terms of what has to be under contract and expended or encumbered by, the end of 2024, and the end of 2026, technically, are we meeting those conditions for the Federal dollars? And where do we need to think about addressing any challenges you're having?

Yes, so no, appreciate that. So given the contracts that we have signed so far, we do not think we'll have any problem at all meeting the Federal deadline of December of 2024 and in fact, for the vast majority of it we we're a year ahead of schedule. So that's, that's we're very excited about that. And so and I want to comment on the RFI squared we because that was so productive, and because there were other, be, because I think there was some concern by some stakeholders that there were other areas where there might be some opportunities, we're going to be going out by the end of this month with another one of those. Because we want to make sure that you know, we, as I think we've noted elsewhere, there's not really a way for CDT to force somebody to participate to force companies to participate. But I think you know, there's we're in a different place where we were now, where we were a year ago, year ago, not none of this was under contract, and now it's there, I think it's much more real. So, we want to give everybody every opportunity. One of the major benefits that that we're really excited about in terms of the lease deals, which is about 47% we expect those to start providing service in the latter half of 2025.

That's more than a year ahead of the Federal schedule for almost half the network. And so if there's other opportunities out there, we want to explore those as well. And so that's you had asked about, I think about how other ways we can support.

Yeah, other ways that we can support you, and actually, in terms of coming up against 2026, do projects have to be completed for the dollars to be expended, or is the commitment to the contract and the encumbering of those dollars considered expenditures for use of Federal funds?

For the Federal funds we have, it's been our understanding that the that the work has to be done and the contracts liquidated by the end of December 2026. So that's been our continued intent. And that's, I think, the Administration's restated that commitment that the intent is to complete the full network all segments of it by December of 2026.

Thank you for the question. I see Ms. Smith as well has her hand up.

Yeah, I have a couple of questions. I know that the governor has promised additional funding to kind of address some of those Middle Mile portions, where they are not part of, I don't know, want to say if they're part of the phase, or they're not planned for construction, but they're in preconstruction. And I know that we don't actually know how much money we're going to have in the budget for that, so I look forward to see what the cost estimates are, since that'll have to be done through the budget process, if we have sufficient funds for it. But I did want to get a sense, because it does feel like I, we've heard from a number of stakeholders that's been really challenging for them to take the proposed Middle Mile plans and translate them into their own CP, like applications at the CPUC for the cap for the Federal funding account or the California Advanced Services program to do their own last mile programs and so I just wanted to get a sense of how you guys are communicating with some of those applicants, because in a lot of the cases where things are shifting. It may seem like it's great on your end, but for those local governments it's become really hard for them to actually plan the network because they don't know exactly where they're going to be able to connect. And we've heard that a lot from the LA, particularly the LA constituents, so I want to get a sense of how moving forward, you know those entities that are planning on applying for those funds are going to be able to get information about where they may be able to interconnect with the Middle Mile. Yes, certainly. So first of all, I think we when, when we came out with the, the phased approach in July, that created a lot of that confusion, because I think you know, some, certainly a lot of communities, they saw a line in a map, and they said, okay, well, it's going to, it's going to go

down this freeway. I can connect to it. And that's what they plan for further FFA grants to PUC. And then, when you know the I think from the Administration's position, we've always planned on building out and, you know, developing the whole network. But I think that created confusion, because when you look at that approach, you're saying, when does the second phase come in? That phase approach is gone now as any as any segment is completed for preconstruction, ready to go to construction, we're going to move to construction on it, so I think that that's an important thing to note. We our current map, reflects the full 10,000 miles, and so anybody who is concerned about where the network's going to be, that map is intended to really provide that. But we also have a contact information on our website. And we're happy to have anybody reach out to us, to talk about what that might look like. And I will also note that as is, I think, already been noted several times, the CDT works very closely with the CPUC, so as we have gone forward with the map and we've continued, I think the CPUC has made commitments to continue working with applicants, so the fact that something might have changed or there might be some confusion about something that shouldn't affect that. There's going to be back and forth with the CPUC to help address those. But I but I think we're hoping that by the Administration's commitment to developing the whole network that that gives a level of a new level of certainty in terms of both the existence and the timing of where they can connect to the Middle Mile.

Thank you, Mr. Monroe. I think also, Mr. Osborn, would you, as from a CPUC perspective, I know the question had a lot to do with Last Mile and their ability to connect to the Middle Mile. So maybe if you could elaborate on Ms. Smith's question.

Yes, certainly. So in fact, we were on a call recently with CDT and Gateway cities about their Middle Mile plans, and so I think that was, that's actually been a series of productive calls with them. And I think, given, you know, the confusion with the phase 2 and now, going back to the full network and the timing of the Federal funding account application deadline we instructed our applicants to just submit what they had, and we'll work with them to, you know, based on what they had at that moment. And then we'll figure out, you know, the reality based on where the map is today, and what the plans are.

Thank you, Ms. Smith. Do you have other comments or questions for the [inaudible].

I did. However, I have gotten the understanding that particularly in the LA area you know the ability to interconnect with the Middle Mile for some of those projects is heavily dependent on whether certain routes are going to be built

because of the cost, and that a lot of that will depend on whether there's sufficient funding in the budget to actually do a new appropriation for the Middle Mile. I just wanted to get a sense. Is that correct? Is that not correct?

Mr. Monroe, I know part of what you're also doing is an RFI squared here at the end of October. I think, maybe actually, Friday or next week early. And then you're also putting a call out to government entities to see if they want to partner, and some have shown interest in the LA area. So maybe you can elaborate more on that that point.

Yes, exactly. You know, I think from our understanding is that every segment throughout LA is important, every segment throughout the State is important. Right? There's they're there because they're going to provide connectivity to an unserved community. And so, but in terms of so as we've reached out there, the RFI squared option, I think that is something that you know, there, there is some thought that there are in, especially in in in denser urban areas, there is going to be existing infrastructure that maybe we could utilize. And so that's one route that we're trying to partner with some of the local stakeholders on in terms of identifying and encouraging participation in the next round and then in terms of and this is, this is, I'm glad you asked this, because I, I think we want everybody to understand this. CDT is continuing to work with cities to look for alternatives for partnerships. And so you know, when you look at the map the CDT and then the State is not the only entity that needs to put something in the ground, and that is the most expensive part of the project. And so we've identified I think, between at least 3 different local entities that we're working with right now, for where we are combining the, some use of local infrastructure or local need in terms of like a joint construction process to achieve a savings and faster delivery for some of these. And so really anybody again, this goes back to, you know, reaching out to the CDT team. If there's an opportunity for that or for concern, or you know anything where, an urban area has existing infrastructure, whether it's broadband or other utilities. Reach out to us and let's look for opportunities to where we can achieve some efficiency and move quicker.

Thank you very much, Mr. Monroe. Any other questions from any committee members? All right, we'll go to the next agenda item. Thank you very much, Mr. Monroe. The next item is from a Commissioner Houck on, or is it Robert or Rob? Okay, all right, for the last mile.

Thank you Chair again. I'm Darcie Houck. I'm one of 5 commissioners at the California Public Utilities Commission. And I'm pleased to be here today to provide an update on our last mile programs and related efforts. I do want to reiterate the comments earlier that as we've come out of the pandemic, we

have done a tremendous amount of work in partnership with CDT and I want to commend the staff at CDT and the California Public Utilities Commission for all of the work that they've done. That said, we still have a tremendous amount of work left to do as we implement these programs. And in doing that work we are going to need to closely coordinate with local entities to make sure that we're getting these things right. And I had the pleasure of meeting with some folks in Oakland last month, and very much appreciated hearing the feedback from the community members, directly. I do plan to go down to Los Angeles next month to meet with community members down there and hear from them as well and continue to engage with communities as we move forward with this process. So, with that, I'm going to provide our update for our Last Mile program. And so, if you could go to the next slide, thank you. So, this slide provides a snapshot of the suite of our last mile programs that we provide in [inaudible]. Sorry, Okay, can you hear me now? Okay, great. So first, is our local technical assistance program, which provided 50 million dollars in technical assistance grants for local and tribal governments to use for foundational work necessary to launch or expand a network. This funding was really instrumental for local and tribal groups to help prepare some of the grants, such as the FFA funding. The program dedicated 45 million dollars for nontribal communities, and 5 million dollars was set aside for tribal nations, and as of June 30th of this year the latter program was fully subscribed. The next program listed here is our Loan Loss Reserve Fund, which is a 750 million dollar investment to enable local tribal and nonprofit entities to secure financing for broadband infrastructure and the PUC recently released a proposed decision for public comments setting forth the proposed rules and guidelines for the funds, and I'll be talking in more detail about this program on a later slide. The next program listed here is our Federal Funding account, which provides roughly 2 billion dollars in grants to deliver reliable broadband and help close the digital divide and unserved communities. And the goal of this program is to provide direct connection to unserved locations and end users. And I will also be talking more about this in a later slide. And the last program listed here, though not an SB 156 program, is our California Advanced Services Fund which continues to serve as an important tool in supporting digital equity by assistance with funding broadband deployment through infrastructure adoption and public housing programs. These programs further the goals for deploying broadband in tribal and unserved and underserved areas at the of the State. And so we administer the California Advanced Services Fund, which has a budget of 73 million dollars for Fiscal Year 2023 to 2024. We do have authorization for, Rob correct me, if it's 150 million to collect, and we are looking to get authorization to spend that for the next fiscal year, and to increase the amount which will help go a long way to

further these programs. So with that, we can go to the next slide. So, our last mile Federal funding account we're really happy to report that the first Federal funding account cycle which closed on September 29th, received 484 grant applications. That's a historic amount. Applications were received from every county in the State with a total of more than 4.6 billion dollars in requests to fund Last Mile Broadband infrastructure projects to connect unserved Californians which really goes to show the dire need that we have to expand broadband to these unserved communities. This is unprecedented. The amount of interest in a CPUC grant program and again demonstrates the opportunity that this program provides to catalyze new high speed broadband infrastructure across the State. This program will fund locations that lack a reliable wire line connection capable of 25 megabits download and 3 megabits upload. Additionally, Federal funding account projects must provide speeds up to 100 megabits, download and upload. We received applications from all entities that were eligible for funding, and these entities include facility based broadband providers, local government agencies, electric utilities, nonprofit organizations, entities with a certificate of public convenience and necessity and telecommunications, cooperatives, California tribes, including wholly owned tribal corporations and nonprofit organizations. Applications proposing to connect back to the State's Middle Mile network are required to consult with the California Department of Technology to ensure projects are in alignment. There's also a point allocation within the scoring rubric for connection to the State Middle Mile regarding next steps. Interested parties can file objections via the PUC's Broadband grant portal, the objection period is 28 days and goes through November 20th, at 5 PM it closes. Applicants will again have 28 days to then respond to any objection via the Broadband Grant portal, and during the objection and response period, the Broadband Grant portal will send a notice to the preceding distribution list with the list of objections and responses submitted that day, so that folks on the list are notified. So again, historic interest in this program, and we are looking forward to moving forward with this first tranche in the FFA program. Please go to the next slide. This slide talks about our loan loss reserve program that I mentioned earlier. The PUC was tasked with designing and administering a loan loss reserve program of 750 million dollars for local tribal governments and nonprofit entities. The program will assist governments and nonprofit entities to finance the build out of their own last mile broadband infrastructure, and the PUC is designing this program through its CASF proceeding, and we issued a proposed decision to establish the funding rules and guidelines. On September 28th, opening comments on the proposal, the proposed decision were filed October 18th and reply, comments were filed earlier this week on October 23rd. The earliest the PUC would adopt a proposed

decision is November 2nd next week at our next voting meeting, and subsequently applications will start being accepted, subject to adopting the decision this year. First quarter 2024, and awards are anticipated to be made in second quarter of 2024. You can find out more information about the Loan Loss Reserve program on our website. And again, there's also, I think these are links on the slides that you can find out more information as well. So, any of the underlined areas in our slides have links to our website. Please go to the next slide. So, our California Advance Services fund. The Advance Services fund continues to serve as an important tool in supporting digital equity and the goals of the broad of Broadband for All. So last year the PUC adopted new rules for the broadband adoption account and the regional broadband consortia account. We updated our CASF infrastructure account to implement legislation regarding project eligibility and performance criteria and this year the PUC is exploring ways to enhance the eligibility of the public housing account for other low income housing developments and looking at what affordable housing may mean, we are looking to expand to mobile home parks. We've already expanded the program to migrant farm worker housing and are continued to look at ways to ensure that we're able to meet low income and affordable housing needs for broadband. So, stay tuned as we anticipate releasing proposed revisions to the public housing program before the end of this year. So as a summary for where we're at on our adoption grants. The adoption grants provide grants to public entities and community-based organizations for digital literacy and broadband access projects. We awarded 32 projects for 2.72 million dollars from January, from our January 2023 cycle in the July 1 application cycle, we received 87 applications requesting 14.24 million dollars, and, as you'll see from these numbers, we are getting increased applications and definitely showing a need for this funding for these programs. And our infrastructure account, this account subsidizes the cost of last mile and Middle Mile infrastructure to expand high quality communication service throughout California. Our June 1 cycle we received 73 applications, requesting 527 million dollars in grants for this program. So again, showing the interest and need for expanding broadband infrastructure, our public housing and low-income communities grant is intended to build networks offering free service for low-income residents in communities such as public housing developments, migrant farm worker housing and mobile home parks, and we had 31 awards, that were made from our January 2023 cycle totaling 1.52 million dollars. And on July 1 we received 14 applications, requesting $875,255. Our upcoming application deadlines for the adoption account and public housing account in 2024, are January 1st and July 1st. Applications are accepted for the infrastructure account on July 1st of each year and with that update I will conclude my

presentation. Turn it back over to the chair to see if there are any questions, and we also have our communications Director Rob Osborn here. If I need to turn to him for any specifics. But again, just commend the staff for the tremendous amount of work over the last 2 years on all of these programs.

Thank you. Commissioner Houck, also thank you for the impact that your programs are making in in areas that are most needed. You know, when you talk about the grants and all the, not only does it show that you're making progress, but also shows the demand and the public that really need these services. So, thank you for your partnership and everything that you guys are doing over there. Is there any? Is there any comments from any of the Board members, council members? And I see, Ms. McPeak has her hand up.

Madam Chair, you would be disappointed if I wasn't going to ask a question. I, first of all, want commend you, Commissioner Houck, for taking the time to always be available in the community and to listen. So, thank you for doing those meetings. I'm very appreciative of the fact you're personally involved and committed on the public housing account. We need to get everybody in publicly subsidized housing connected. And so, as you know, we're here to help provide any additional input from the stakeholders. What I also want to do is say thank you for to the PUC for establishing the new public purpose, partnership, or programs charts on an access line. So, you might want to comment on the I think confidence you have that that's going to generate the revenues that are authorized in law for collections and particular [SB 4] authorizes out of all of that 150 million a year for the California Advanced Services Fund, which is the most flexible dollars the State of California has. We want to make sure, not only can you collect it, but you can expend it, so thank you for your leadership on that. Going to that point, 2 questions, what kind of help can we provide to the PUC for your leadership to ensure that item is in the State budget and the expenditure authority matches at least the collection authority. And then the second question, I have the limit that you, finally, it took a while for me to understand the 73 million, that is the current expenditure limit. It goes back to the fiscal year 18/19 budget. I was so stupid, I read, I went and read the current budget entire pay every everything and couldn't find it. So then you had to instruct me where that was. What is the amount that is realistic? Because the 73 million came from the authority of 66 million a year, and you needed to have some carryover. So is there thinking going on as to not only how we obviously support you in the budget process, but what is the realistic expenditure limit that you need to match the collections of 150 million?

So I would say, any support you can provide would be helpful because we definitely need those dollars, as you can see from the grant applications we

received, we would be short even with the 150 million so we, we really need that. I would like to see the full 150 million be available for our next fiscal year. I know our staff and Rob in particular, are working closely on it, so he may be in a better position to provide any more specifics on how to assist us, but I know we are looking and working closely with the Administration and our Office of Governmental Affairs to look at getting the authorization to spend that full 150 million.

Thank you, Commissioner, and thank you, Sunne. Just to add on to what the Commissioner said, you know, I think, leading up to the FFA application deadline. There was a lot of doubt about how much interest and demand there is for Last Mile programs. I think that the numbers speak louder than words. And I think that provides a lot of you know, validation that the budget authority, whether we're seeking for CASF is indeed something that we need to help close the digital divide, as in addition to FFA, in addition to the loan loss reserve. So I think yes, to echo the Commissioner's point. Any support you can provide would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you. I see that Ms. Smith, you have your hand up.

Yeah, I did want to clarify one thing. The authorization to move up to the 115 million my understanding is that that was done through Legislation. That was SB 4 and AB 14 and so it set the 150 million cap on an annual basis. The PUC adopted its decision to implement that in April 2023, so at that point the collection process changed. The ask is really a question of the budget process in my understanding just the usual appropriations process that goes through the budget that goes through the budget. But any raise above the 150 million cap would require legislation to change the surcharge that's collected for the public purpose programs and not just CASF, but across the board potentially.

Yes, that that's correct, we're we have the authorization. And we are collecting the funding. We just need to go through the budget process to get the authorization to spend up to that amount. So yes, you're correct.

Thank you.

Thank you for the clarification, Ms. Smith. Any other councilmember questions, comments? We'll go ahead and go to the next agenda item, which is the Broadband Adoption and Affordable Connectivity Program which will be presented from the California Emerging Technology Fund, Ms. McPeak.

Thank you, Madam Chair. The Governor's executive order going back to 2020 and then the subsequent action plan actually directed the California Broadband Council and several members to advance and promote adoption

of affordable offers. So that's the foundation under which we work. When the Federal Government established the Emergency Broadband Benefit program. We all promoted that as an available and a preferable offer because it was the government subsidy. And then that became the Affordable Connectivity Program at the beginning of 2022. It was in March of 2022 that the California Broadband Council stepped forward and said, our goal is to get 90 % of all eligible households connected to the Internet by the end of 2024. So, I just want to put in context that really, it's all built around the Governor's Broadband for All action plan that we are doing this. It's under the umbrella of the California Broadband Council going to the next slide, please, I'm sorry, that we launched Get Connected! California and that was really focused on ACP, the Affordable Connectivity Program, as the preferred affordable offer that provides a $30 a month subsidy for eligible households, and $75 on tribal lands. The big news here is, as Mr. Adams said, it's about 20,000 households a week are being added from California. And as of Monday. That number exceeded 2.6 million, which is 45% of all eligible households. That's a pretty remarkable increase. I'm going to just shadow for the moment, foreshadow that, we have 15 entities in California that received grants from the Federal Communications Commission to promote ACP. And one of them is the California Department of Technology. Another is the California Emerging Technology Fund. And in our grant, we also have 10 sub awardees or grantee partners, including Tech Exchange represented by their executive Ulysses Zatarain here to do work in terms of enrollment in person. Going to the next slide if you will please. You can see that what I want to underscore is how important the State leadership has been. You know it's this focus of this Council, your willingness to really make this a priority. Yes, per the Governor's Broadband for All directive, but the help across the State from all stakeholders because of the California Broadband Council leadership, I think, is really tremendous, and you can see it in the numbers. So, since you are we the Council adopted that goal of 90% there's been and actually, these numbers haven't been updated to Monday, there's been a 24% percentage point increase in literally 18 months. That's the bottom line here. Going from what was the rollover of EBB into ACP at 21% of our eligible households to now not 44, but 45% and a 15% point increase in 2023 alone, from 30% to 45%. Our statewide number is 45%. There are regions within California who have taken your lead and then further focused with intensity. For example, the 7 large counties in Southern California are at literally 50% enrollment. That's huge. And in the San Joaquin valley, the 8 counties are at 47%. So last year, under the California Broadband Council get connected California, there were 61 in person ACP enrollment events on 3 big days. A couple of them were maybe the next day on a Sunday as opposed to a Saturday and that resulted in 1,164 households,

enrolling with 412 computing devices being distributed as drawings. Those recipients of the computing devices filled out a very extensive survey. So, we get a snapshot of where they were, and they've agreed to be followed over time, two years, 4 times more, and we're in the process of doing that first outreach, so that we can see what kind of a difference being connected and having a computing device means to them. In addition to that, there were 14 other in-person enrollment events getting to 75 last year in the name of Broadband for All. I want to say, that is a huge amount of work. A lot of you in the audience have been parts of ACP enrollment. On August 18th Friday, you know Oakland Undivided did a huge event. And you had 50 people actually want information, I think, enrolled or got information about people to enroll about 21 actually on the site 9. I mean, these things are not easy to do. So I commend you for doing that work. What we're in right now is focusing on taking, accelerating all of this effort because we've got momentum. Not only are we a 45% in California. What I look at is also what percentage of all enrollments in the nation is California and we crossed over about 2 months ago to being 12% with a steady uptake. So, we are 13% of the population of the entire country and 15% of all low-income people live in California. So, we are shooting for that. No kidding. Yes, it's sobering. We have more poor people by numbers and percentage than any other state. And that's what we have to keep focusing on. So that upward trend to get over 12 and it's just continuing over 12% and climbing to 13 now. Now is really where we want to go. And that's where public agencies now can have the biggest impact. Starting with state agencies on direct notification. And that's this next set of bullet points. I just want to sort of really highlight. State agencies last year voluntarily notified their customers. The Department of Health Care Services has over 8 million households in mediCal. The Department of Social Services has CalFresh, and they went to their CalFresh Cal Works recipients that were 2.8 million that generated through our call center more than 17,000 calls. Because if you tell somebody you are eligible, actually more than 80% will be able to. If you get them the button, they'll click and they'll enroll themselves. That's great, we have to count on 20% are going to need help because they don't have the exact documents. They may not have a device or connected to the Internet. You have to do this online right. And there may be a language barrier, so that we have a whole system now, that is, under the auspices of the California Broadband Council to take calls and help as many of those households as possible just on the phone. Because people are busy. They don't want to have to come to an event if they can do it on the phone. There will be lots who do have to still come to an event. And that is where our coordination integration of the Broadband Council work with the FCC Grants make a huge amount of difference. So the State grant to the Department of Technology will

be doing a lot of the mobilization of State agencies for direct notification through our call center. That's not in person, so the FCC doesn't pay for that right now CETF is paying for those, if you will, enrollments with our grantee partners, and then those who need to be connected in person will go to be referred to the 50 events that we are being funded to do. And again, I would note, Tech Exchange has obligations for 4 of those as one of our 5, 10 partners. So going to the last slide, I think it's the last slide. It's really important to say, just emphasize again the State agencies being engaged with the direct notification and working with the resources of the CDT grant from the FCC is our leading strategy, and I'm pleased to just announce the Department of Healthcare services says they want to do it again, and the Department of Social Services started direct notification this week. We had 82,000 calls totally last year through the call center with 78 different communication channels. So we can tell the Department of Health Care, Health Care Services. What was the impact of your work or anybody else, and, as I said, we'll do 50 ACP Enrollment events that we are trying now to get scheduled in the remaining part of this fiscal year, so that we continue that upward momentum, and again for California our fair share of the Federal dollars, and provide that support to all low income households who need it for the State to achieve digital equity. I love to see the signs that say digital equity is a 21st first century civil right, our report in 2015, used that for the first time. But, boy, is it true and truer today than ever. Thank you.

Thank you, Ms. McPeak. Any comments or questions from any committee members? We'll do in room first. So, Commissioner Houck, and then we'll go to Ms. Smith right after.

Thank you. I just wanted to echo what a tremendous amount of work this is and the numbers are very telling. On the success that that you've had and I think we're looking forward to seeing how our pilot program that we recently adopted that allows the stacking for both lifeline and ACP. How that will help increase and support the efforts to ensure that everyone's connected. So, thank you for all of the work that that you're doing on this area.

Thank you, Commissioner. Ms. Smith.

Yeah. Thanks for everybody who's been working on getting increased enrollment for the ACP. I think it's really important to demonstrate the demand for that program. And I wanted to get a sense of whether members of the Board or individual like if there's any kind of coordination across the Administration, or between different agencies and different groups who are part of the Council, are working on communicating to Congress and to the Federal Administration that we you know, the money's supposed to run out in April. My understanding is

that the White House may be shortly submitting a request for a reauthorization of the ACP with new funding. I just want to see if they if there was any kind of framework that have been set up to try to urge our members in Congress to provide additional funding for that program.

The short answer is, Yes. Thank you. Thank you, Sarah for asking that question. We have actually been working in a National Coalition National Urban League and Pew Charitable Trust. There are lots of others. But that's one of the channels that we have been working through to have a bipartisan coalition in Congress. I think this is the time, as you note, or an expression of our legislature to do that same thing. A good part of why California is such a good voice in this is because we have of the diversity of our rural and urban. So, while there are rural and urban states, and every urban state has rural parts of it, but we need, we can speak from the counties who are rural, the counties who are urban about the need and what difference it makes. For example, in Kern County which is the home of a former Speaker of the House they're at 67% enrollment. You know, this is one of those good news cases where we can get bipartisan support, and then I'll defer to my colleagues who actually are in the administration here about the communications I know that you're doing. I'll end with saying the FCC is so delighted to get California's data from all of these enrolments because it turns out most States don't have the data that California has. And so the Commissioners are using directly our data sets from all these enrollments as part of the evidence for reauthorization. And I want to put a plugin for reform. They make it really hard for us to enroll people. It could be done so much easier. So let's not re, you know, forget that that not only reauthorize, but reform part of helping the Federal Government on ACP.

Thank you, Ms. McPeak. Mr. Adams, I know you're overseeing some of the stuff that we're doing, either. Do you have any comments that you want to make?

Just a congratulations and a thanks to CETF for their leadership, and being the champion for Broadband Adoption and ACP on the Broadband Council, thanks all them other members and the partners, many of whom are in the room here, who have led to the great success of the program. I think I would reiterate that the throughout the digital equity and BEAD planning process that we've done this year, that the ecosystem you know, individuals and entities from across the State have indicated that the ACP is a incredibly valuable if in imperfect tool for adoption, and that there's at least throughout the statewide ecosystem, an appetite to see that extended, or to have a successor program and come about. There's also a number of, you know, other recommendations that folks have made about improving the enrollment process etc. And a lot of that will be summarize, then, noted in the upcoming Digital Equity Plan.

Thank you. And Commissioner Houck.

Just that I sit on the Telecommunications Committee for the National Association for Regulatory Utility Commissioners at NARUC and we've been coordinating with commissioners across the country on awareness and need for the ACP program. And then, Rob, I don't know if not to put you on the spot, but I don't know if you had any other information in response to anything that CPUC at the staff level are looking at for expansion and continuation of the ACP.

Yeah, so certainly. You know the ACP I think what's great about it is that it can be used for any provider that wants to offer that program. We, through a decision earlier this year, implemented a pilot allowing ACP to be combined with California Lifeline. And so with that pilot, we are allowing the California Lifeline subsidy to be added on top of the ACP subsidy, and that, of course, is included with the California Federal lifeline subsidy, so it's a significant amount of money. And so the reason we're doing a pilot is we are requiring a certain minimum speed and minimum data allowance for that program. So to me, that's sort of where I'd like to see things going in the future in terms of having sort of minimum standards available to customers who are getting this program. They should be able to expect a certain minimum level of service as well.

Thank you.

Any other questions or comments from any council members? Not online and I see none in the room. So we are going to go to the next agenda item, which is regarding the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. Basically, IIJA know we don't like acronyms, but it is an update from both Deputy Director Adams, who will talk about the Digital Equity Program and then he'll transition to Robert Osborn, the Director of California Public Utilities Commission in the Communications Division provide update on what's going on with the BEAD program. So, Mr. Adams, if you would kick us off.

Thank you, Chair Bailey Crimmins, and, as we said before, Broadband for All includes a number of different programs and initiatives. And part of what we've done over the last year is take the guidance from the Broadband Action Plan to try to bring back as much Federal dollars as possible to support Broadband for All is, we reported at numerous meetings, The Digital Equity Act and the BEAD program represent prime opportunities for that. So I'm going to give a brief update on the status of the Digital Equity Planning process or actually the plan that you know, we expect to post for public comment sometime, you know, in the coming weeks, there was a result of the massive engagement with Public Utilities Commission, members of the Council, and obviously members of the ecosystem, many of whom I see here today, so next slide, please. One thing we

wanted to update you folks on is that the NTIA evolved their approach to the Digital Equity Planning process and created some procedural steps that were not included in the previous timeline, and as a result they had encouraged states to apply for no cost extensions to accommodate for these procedural steps. So California, CDT on behalf of California, 51 other States and territories applied for the no cost extension which will extend to a certain amount the timeline for completion and delivery of the Digital Equity Plan to the NTIA. One thing we want to note about that extension is that by in addition to increasing the time for the plan that CDT, and the State of California will extend the public comment period on the Digital Equity Plan to 45 days which was important. I know Director Bailey Crimmins and folks within the Administration wanted to give all of our stakeholders and partners an opportunity to comment on the plan that reflects the work that we've all done together. Next slide, please. Just real quick, want to give a reminder, an update of what folks should be looking for when the plan is posted. This graphic here visualizes on the left-hand side, the key things that the NTA is going to want to see in the States, Digital Equity Plan. So a section on vision goals and objectives a section on measurable objectives that the NTIA is given States a goal to really work towards. A section on process and engagement on stakeholder and asset inventory. a needs assessment, an analysis of what we've learned about barriers for covered populations, through the engagement process and then a section on implementation strategies and key activities. And so that's what the plan is going to contain for folks who are going to be looking at it and providing public comment. A reminder that we wanted to have for folks is that the graphic here, the items in the orange section on the right are what are the potential uses of capacity grant dollars that we will get as a state to implement the plan. So different BEAD has a certain bucket of funding and Digital Equity Act has capacity grants that will come that are separate of BEAD and even competitive grants. Next slide, please. Something to remind folks here is that we tried to develop a cross cutting process that incorporates many opportunities for residents and partners and stakeholders to contribute. So the foundation of the Digital Equity Plan is really leveraging and the qualitative and quantitative data and really specific measurable objectives that were informed by the process. And so that process, just as a reminder, included and sort of in all of government sleep planning group that took the Broadband Council Member entities and expanded it to 22, the 6 outcome area working groups that we conducted, 4 meetings each for 24 meetings with a number of subject matter experts, the digital equity surveys for both residents and organizations, the regional and local planning workshops and the statewide public engagement, and all of that, as we've said before, gave us you know, some significant information. You know essentially over 50,000 engagements

and touch points with residents from California. Next slide, please. A reminder here, the Statewide Digital Equity survey or the telephone survey we did in partnership with CETF and with USC Annenberg, the largest of its kind in the State random digit dialing. That really tried to go further and over sample rural populations that are often not counted for and worked with the Department of Rehabilitation to expand that list to include disabled folks so we could get more granular data. Next slide, please. This is yeah, let's just skip to the online survey. We developed an online survey to and mobile phone friendly [survey] as a compliment to the phone survey. In an attempt to really get more granular and get more information from the covered populations, self-identified members of covered populations themselves. So when we last reported to you in July, the survey was still open. We had about 43,413 responses, about 40,000 valid responses. Now we come to you when we close the survey we got a little more responses in the total reach. The valid responses. You'll see that the numbers gone down. But that's been after a rigorous you know, sort of a data review and cleaning and verification what we've received. But that's a tremendous amount. The visual on the right-hand side just is an example of how much care we took to make this be an accessible survey translated into 14 different languages. Next slide, please. Just this is a visual of the response we got thanks to support from the ecosystem here. Aging individuals, California AARP was an amazing partner. You know, rural households. RCRC and their folks, just so much response back. Next slide, please. The digital equity ecosystem mapping tool was developed because we need to hear from residents, but also wanted to hear from organizations that are actually doing the work of digital equity and digital inclusion, or plan to. So in building out our asset inventory, this tool enabled us to get information for more than 460 organizations. I'm not going to read all the spreads, but it was anchor institutions, government and public organizations and private sector and NGOs. The map on the right shows a spread of where we heard from entities that are going to factor into the Digital Equity Plan. Next slide, please. We wanted to share with folks that the implementation strategy and key activities that you'll see will fall along these 7 themes. These are not limited. These are just for the sake of space on this slide, and to have folks understand that these are the themes that we heard back from the regional workshops and the working groups that folks thought would be the strategies and activities that could help foster digital equity. Next slide, please. So, a little update on the public comment process itself. When we post the draft Digital Equity Plan, we will post it on the Broadband for All portal. We've developed an online form where individuals and entities will be able to comment directly on sections. The Department of Technology will acknowledge receipt of those public comments. We will consider all public comments, and

revise the plan as appropriate, and then as a summary of the process, we will include a catalog of the integration of all input in our responses into our final plan that we delivered to the NTIA. Next slide, please. This here is an adjusted timeline here of the next steps that you can expect. So public comment period in the fourth quarter, integration of public comments into the Digital Equity Plan kind of spilling over into the first quarter of next year the NTIA curing process, the final Digital Equity Plan, and then knowing that so many folks are placing their own regional and local plans, wanted to say that probably expect the capacity grant notice of funding opportunity come out in the second quarter of and competitive grants, and Q3 of 2024. So that, I believe is my update, and I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Thank you, Mr. Adams.

I want to ask any council members. If you have any questions before we go to Mr. Osborn to talk about his updates. I would like to also acknowledge Senator Bradford. He is online. He has been a champion for digital equity and has been working closely with all of us and obviously works closely through his Chief of Staff. And so I just want to acknowledge him, Senator, if you have any comments or questions, I know you're not listed as a panel member, but our team members are watching online, if you have any questions, comments, we want to make sure you have that opportunity. You could just raise your hand in that feature, and we make sure that you have that opportunity. Then the team will let me know if they hear from you. If not, we know in spirit you are constantly champing for all California, and making sure that we are accountable to the mission of the goals of Broadband for All. Any councilmember questions before we go for Mr. Adams, before we go to the next item.

I would also, I just want to make the comment, Mr. Adams. Thank you very much. I know when we talk about an extension of a timeline. I know the answer, but I'd like to ask it of you anyways. Are there any other states that you're aware of that's doing more than a 30-day public comment period?

I don't know I can't, but I don't believe so. I think the folks are being pretty, I'm following the notice of funding opportunities to require States to do a 30-day public comment period.

But California, as always above and beyond decided to do 45 days to make sure there's a lot time to

Yes, or well-intended leadership.

Alright. thank you very much. We are going to go shift to Mr. Osborn and talk about BEAD.

Thank you, Chair. My name is Robert Osborn, Director of the Communications Division at the Public Utilities Commission. So this slide, I apologize, is a little complicated, but it shows the timeline for the multiyear implementation process for BEAD. First off, I just want to thank the Department of Technology, and CETF for making the 21 engagements over the summer so successful. I think it was a really great experience to meet so many people across the State. The feedback that we received from these 21 public engagements are helping us to develop the required initial proposal that complies with the Federal rules and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration requirements, which is the administrator of the BEAD program. So, we will continue to coordinate with Department of Technology in planning outreach activities and aligning the Digital Equity Planning with BEAD as CDT is the designated entity for the State Digital Equity Plan. So, we see over here on the timeline at the very bottom, August, we have the 5 Year Action Plan. So we accepted opening comments until August 7th in reply comments until August 11th on the 5-Year Action Plan and the plan and all comments were submitted to the NTIA at the end of August. Then you see the if we switch up to the top August through December, we're in the process of developing the initial proposal, which is the first major milestone. I guess the second, which will include the rules for the BEAD challenge process and the sub grantee selection process and as well as other requirements for program administration. So, for this, we intend to seek input on the initial proposal from a wide set of stakeholders as well as the broader public via written comments a technical workshop which I'll talk about in a moment, public hearings and a listening session. We will also release a draft of the initial proposal for public comment before it is submitted to the NTIA for approval. The deadline is at the end of December for the initial proposal. And that means we have a pretty short timeframe by CPUC norms to get input on the many different program elements from interested entities. Also, want to highlight that, as I mentioned earlier, upcoming activities in October and November this year. So, the PUC will be holding a public technical workshop for parties in the proceeding, actually, tomorrow at the Energy Commission building and there will be a virtual participation option. So, it's a hybrid meeting. So, you don't have to be there in person. That will start, I believe, at 9:30. There will also be 2 virtual public participation hearings that will be held on November 8th. Again, those are virtual, so you don't have to be in in person. And those will be in the morning and sorry the afternoon and evening. So 2 PM and 6 PM. And, by the way, these are, this information is also we, I believe we have on our website. A staff proposal will be issued to inform the State's initial proposal under BEAD, and there'll be public comment on that proposal. And as Commissioner Houck mentioned, we're also planning a subsequent meeting on November 28th in Los

Angeles. So written comments will be accepted from stakeholders and the public throughout the process. In early 2024 we see in the timeline. Here we will, we hope, we anticipate approval of the initial proposal, which will do a number of things. First, it will trigger the first 20% of the BEAD allocation. Second, it will enable us to begin the challenge process. And then, after the challenge process concludes, we'll begin selecting sub grantees for a competitive process described in the initial proposal. All of this gets wrapped up into the final proposal, which is due 365 days after the initial proposal is approved. The final proposal will be available for public comment before submission to the NTIA, and once the NTIA approves the final proposal, the CPUC will receive the balance. The 80% of the funds from the Federal Government and make for the formal awards to the proposed grantees. The CPUC is gearing up for administration of this large and complex program. We're recruiting program staff and working on contracting to develop the systems and processes to support the challenge process, the grant application creation and submittal as well as post award grant administration. Next slide, please. So this slide is really just a summary of what's being addressed in the proceeding. As I did not mention, the California was allocated 1.86 billion for last mile Broadband access for the BEAD program. The rulemaking numbers listed here. And really, what the rulemaking is accomplishing is establishing program rules. Conducting the initial process for challenging the eligibility map, running the grant application process, and then the final proposal. All of these things, unlike any other broadband program that we have is subject to the NTIA for review and approval. And you know, this is a program to deploy service. It's for any uncertain location with speeds less than 25/3 and the goal is to fund reliable technology. But then, at a certain point which technically is called the extremely high cost threshold. At that point, any other technology may be considered. So there's links on these slides to connect to get more information and to sign up for our constant contact to get updates. And that concludes my presentation. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Osborn. Are there any questions from council members? I see Ms. McPeak.

Madam Chair, you actually asked a question to Deputy Director Adams about was any other State doing a 45-day review? Your answer was, you weren't aware of any. I think what I really wanted to say, and I think it's great to follow Rob on this, is that I'm not aware of any other state period doing the extensive outreach and engagement and involvement of so many different stakeholders and so different and so many different ways in order to try to get input. It is still hard. I mean, California is a really big state, right? It took, you know, we reached out to 60,000 people to have 2,192 people in those 20 workshops. It's just an

extensive effort that was made. What is also extraordinary, I'm going to, I know this to be true is that it was all of you who actually were there, it was State officials who made the effort. And so, I just want to commend you. I know that I'm looking at three gentlemen who briefed Lori. Deputy Secretary Pepper, I don't mean to be so informal, but I'm older than all of you, so I can be. And the, you briefed the Caltrans and ISP stakeholders, I think September 7th. And what you said Director Osborn was, you have to braid together all of these resources, all these sources of money that have all the different requirements and conditions. And so, anyway, I wanted to commend this, all of you, because California has done a better job in my understanding of what's gone on, and 50 different, 51 actually operations on BEAD and Digital Equity Plans. And it was the State officials themselves who were on site. And then here's my plug. With all of these different strands of dollars from the Federal Government, the California Advanced Services Fund is our is our flexible dollars to get the most out of the Federal funds. So, keep that in mind.

Thank you, Ms. McPeak. Commissioner Houck.

Yeah. And I echo Ms. McPeak's statements and also just want to highlight a couple of things. You know, the PUC doesn't always, we typically don't act very fast. We have very short time frames for the BEAD proposal, and I just want to reiterate that. And our process isn't necessarily the same as a typical State agency for rulemaking. So, it's important that the public understand the opportunities for public input. And as Director Osborn indicated, we're going to have a workshop tomorrow here in Sacramento. It's hybrid. So, as you said, just want to highlight, you can join virtually. And also, for those that don't know what our public participation hearings are. On November 8th, at 2 PM and 6 PM, we will hold virtual hearings to just take public comments. So this is for the public to be able to hear directly from you. There will be court reporters taking transcripts it. Those comments become part of the record through the transcript. So again, that's virtual. So you don't need to be in a specific place, but just want to make sure everyone understands what those public participation hearings are. And we do have several opportunities to get input and we want to hear it and just want to make sure everyone understands how to participate. And again, the links on Director Osborn's slides on that second slide, the underlined areas have links for more information and how to subscribe to updates so that information is embedded in in the slides for those that are interested.

Thank you, Commissioner Houck. I know, there's quite a few individuals in the room, and they have a hard copy. So, it probably just says that underline you're like, what link? So, if you do want to know more information, we'll make sure that. Obviously, the electronic copy. So that you don't haved to guess and do

Google searches to figure out how to get that information? So, any other questions or comments from any?

I want to take this opportunity because there were the 20 in person workshops, and then and Rob use the term 21, because then, where there was a 4th consultation with tribes that was that was virtual. But the roadshow wouldn't have been complete without Deputy Secretary Drown driving the Digital Equity Express up and down California. And some of you even saw it in Oakland. So even going to that great length. The Department of General services allowed at one of their almost surplus vans, and it was almost surplus, I got to tell you, to be to be driven, to try to spread the word.

Thank you, Ms. McPeak.

Are there any other questions or comments from members of the Council online or in the room? I see none. The last agenda, thank you both Mr. Osborn and Mr. Adams for the agenda. The last item is the staff recommendation on the 2024 Broadband Council focus and meeting schedule. So please note that the adoption of the work plan will require a Council vote, so, deputy? Oh, I'm sorry was not on my agenda, so we'll go ahead and shift to legislative update.

Thank you, Chair Bailey Crimmins said so real quickly, I know that we had been asked to do this last year wanted to give a quick legislative update. So, in 2023 the Legislature focus its agenda on clarifying, modifying, or amending the new broadband funding programs and mechanisms established through Senate Bill 156. The bills that passed this year in the broadband space were primarily related to data collection and mapping, permit streamlining and digital equity, 4 key bills in this space. If you go to the next slide, please. They were passed this year and are summarized on this slide. The first of which I'm going to cover the next three Director Osborne is because they focus, you know, primarily with CPUC, but AB 414 by Assembly Member Reyes established the Digital Equity Bill of Rights, and it states that it's a principle of the State to ensure digital equity for all residents of the State. Their residents should or shall have access to broadband that meets specific requirements, and that broadband Internet subscribers benefit from equal access to broadband as those terms are defined. Mr. Osborn.

Thank you. And so, switching over to mapping AB 286, which was from Assembly Member Wood addresses broadband infrastructure mapping. It requires the CPUC to update its statewide interactive broadband map with new features to receive address level, public feedback data, verified speed tests and other information to validate the accuracy of the self-reported data before accepting it as evidence in the CPUC proceeding and to display both the self-

reported and Internet Service Provider reported data availability at the address level. And one additional thing is pricing information, which is, I think, very important. Moving on AB 965 Carillo addresses local government permitting app and permit applications. So it specifies broadband batch permitting requirements for local agencies, two or more broadband permit applications for substantially similar broadband project sites must be grouped together under a single permit. Local agencies can set reasonable time limits and reasonable limits on the number of projects included in a batch permit and charge fees, and then finally SB 387 Dodd, which is, addresses sale or lease broadband development, and authorizes the department of General services to enter into a lease with Internet service providers at an amount less than fair market. And that's important, because up until now they've been required to enter leases at fair market value, so less than fair market in support of broadband infrastructure deployment to connect unserved or underserved locations.

Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Adams. Thank you, Mr. Osborne. Are there any Council member questions or comments about the legislative update?

Alright, Ms. McPeak.

Madam Chair I do want to just acknowledge that we're grateful to the Legislature for passing AB 414 and the Governor signing it into law. The Digital Equity Bill of Rights started right here, it was introduced by the Commission. it was Commissioner, I think, was Guzman Aceves who actually introduced it. She had 6 rights. I said, no, no, no, we need 10. But anyway, it there's all of you in the audience who supported it. Thank you. It actually preserves and sustains the legacy of this current administration and the Legislature going into the future. But it is a success for the California Broadband Council.

Thank you. Commissioner Houck.

Yeah. Just want to echo those comments. And thank Commissioner, former Commissioner Guzman Aceves for all of her work and for the community support on the Digital Equity Bill of Rights. It's definitely an important [inaudible].

Thank you. Are there any individual panelists or council members sorry that are interested in making any comments or questions online? Alright, I see none at this time. So now we'll get to the last agenda item, which is a staff recommendation on the 2024 council focus and meeting schedule. And again, please just note that this adoption will require a vote from the council members.

Mr. Adams. Thank you, Director Bailey Crimmins. So can we go to the next slide, please? Staff would like to submit the recommendation to the California Broadband council that our focused for next year, and the meeting scheduled be as follows, that we continue the annual action plan review and revision process, which would begin, you know, after this vote, and we would report out on at the first meeting of next year that we continue to report out on the progress of the related Broadband for All initiatives given their you know, dependency and interconnectedness that we shift from focusing on digital equity and BEAD planning to providing updates on digital equity and BEAD implementation, and that we continue with quarterly meetings on the fourth Wednesday of the month. And the proposed dates are January 24th, April 24th, July 24th, and October 23rd.

Thank you, Mr. Adams, do I have a motion to support the recommendation?

So moved.

Alright, moved, moved by Deputy Director Green, and second in by Ms. McPeak. Do we need to take a roll call of each of the members? Ms. Nguyen?

We can definitely do that.

Okay, thank you.

Yes.

Director Liana Bailey Crimmins?

Aye.

Senator Bradford, if you are online, please raise your hand.

We can also circle back.

Ms. Sarah Smith?

Aye.

Thank you.

Commissioner Houck?

Aye.

Thank you.

Deputy Director Green?

Aye

Doctor Kristina Mattis?

Mr. Martone?

Aye.

Deputy Secretary Lori Pepper?

Aye.

Ms. McPeak?

Aye.

Deputy Secretary Flores?

Aye.

Mr. Josh Chisom?

Aye.

Deputy Secretary Loretta Miranda?

Aye.

Thank you.

Mr. Mitchell Mattos

Aye.

Thank you.

Madam Chair. We have, The motion passes with 11 passes.

Thank you. Ms. Nguyen we are now going to move on to public comment. And so, Ms. Nguyen, if you please, provide, basically the guidelines to begin that process.

Of course, happy to do so. To ensure everyone who wishes to make a public comment has the opportunity to do so, we respectfully request that you stay within two minutes per person. The order of public comment will be in person public comments, zoom hand raised or phone comments, and emailed comment submitted prior to the meeting. For in person comment, please form a line at the podium. For Zoom, please use your raise hand feature in the lower toolbar. For phone, please press *9 to raise your hand. Email comments received prior to the meeting will be read at the end. Additionally, I would like to make a note. Madam Chair, in addition to the public comment, we have a letter that was submitted this morning. We will distribute the letter after the final speaker.

Thank you. And the team had just notified me that Senator Bradford did raise his hand and then lowered it. Is there any way we can? I want to make sure I give him an opportunity. Is there any way to pin him and make allow him to make a comment? Mr. Bradford, you can raise your hand and we'll go ahead and put you back on there. I apologize. We did not see that Mr. Bradford, you can now speak.

I'm sorry I've had problems all day on this, so I've missed all the last few minutes. So, continue, and I'll come back.

Okay, thank you very much. Alright. We'll give him an opportunity at the end of public comment, then. So, we'll go ahead and get started.

Good morning. My name is Paulina Chavez, and I represent EveryoneOn. We are a national digital inclusion, nonprofit, unlocking opportunity by connecting people in under resourced communities across the country to affordable Internet and devices, and by providing digital skills training. I'm here from Los Angeles to stand with equity advocates in the room and urging the CBC to use its leadership to urgently pursue fixes to the deeply flawed maps driving the State's broadband investment decisions. Myriad of organizations and advocates have presented copious evidence of the flaws. Extremely wealthy enclaves of mansions are marked on the maps as unserved and even priority unserved, even as incumbent ISPs publicly advertised, gigabyte service at affordable service, affordable prices to those [same] enclaves. High poverty neighborhoods are marked as served even in as attempts to get service from the ISPs that allegedly serve them from service or no service available messages or offers of service that are slow and expensive. Apartment buildings, housing dozen of families are marked as single unit dwellings, or marked to serve with only a leasing office can get service. Housing, farm worker communities and other rural communities are under accounted resulting in an understatement of unserved households. Recent LA times editorial, said the agencies acknowledge the maps of problems, but perhaps proceeded, anyway. It's irresponsible to base billion dollars once in a generation and funding decisions on bad data. It's not only irresponsible, but the reliance of bad data threatens the effectiveness of the billions of dollars in once in a generation Broadband infrastructure investments, and may perpetuate the same and divestment practices of industry, stakeholders that have bypassed the high poverty, urban, rural, and tribal communities for decades. This approach could double down on the digital divide, not solve it. It is not too late to change course. We urge the committee to act with urgency and decisiveness, to address these demonstratively inaccurate maps, to ensure the State's Broadband for All goals can be met. Thank you.

Good morning, Council members. My name is Mia Hatfield. I am one of the cochairs of the Open News Commission, in which we represent the diverse needs and rights of Oakland's 50,000 plus youth. I am also a student at Oakland Tech High School that serves 2,000 Oakland students. I'm here to talk to you about the impact of Broadband for All and the effects of it on my community. My entire educational success depends on the Internet, and I could not do my homework every night, if I did not have access to the Internet. I should not have an advantage over my peers, just because my family has the ability to pay for quality Internet. Oakland's youth are historically neglected and deserve to be put first in your priorities, the State's proposal to cut Oakland's Middle Mile network by 56% is unacceptable and perpetuates divestment from historically black and brown neighborhood. Stand up for open youth and invest in us.

My name is Thamar Pena. I work for United Parents and Students, which is a nonprofit seeking to empower communities to become powerful self advocates for quality schools. I flew here from my home in Compton to speak to you today. I was a teacher, when the pandemic started and I saw and experienced firsthand the devastating impacts of the digital divide. The communities I work with include some of the least connected highest poverty most vulnerable in the State. We have been systematically overlooked and left behind for decades. I just sat here and heard that Compton disappeared from the map due to a GIS error, but that is too common an occurrence for me to easily accept. It was an error, we know spectrum is already starting to install fiber optic in communities like Marina del Rey, La Vista, and Culver City, while Compton, and communities like Watts and Lynwood, continued to be red lined. Multiple studies, encompassing tens of thousands of data points have documented that companies like AT&T and Charter Spectrum routinely advertise higher prices for service in low-income communities of color than in neighboring wealthy communities. We also know that private ISPs, such as at AT&T and Charter Spectrum, will enter into agreements with landlords such that tenants are only allowed to subscribe to that internet service. One community, one family I work with was paying AT&T's bills for months, even though AT&T did not provide a service which allowed them access to the Internet. This family is now disconnected. Given that other ISPs are not allowed to serve this building, due to the agreement the landlord has with the ISP. We are encouraged by and fully supportive of, efforts by our community leaders to close those gaps with a focus on equitable access to broadband, that is fast reliable and affordable and building service with, by and for the communities to serve. So, I'm here to urge you as the leaders of the agencies responsible for deploying billions of public

broadband dollars and the leaders advising decision makers, policy makers and bureaucratic officials doing the day-to-day work to ensure we don't waste those dollars by doubling down on the mistakes of the past. Please don't shovel our public dollars to private bottom lines. Prioritize community support, local leaders, work and ensure our chronically underserved communities, finally, get the solutions they deserve.

Good morning counsel. My name is Jorge Rivera, and I represent the Healing and Justice Center. Our organization serves low-income people of color communities in the San Gabriel Valley within Los Angeles County. Covid highlighted the need for digital equity when our communities were unable to connect with us and receive vital resources that were intended to support and protect them during the pandemic. Almost a year ago, our digital equity LA Coalition shone a light on a deep-seated ailment within our county and State, the glaring disparity in broadband offerings between our low and high income communities, an issue that strikes at the very heart of community wellness and justice. Look no further than Crenshaw, a predominantly black and brown neighborhood wherein one census tracked, 30% of residents grapple with poverty. Here Charter Spectrum demands $50 per month for their standard Internet tier. Contrast that with Mar Vista, a primarily white neighborhood with just 1% poverty where the same service is advertised at a mere $20. This isn't an anomaly. It's an intentional barrier to community healing and growth. The divide is not just anecdotal. UC Santa Barbara's research and the comprehensive Cal advocates analysis, mirror these findings and alarmingly, and alarmingly that extra $30 in Crenshaw seems to match the affordable connectivity program subsidy. Cal Advocates crystallize this in their stark observation. Quote: If broadband providers raise prices to match subsidies, i.e. monetize subsidies, the ultimate result is that the broadband providers will benefit from the subsidies, whereas customers will not. Our digital divide isn't solely an infrastructure issue. It's about whether we choose to use this infrastructure to nourish or neglect our most vulnerable. We implore this council as we forge ahead with California's Broadband for All initiative, may we embrace a holistic, equitable and nurturing vision. We must not tread the same worn path. Let's heal, unite, and prosper together. Thank you.

Hello! Good morning. My name is Ulysses Zatarain. I'm the Executive Director for Tech Exchange. We've been rooted in Oakland for three decades, working to bridge digital divide by ensuring that all families have access to a computer, affordable Internet and the tech necessary to enhance their quality of life. I want to first commend the CBC, the California Department of Technology, CETF and CPUC for the ongoing work to build digital equity in our state. As it was

mentioned. You know, Tech Exchange, we have been a partner of this work, with all these agencies for several years now, and we're very appreciative of our partnership with you all and very excited about the work to continue to build digital equity with this hopeful, transformative investments moving forward. But I'm here today because as a CBO rooted in Oakland, we were disappointed to learn that the State suddenly reversed its decision to build Middle-Mile infrastructure along SR 185 International Boulevard. The street which we call home. This was done based on data that inexplicably shows more concentrated need in Pleasanton than in East Oakland. Unfortunately, the State's broadband map erases the need of our communities and the reality that upwards of 30% of our communities are without high-speed internet access. The pandemic certainly illustrated how social inequities not only persist in our society. but are exacerbated when there is a lack of public investment in our communities. These divestments negatively impact educational outcomes, negatively impact health care, access and public safety, among other indicators. Essentially, these divestments perpetuate generational cycles of poverty and could perpetuate them further for decades to come if something isn't done right now. Access is indeed the foundation upon which digital inclusion and equity is built and it's not too late for the State to reaffirm its commitment to our shared values of equity and community. We're asking that you please reinstate Middle-Mile investment in California's least connected communities and work with us. The folks who know these communities well to develop a map that captures the lived experience of our students, families, and our community members. The pandemic also illustrated our humanity. It illustrated our ability to come together for the greater good, and to really improve the quality of life of our communities, not only for them to survive, but to thrive. We stand in solidarity with Oakland Divided, Digital Equity LA, CADE, and other advocates across the State, urging the CDT to take the lead on putting Equity back into Broadband work for all. Thank you very much.

Hello, Council. My name is Katie Liang and I'm a student at Oakland High School, and I serve as a District 5 Youth Commissioner on the Oakland Youth Commission. District 5 Oakland is my home district that covers Fruitvale, which includes International Boulevard, which is one of the areas that is impacted by your proposed cuts. I am here before you today, instead of being at school to speak on how prominent this issue is. If you are here cutting Internet access from low-income neighborhoods, you're impacting the youth who live in these areas. I'm a youth that lives on International Boulevard, every day after school and after extracurriculars, I come home to complete homework on my laptop. There have been numerous times where I've turned in homework late due to Internet problems. My community is already extremely underserved and elected leaders

still find a way to neglect and fail my community. Governor Newsom, promise a multimillion Broadband investment on my street, and where 30% of families don't have access. There was a 12.8 million dollar promise to Oakland. But only a 5.7 million investment happened. That is a 7.1 million dollar cut that could have been spent on making a middle line board ban on International Boulevard, which would have helped families living in Fruitvale and deep East Oakland to Internet access. How do low-income communities lose investments for Internet access? But wealthier communities, such as Pleasanton and Beverly Hills face no divestment. This is why I am here to urge you to reconsider your decisions about how and where to spend nearly 4 billion dollars in public dollars from CDT's Middle Mile Broadband Initiative and examine your sources properly, because what you're seeing are fake maps. I urge you to bring this process back out to the open with active outreach to communities, because your communities aren't the ones that are impacted. Communities of color like mine are the ones that will suffer the consequences. Once again, thank you.

Okay. My name is Amber Johnson. I'm a high school student on the Oakland Youth Commission and on all City Council within Oakland Youth Commission. Specifically, I'm our District 6 Representative, which is a big area of East Oakland, an area that's your broadband maps are negatively impacting by the, by the way. You may not see these areas as important or not worth your time or funds, but these areas hold families, futures, everyday people who deserve the right to something as simple as Internet. We're in a digital age, so this is no longer a luxury, but is a necessity to the growth of families, and without it will worsen the disparities amongst Oakland neighborhoods. I started high school in 2020, online. I had no access to consistent Internet which affected my grades, which affected my mental health, which affected my relationships that still impact me to this day. This issue has longevity, and it's deeper than you think. What about those who need access to learn about immigration issues or wellness and mental health care. You're neglecting the needs of those who need you most. We're not asking for handouts to Oakland. We're asking for the State to commit to creating a state broadband that isn't discriminatory. We want for you to work in partnership with people who actually know what's best for our community so that you can create positive change where it's truly needed. If you really care about the well-being of Oakland, a city that continues to contribute so much to California culture. Then you would make the right decision. Invest in those, and who invest in the people who's really disconnected. Thank you.

Yeah. Great. We'll wait for the clock. Good afternoon. My name is Lily Beth Gangus. I'm the Chief Tech Community Officer of the Caper Foundation, where we focus all of our work on at the intersection of racial justice and technology,

because we believe that technology is not only a possibility for income mobility, which will addresses all of the systemic disparities that we face, especially as we look at specific neighborhoods that have been redlined and we're still disconnected. Specifically for me, this is very personal, because I'm an immigrant, so I know what it's like to just be hearing from some of the youth that you just heard when you have to go to your library to be able to have access to Internet. When I immigrated here over 30 years ago, when I went to school over 20 years ago I still had to be able to go to the library. But thanks to my mom working double jobs, she got us the first Internet, she got as my first computer that helped me then become a software engineer graduating from South Central, and USC. And yet, 20 years later, we're still facing the same issues where now I work in Oakland, and there are still 36,000 families completely disconnected. So, we're talking about these 8 billion dollars that are multigenerational. We have a multi-generational coalition right now. And if these maps are not going to be able to be fixed, we're going to be doing a huge disjustice, and that it's going to be a civil rights issue. Because if you saw in the pandemic who had access to education, who had access to healthcare, who had access to jobs. So then, that way they can eat, and who had still had to work in the farms, who have had to risk their lives, and now we're going to misuse these dollars of investment. That is public dollars. I urge you. I urge you to make sure that you correct those maps as Mr. Monroe mentioned earlier, when there was a mis the error that they found in content, but it was fixed, great. Maybe we can finally fix the fact that Oakland was 56% slashed in their investment, and South LA was 70% slashed, although you call it 17% statewide impact, but those are having disproportionate impact in the percentages of the communities. And not only that, but can you look me in the eye and tell me that some of the richest areas in California, like Pleasanton and Beverly Hills didn't get a divestment. In fact, Beverly Hills got a new line that was added. Tell me, please, each of you look in the eye, if that's inaccurate? Is that fair? I don't think that is fair, and we all know it, and you have the power to make sure you fix those maps as we just saw earlier, because they can. So, I ask you, and I urge you to please, reinvest in the communities that need it the most, and those are the communities that are disconnected that are that have been redlined from many histories. This is our time to reset it. So, I urge you to please do that. And if it doesn't work for Oakland, doesn't work for California right? And if it doesn't work for LA is it going to work for California? And I'm a product of both of those cities. So I please urge you to make the right decision. Look at the data, and there's still time, because time is of the urgency. Thank you.

 Good morning. My name is Kathy Meza. I'm flew today from my home in southeast Los Angeles to ask you to consider the impact or Broadband for All

decisions have on my family and my neighbors. Today I will be providing my testimony in a Spanish to represent the families in my community who are entirely excluded from these meetings. [Kathy continues comment in Spanish]

Good morning, I am so proud of the parents and students that are here today. And if you didn't understand what she said, all you need to know is that she is a mom who's paying $75 for 500 megabits of Internet, and she lives in the low-income community. My name is Elmer Roldan. I'm the Executive Director of Communities in Schools of Los Angeles. We're a nonprofit organization that works to keep students connected and on track to graduate in Los Angeles Unified School District. We work with over 12,000 students across 5 neighborhoods, all of which are in LA unified, as I mentioned, and these are some of the least connected neighborhoods in the entire State, including South Central Los Angeles, Watts, the Pico-Union and Boyle Heights, communities of Los Angeles. Our family families often express feeling neglected by the national profit driven companies delivering Internet in Los Angeles. Some areas don't have options for fast speed internet or affordable Internet for that matter. And we have the data that supports that. This is why we, as a coalition, support a locally driven solution for Internet. On Monday the CPUC released summaries for the 483 Federal Funding Account grant applications totaling 4.6 billion dollars, more than double the funds available. We were appalled to find that 5 of the largest Internet service providers in the State make up close to 80% of the dollars that were applied for. The scale of public dollars that these companies are asking for is staggering. AT&T, for example, is asking for 1.43 billion dollars of the 2 billion total that is available from public dollars. These same companies report record profits in its most recent SEC filing AT&T reported a billion dollars in profit on their consumer broadband services. That's 1 billion dollars in a single quarter, July through September of this year. That's up nearly 10% from the same period last year, at a time when everyday Americans are struggling to pay for their basic necessities and things like Internet. So, at the same time as these massive companies extract extraordinary profits and tighten their monopolies, they are asking for massive amounts of public subsidies. We fear that that this is coming at the expense of community driven solutions that can and will provide more affordable, responsive, sustainable service to people who need it the most like the students and parents that spoke to you here today. This situation underscores the urgent need to prioritize community interest in California's Broadband for All programs from the Middle Mile to the Federal funding account, and beyond. There comes a time when making huge profits on the backs of public interest needs to be corrected, and the time is now. So, we ask you to move forward with this, with to work with us towards equity, maximizing public good with public dollars. We need courage and an ironclad

commitment that to at least do as much partnership with our students, parents, and community as we do with industry, and ideally much more. Thank you so much.

Good morning state leaders. My name is Ray Lopez-Chang hailing from Los Angeles and serving as Director of Advocacy and planning at GPSN. We are an organization focused on improving LA public education through our group of over 70 LA based organizations. And we are also a member and Co Convenor of the Digital Equity LA Coalition. I'd like to begin by sharing some personal information that is relevant to today's conversation. I am a child of Central American Chinese immigrants and refugees. My family fled to this country because their relationship with access to survival was interrupted by unresponsive and violent government systems. I've had to join my family to unlearn and relearn what access means in this country and while my family was provided political asylum, today, several decades later, our communities are being met with a different phase to access, which is the exclusion from a modern mechanism to receive health care, educate children, participate in democracy, get a job, or, as my family would call it, survival. We appreciate that the CPUC and other relevant State agencies have made an effort to solicit input and engage communities on various proceedings. But the reason GPSN and others are here today is because to interact with this body, you need access to high quality Internet or several hundred dollars to book a flight to Sacramento, which means you likely don't hear from the underserved communities we represent. So, when you hear from us, behind our voices is the weight of thousands of redlined Californians who have been shown broadband access is a luxury, or alternatively put that quality broadband is more important in areas who live in luxury. The CPUC post online, its 5 core values, accountability, excellence, integrity, open communication, and stewardship, all of which you've subscribed to upholding. And at times we've experienced optimism when these values have been exercised, and we thank you for that. But more recently given inconsistent communication and developments with the Middle-Mile broadband initiative, these values have been ignored and advocates and organizers have experience with government systems who ignore our communities. But we also have experience with government bodies who listen. And while the State says it wants to hear from community, especially given the CPUC's EEE grant, in recent months trust has deteriorated significantly, and our collective goal to serve Californians equitably no longer feels like a shared goal. And so, like any healthy relationship, we are communicating what we know to be our reality based on the actions presented to us. Those include selective transparency and not so open communication. And so I'd like to emphasize that we have a tremendous volume of work together in the coming

months and years and our intention to amplify voices you don't hear from remain strong, but we hope your drive for community rooted solutions is stronger and it should not go unsaid that you all hold roles that require immense courage and immense commitment to public service and we are holding on to the aspiration that decision makers and staff of this body and all relevant State agencies will reflect on your individual capacity to influence conversations, to repair harm, and live by the values you've set forth to this public. And if so, we have faith that as your actions evolve to recharacterize your intentions, that we will reciprocate our gratitude. Thank you.

Good morning. My name is Carla Lopez Valdes and I am part of Barros Los Ninos, a nonprofit organization that has been serving the LA Area for over 40 years. Our work is grounded in a holistic model, where throughout all our sites and schools we provide mental health services, basic need and support services, not only for children but also for their families. We know, firsthand, how pricing impacts Internet access to the communities we serve. Throughout our work in this coalition we have learned that in recent public meetings broadband industry associations have asserted that the digital divide is a function of affordability, not access. We partly agree, it's both. We want to ensure this Council has awareness that part of what's driving the affordability issue is the pricing practices of those same broadband companies. Further, as we wait to find out the feature of the current Federal subsidy programs, such as ACP, it's critical that we all understand the ways industry, pricing practices undermine the effectiveness of these subsidy programs and divert public dollars to pad already extractive corporate profits. A recent CPUC Public advocates report found that California has some of the highest monthly recurring prices in the nation for fixed broadband service plans. At a time of a critical need for broadband service, as you've seen and you heard these price increases are detrimental to increase adoption. We ignore the role industry has played in getting us to this point or we have the persistent digital divide with communities of color, low-income communities, immigrant communities in urban, suburban and rural areas. All are disconnected in some way, shape or form. The time is now to chart a new path. One that demands more accountability of private partners hoping for public subsidies, and one that creates more room for public solutions. Thank you so much.

Good morning, members of the California Broadband Council. I want to thank you for the work that you have put into serving in this council and for gracefully creating space for us to be here today, and I also want to thank the staff for such a warm welcome. It was, you know, very surprising, this is my first time in this meeting, so I really appreciate the welcome. My name is Claudia Oliveira. I am

President of the downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council, and also CEO of the DTLA Chamber of Commerce, but today I am speaking in my ILSR capacity. And like many of us here, I flew in today just to amplify the voices of my community. And when you see a sizable group and a heterogeneous number of organizations and individuals like this come together to push for decision makers to take bold actions and to craft a robust and comprehensive plan to make sure underserved communities are prioritized. We are all coming here with the same core values based on transparency and equity and anti-discrimination. I have seen first-hand, the struggle brick and mortar owner operate a minority small businesses experience, the inability for self-starters to have a competitive edge and the workforce to acquire mid-career training and apply for the jobs we are all fighting to arduously to create because they don't have accessibility to reliable Internet connection, especially in the impoverished parts of Los Angeles County, which you've all heard. You know the numbers, I don't need to, you know, re tell you again. ILSR has been at the forefront of data analysis, infrastructure, education and efforts to compile credible data and achievable solutions. All of you are in a position here where your decisions and recommendations could potentially make a significant impact and uplifting historically marginalized communities. I am asking that you do this from an economic empowerment lens, and an anti discriminatory lens and make a commitment to put disadvantaged communities first. At this time California is presented with an incredible opportunity to address our digital access disparity. This is an opportunity to do the right thing, and it's an opportunity to do some good and thank you for your time.

Morning councilmembers. My name is Patrick Messac, and I'm here with the City of Oakland. This doesn't need to be complicated. By definition, when the Government withholds generational investments from high poverty predominantly Black and Brown communities based on a map it knows to be flawed and has been proven to be discriminatory, this is called redlining, plain and simple. No one is defending what's happening here because it's clear for all to see. Google California interactive broadband map, the map shows you where the State will direct this historic public infrastructure investment. Each red dot a priority location, places the State alleges without access to reliable broadband Internet. Let's start in a high poverty community like East Oakland, where many of our students who spoke from today are from. In East Oakland upwards of 30% of our households do not have Internet. So let's look at the state map. What do we see? A sparse peppering of red dots devoid of the reality experienced by so many in this room today. This under counting erases the voices of our community. We know this to be true. We've been in the cabling closets of public housing in East Oakland, a rat's nest of copper cabling

decades old, reportedly serving hundreds of our families. We've collected thousands of additional data points demonstrating the preponderance of unserved locations precisely where the State entirely removed. SR185 and entirely defunded I-580. Now zoom into a wealthy community. What are we going to see? The State inextricably adding dense clusters of demonstrably served locations in some of the highest income most connected communities in California. With this data, it's no surprise that Livermore and Pleasanton segments were preserved when Oaklands was cut. It doesn't take confidential subscriber data to know that this is fiction. Google these addresses on Comcasts publicly available address lookup tool and they'll tell you that a current account exists at this address. This is not conjecture. This is not some hypothetical exercise. This is leading to the divestment and redlining of our community. This visual shows investment based on Median household income based on the FFA math. By far the vast majority of investments are going to household incomes above one $150,000 per year. We all know better now we must do better. Thank you.

Hello, everyone. My name is Georgia Savage, and I'm here representing Oakland Undivided as our Deputy Director. Organizations from across California are here today, as you can see, to express our deep concern for the decisions made thus far, but we are also here to offer solutions. There is still 2 billion public dollars remaining which has the power to completely revitalize broadband infrastructure in historically redlined communities. There is still time to do the right thing. Make no mistake, the decisions made today will impact Californians for decades to come. If equity is a driving principle, we must ask ourselves which communities should receive funding first? The answer is clear. We must prioritize the most disconnected, highest poverty communities first. Low-income communities get the oldest, most poorly maintained infrastructure, if any at all. We saw from Patrick's visuals that we've been in these MDUs, we've been in these public housing units, and we've seen copper wiring from the seventies. That is not acceptable. That is not connection. As seen as well in those Hubble IQ maps and just speaking with our community members, we see that these communities pay higher rates for slower, less reliable speeds, and many can't even access the Internet at all. They've been bypassed for investment by private companies and have been for decades. So common sense and basic decency says, we must start here. These communities cannot afford to wait another year while tens of thousands lacked access to this 21st first century necessity. Justice delayed is justice denied.

Thank you. Appreciate that, thank you. Hi, everybody, my name is Diego Rodriguez, and as our relatives are mentioning, I'm one of the members of the nonprofit grassroots organization Homies Empowerment of East Oakland. So a

lot of points were made, and I appreciate all the facts that were being shared. I just wanted to share that, you know, when we think about bridging that digital divide right? Ancestral wisdom will teach us that it takes a village, but in deep East Oakland, at Homies Empowerment, we say it takes a [Varyo]. In my short few years, I've witnessed community chance for education, for cultural awareness, and for the right to be seen and heard. Today, the streets of East Oakland echo with a new yet intimately familiar plea. I think the demand is for equity in the form of connectivity. Right? The broadband divide might sound foreign compared to struggles of our past, but it is intrinsically about access, equity, and ensuring communities stand on equal footing with the rest of the nation. We've been pushed, you know, the essence of our struggle continues. You know we've been pushed to the back of the line time and again. Yet Oakland always has found its way back into the light. The broadband divide may seem trivial to some, but it is as isolating as any physical barrier stifling our potential. The divide underscores that while battlers evolve the undertones of systemic inequity persist, why is it that vibrant areas like the deep of East Oakland, teeming with culture and history, remained overlooked. Push to the margins. We're discussing families, children, and elders who formed the city's backbone, persisting against all the odds. So I'll say again, our demand extends beyond a mere broadband connection. It's about dignity, inclusivity, and the rest erasing decades of neglect. The pandemic didn't create these inequities to simply further expose them. Our decision, It's all so our decision makers and everyone that's listening and the deep ware taxpayers, too. So we demand what's right. The children of Oakland deserve the same opportunities as those in the wealthier parts of our nation. Our elders shouldn't be isolated, due to digital inaccessibility, and every local business harbors dreams as vivid and valid as any other. Those with power to enact change, consider the cost of keeping an entire community disconnected in this digital age. The spirit of East Oakland is definitely one of unyielding resilience in in, in a belief of a better tomorrow. So let our call not just be for connectivity, but demand for equity and justice. It's time to answer that call. So thank you for the time.

Good morning, members of the Council. My name is Lindsey Skolnik and I am representing the California Alliance for Digital Equity. I am here to uplift the Alliance's deep concerns in regards to the opaque decision-making process that resulted in the release of CDT and CPUC's updated network maps. These maps were published without any explanation or paired data which is shocking when you consider the unprecedented level of investment in CDT's nearly 4 billion Middle Mile, 4 billion dollar Middle Mile Broadband initiative and the CPUC's 2 billion dollar Federal funding account last mile program. Over the last few months our partners have requested more details about the MMBI map

changes from various State stakeholders, but have received very little information. After many back and forth conversations, we were hoping to at least learn what segments of the MMBI map have been contracted to build or lease up until last week there was no publicly available information about the funding allocations for contracts rather than hearing from State stakeholders, we learned from a CalMatters article that the State had already spent 1.8 billion on various lease, purchase, and joint build agreements, and of that 1.2 billion went to leases and existing infrastructure in areas like Beverly Hills and West LA. This is astounding, not only due to the continued lack of transparency, but also because this approach doubles down on infrastructure in some of the State's most connected communities. Should the state continue to rely upon these maps, we worry a once in a generation, broadband infrastructure investment could become a wasted opportunity to finally close the digital divide. We urge you to bring to prioritize, reprioritize, bringing broadband infrastructure to California's least connected communities. Thank you.

Hi, my name is Brandy Huffman. And I'm the people that you're trying to reach. I live in housing. I have children at home. I struggle. I pay more in Wifi than I do in rent. I have 2 different companies I have to go buy, because I'm only getting 10% out of what I'm supposed to be getting of unlimited. So I have Comcast, and I have Metro, my son, who is attends, OMI. Oakland military in Oakland. I am from Oakland. We had a big issue. He takes a this is top class. I'm sorry I went blank, but he takes top classes there, and he gets all A's. We had an incident for a week we didn't have Wifi due to Comcast's Fault. He went down to a B, and he's looking at me. and I'm looking at him. I'm doing the best. I'm calling customer service. I'm calling everybody to the point I'm in tears, cause I can't help my son do the best he can at school. He taken college courses and high school. I have 10 kids. I have 2 boys left. The older ones are like, Mom, give him this. We have this. They give me money to try to help him cause they see their little brothers doing harder than they did and I'm just asking that y'all reach out and help we need affordable working Wi-Fi. I need, I have an autistic child. I need zoom calls. I have other children that I've adopted who have zoom calls in therapists. I have cancer. I needed a reasonable accommodation. It got denied because my Wi-Fi did not work didn't get the paperwork in from the doctors. So now I have to start all over from the process to do anything. So please, please. please. Affordable and working in those areas, please. Please.

I just want to thank everyone for their public comments. We do have a lot to continue to get through. And I would just ask if you could just please be respectful of the two minutes timeframe, so that we're able to get through

everyone and everyone's able to, you know, share their public comment and thoughts with us. So, thank you so much.

Good afternoon, everyone, and thank you, sister, for your vulnerability, and for being brave and courageous to give that message. My name is Maria Villamil. I'm here on behalf of California Native Old Project, a member of Della Coalition. Our organization represents native Americans and indigenous communities in LA County and across the State of California. We are a trusted messenger for native people to achieve equity and justice by increasing civic participation and community organizing across the State. I'm here to talk about the impact that our native American Californians are experiencing because of poor access and equity and broadband Internet across the state. Native nations have not experienced digital redlining, they have experienced digital indifference, a situation bound to persist unless greater investments are made to bridge the digital divide in tribal communities and urban and rural communities across the state. Tribal nations have faced systemic oppression for centuries. Broadband for us is not just about Internet access, but about a pathway to obtaining an education, improving health and acquiring economic resources necessary to thrive just like the many different communities that are being represented here. Our communities have the lowest amount of access to broadband Internet of any California demographic 4% lower than the statewide average. I'm not here to compare or to judge. But we do. Want to make sure that we're represented as well. State funding is key because we have 109 tribes in California, and even though the tribes may be overseen by Federal government, our urban and rural communities have are making the great a request for you to prioritize the interest in Broadband for All programs from the Middle Mile broadband program to Federal funding account and beyond tribal representation is important when making decisions in all the areas of infrastructure. So we demand that you continue to include us in tribal consultation and across all meetings that you're having. I asked that you prioritize equity and public interest for alignment and collaboration across all tribes and people of color in the county of Los Angeles and across the State of California, including Oakland, our communities need respect and all broadband access. Now.

Good morning. My name is Elizabeth Aguilar. I'm with communities in schools of Los Angeles, and I flew out here today to implore you to consider the impact of Broadband and all of the decisions on the community that I work in. At communities in schools of Los Angeles, we provide social, emotional learning to students across 5 neighborhoods in Los Angeles, in the Los Angeles Los Angeles Unified school district. All which are predominantly black and brown students. I am here to represent, The student, proudly represent the students and the

parents guardians that we work with and to share the frustrations that we come across constantly while we provide virtual mentorship programs to reach more students across Los Angeles, the reality is that a lot of these students do not have adequate connection to be able to participate in these virtual programs. I'd like to remind you that a lot of our students are applying, all of our seniors are applying to the UC system at the time, and they are being paired with some of our mentors, and unfortunately they are not being adequately connected to them. This frustrates them right? They're not only applying for school, they're applying for scholarships, they're applying for jobs, they're applying for things that they really need right healthcare and things that they're unable to do so. And the frustrations not only extends to them and their families. It extends to all of us as well, because we're trying our best to support them. That's why I'm here today to please help us. Thank you.

Good morning. My name is Paola Schenkelberg, with communities and schools of LA and I also flew here from LA to be able to help you consider the impact of Broadband for All decisions for the communities that we support. Like Liz said, we provide support at 15 LAUSD title one schools. We place caring adults in schools to support them academically, emotionally, and socially, during the pandemic. When the school shut down, we quickly realized that we needed to expand our efforts, and in we launched our External Affairs Department, focusing on advocacy as part of our advocacy efforts, we launch our student and parent advocacy committees, where we meet virtually with those students and parents. Many of our committee members are not able to have the full capacity to meet during those meetings, because it's virtually, and they don't have the bandwidth to be able to fully participate most of the time. They have to have their videos turned off so that they're able to hear the meetings so that they can hear the information. Many of the families we support do live in South LA and East LA and are just trying to make ends meet. Being able to spend $70-$100 dollars on Internet is not possible for them. Reliable, affordable, and accessible Internet continues to be an issue our families have to deal with on a daily basis, and it affects most facets of their everyday lives. I urge members of this committee to do right by our families, so that I may go back home and share with them that the State is listening, and they are taking care of their needs and their consideration. Thank you.

Good morning. My name is Sophia Sandoval, and I also represent communities and schools of Los Angeles. We our mission is to surround students with a community of support, to empower them, to stay in school and achieve in life. So I am here to elevate concern about postponing funding for broadband investments within our most underserved and least connected communities. The

decisions made in recent months, in particular, shifting communications on the part of CDT around Middle Mile plans, and what is currently funded have left our communities anxious about being marginalized. Even further in the digital divide. We are grateful for to the Governor for his commitment to seek additional funding for the Middle Mile to cover gaps. But we are concerned that spending in our highest needs communities has been pushed last in line behind spending in wealthy communities, as some have already mentioned, Beverly Hills that don't need as much support as our communities that we serve. We are left to fight for and hope for future new dollars, which are not guaranteed, and especially as our state budget is more stress and prioritizing this new allocation in the budget may come at the cost of resources available for other essential government assistance programs for the people in our neighborhoods, we urge the Governor to issue a clear statement outlining his plan for future Middle Mile funding, and urge both the Governor and this committee to ensure that the already allocated 4 billion dollars go first to the highest need areas not last, as we fear s presently the path the MMBI is on the time to act is now, and we respectfully ask the CBC to use your leadership to make sure that happens. Thank you.

Hi, good afternoon. My name is Leslie. I grew up in LA and currently live in the East Bay. I am representing Oakland Undivided. And I will be speaking on the student perspective growing up in a low-income community. I know firsthand about the struggles of not having Internet access and how stressful it can be on a student. Internet access is not a luxury, but a necessity, especially in today's digital age. I see that at my school everyday UC Berkeley, where people from different backgrounds are there. So you have low income and then higher income students? Each year it becomes increasingly more competitive to receive an admission to a UC. It is already difficult enough to compete with higher income students that have access to several programs that low-income students such as myself can only dream of. So Coucil. I ask you this, why add an additional barrier for students that come from a similar background as me? Thank you.

Morning. I am Daoud Stevenson. I am with the Oakland Undivided with my mom. I am a college student at Merritt College, and I am a supporter of special needs students. My opinion on this is that we can do better and we and we can by supporting our community more. We are a work in progress, but I believe our mission is not done yet. So I think that if we combine ourselves as to one large team, we can do better and be better. And hopefully that mission is accomplished. In my conclusion something needs to be done. Period. I'm done. Thank you.

Hello my name is Gaby Andrada and I lead a cross sector, digital inclusion initiative in the Bay Area with Everyone On. We are a national nonprofit that seeks to unlock social and economic opportunity by connecting those in under resourced communities to affordable Internet access computers and providing digital skills trainings. In my collaborative efforts throughout the bay one fact has become abundantly clear. The digital divide is not distributed evenly. Entire communities have been bypassed and overlooked for decades, and it is not because our historically red line communities don't want Internet, in fact, I still haven't come across a community member that didn't want Internet. So why are so many disconnected? The truth is that getting Internet in East Oakland or the Tenderloin isn't like it is in getting the Internet in Noe Valley or Pleasanton. Residents in marginalized communities are asked to pay more for less and because they rely on outdated and poorly maintained technology, they rarely get the Internet performance that they are paying for. Devices are important, digital literacy is important but affordable, reliable high-speed Internet is the foundation of digital equity. The State has an opportunity to prioritize people over profits by investing in the communities we all know this funding is intended to serve in solidarity with Oakland Undivided, Digital Equity LA, CADE and advocates across the State. We urge the CDB To take the lead on putting Equity back into Broadband for All work. Thank you.

Hello, and good afternoon, Council. My name is Alessandro Negrete, and I'm here representing Alliance for a Better Community in Los Angeles we serve the Latino community on a number of issues, including health, civic engagement, economic prosperity, and education, among others. We work and have families in Southeast, LA and East LA, and these are communities that are heavily impacted by inadequate access to survive. Because that's what is what we're calling digital, the digital lifeline digital equity is a digital lifeline. These communities are low income, new American predominantly monolingual Latino communities. The South East LA community is represented by the Gateway City Council of Governments has 5.4 of the State's population but 14.3 of the State's disadvantaged communities on the census tracts. Looking at just the top 5% of the lowest income census trucks in the State digital equity lay represents 26% of them. On November 1st when we heard that our communities were in the initial Middle Mile broadband infrastructure projects, we were thrilled. Furthermore, furthermore, affirmed when they were included in the analysis and data in March 2022, our local leaders got to work immediately over the last years to leverage Middle Mile to bridge, equitable equitable access for our communities. Finally. but I'm here today because our communities, my community are dismayed and frankly disappointed and furious. Yet again, the State has disinvested from our communities by moving Project 15 to a future unfunded

phase of the work. Our communities are consistently left unheard and left with a feeling of disregard. We must address the situation to ensure fair and equitable access to the resources that we're initially promised, and that there is a transparent process with accountability moving forward. With my last 30 seconds, I will address you as a community member that lives in these communities, and I ask you not to look at me. But think about the young comrades that are missing school today. A mother who's monolingual speaking is speaking to your hearts and thinking about her family and what it would and I asked you to think about what does access mean to you. And what would it look like for you not to have the bare necessities you need in a digital era? Thank you.

Okay, good afternoon. I am not a public speaker, but I will be a public speaker today. My name is Ashley Cruz. I am a first-generation undergrad student at UC Berkeley majoring in political science. It is my final year, and it has been a struggle to get to where I am. I am the pandemic class of 2020 . So the Internet was just that's where we realized that it was a necessity for my family and growing up low income, it was very hard to get a computer or a laptop and I am a I am a middle child, so I have an older brother, younger and a younger child, and a younger brother, so we all had to share one laptop and one computer. And that was just hard because I had my college applications. I had everything to do, and my older brother also had to do his own things. And it just was very difficult to realize that Internet access was just not there was not reliable. And for and having this proposal, it's just going to change everyone activities. And I am from LA, so I know the struggles. And I thought that coming to Berkeley would have been in such an experience of Oh, I'm living behind my low-income community. But it was not that case, because, like just like in East Oakland, there are struggles that have yet to be resolved. Therefore we need to change because we are the future. Thank you.

Good afternoon. My name is Samantha Nunez, and I lead the Oakland Unified School District Student Information Technology Internship program. Our mission is to foster digital equity for the 34,000 students in our district and to empower the next generation, silicon valley innovators and change makers. The barriers to digital access faced by our community or systemic on the back to school tech check completed by every OUSD family. Over 20% of our families reported lacking access to home Internet that's fast and reliable enough to support their child's education. Think about it. Nearly one in families lack access to the Internet which somebody previously said, it's not a luxury, it's a necessity. Our interns help connect families with hotspots. But, however, these are, this is a temporary solution. It's funded by a Covid error program that's set to expire next

school year. Even with Hotspots, the connection strength degrades rapidly for our families, living in our highest poverty communities. even for our families paying for wireline broadband connections from big Internet companies be test reveals thousands of households receiving speeds that are only a fraction of what they're paying and well below the megabit per second download speed threshold to be considered served by the State. Structural problems require structural solutions, and I implore the State to direct this funding into the communities that need it the most, the communities this generational investment is intended to serve. Our students and families are counting on you.

I think it's still morning. But I'm going to say, good afternoon. Happy October and some spaces we call it Rocktober and I'm here because we already know the issue, so I don't want to speak to that. What I would like to speak to is the benefit that I saw my son, who is autistic gain and leaps and bounds through the Internet. He researches math games. He looks up, answers, he's a master researcher. And when I was growing up, my dad told me, go qualify your answers, which meant I had to go to an encyclopedia or library. He can qualify his answers right at home on his phone. And it's remarkable how empowering it is for this young man who will be sitting in one of these spots or higher and so I just want to thank you guys for even wanting to do this. But we cannot divest in Oakland and Watts and Inglewood, its outrageous, because artificial intelligence is starting to be introduced. We already behind the 8 ball. We gotta catch our babies, our youth up, our, they're scholars. We gotta catch them up so they can even compete 10 years from now. And it's getting very nervous. you know what's going on in our state, and how we are not and how we're working toward doing something better. And I'm leave y'all with this. This was my favorite part from Hamilton. You don't want to be bird that kills off progress. We want to be the one that stands there supports because somebody's going to tell your story and we want them to tell it with pride. Not you don't want to bring shame on your family members. Y'all gone. And your family. Yeah, that was, auntie did that. We don't want that we want to take individual accountability independent of this collective. And that's how we made it so far in America. That's how, why we're still growing. It's still an experiment. Now it's time to, this is a historic time. We don't want to sleep on this. We just we don't want to sleep on it. And I also want to say, when our communities are empowered, you won't see crime. You won't see as much littering because they are, they're invested in being an American. Most of us don't feel like America. I feel like an American. Thanks to my mayor, but I'm just saying. So let some what I'm going to leave this with this. Put more heart in your love and more love in your heart, and that's all cause we want. Y'all here, you guys, are the brains, and we want to work with you and

thank you for allowing us to speak on what concerns us. Thank you so very much.

Hi, thank you for sticking around to hear all of us today. I hope that what you see in all these people about half of us, I think, got on a plane before this morning to be here in front of you. I hope that what you take from that is not feeling attacked, but feeling a sense of how desperate we are to be heard and how we're not feeling like we're being heard anywhere. That's why we get on planes at 7 in the morning to be here, give up our days of work and family, and all of our other obligations to be here. So I hope you'll hear what we're saying in that spirit. I want to talk specifically to the ways that this continued lack of transparency eroads trust continues to add to the feelings that you heard today and really undermines any partnership that we might try to build and I want to give some specific examples. And I'm going to pick on the MMBI today, because that's the most current. But this is true of many, many pieces of work here. CDT talks in generalities about the changes to the MMBI maps and how we got here. But the specifics are really what matters. And I want to talk about some specifics. So there have been ongoing changes to the map that are made with no consultation, no advance notice, no conversation prior with the affected communities, or the last mile projects that are going to be affected by those. The most recent changes were made last Friday, right before the Middle Mile advisory committee meeting, and the only way we know this, is that there is a date at the bottom of a web page, attached to that date is no indication of what those changes were, where they were made, anything else. We don't know that, CDT keeps it secret. CDT also today and Friday, and to count matters, but not in individual conversations, talks about the lease contracts that are already signed for 85% of the network, but keeps all information about which segments are covered by those signed lease contracts, or any of the terms of those lease contracts-that's a secret. We want to thank Ms. Smith for asking the question about what segments depend on additional funding, and we've also been asking that question repeatedly got the same vague answer she got today. What segments will remain unbuilt without new funding is a secret. The last time publicly available data or analysis regarding what's driving the decision making around the Middle Mile were published was March of 2022. The information behind the Middle Mile maps are a secret, from the public localities and advocates. And we would love to cheer on the new RFI2 and support outreach to get more responses to that, except it's hard to invest in that. When the results from the last round are, say it with me secret. So we're ready and willing to be partners in this endeavor, but partnership implies real opportunity to work together which requires a shared information set and a lot fewer secrets. Keeping secret, what should be public information is not a path to

partnership. It's not a path to successful information implementation of this project. So we urge CDT and this Council to move with urgency to transparency and actual partnership. We ask the Council to support these efforts. Thank you.

I'm the last one. You are welcome. Good afternoon, Tracy Rhine with the rural county representative of California. We represent 40 rural counties and although I am the one person here representing a rural entity, I think the issues I'm going to talk about today equally apply to urban areas as it does rural areas because this is a process issue. I am also going to focus on the MMBI because I think it is foundational to Last Mile efforts that our communities are undertaking specifically local governments and municipalities that are trying to get our communities some Last Mile reliable broadband. The Middle Mile is needed for all of our last mile projects, and, as you know, as we've been talking about, there's been a large investment by the State, six billion dollars plus more coming from the Federal Government. The changes in the Middle Mile map. I think it's kind of misunderstood on how that actually is affecting us now. The State invested 50 million dollars in Local Agency Technical Assistance money. That money for our areas was invested in design of networks. Those networks were designed based on the Middle Mile map. The Middle Mile map has changed at least three times. Again, as the previous speaker noted we don't know how many times it has changed. And so through the Federal Funding Account process, we had to change what we were applying for and kick out projects to areas based on those changes of what we knew right then. The Middle Mile map has changed at least again twice since that point. We have areas such as Green, Greenfield, which is in Monterey County, which is a large, largely farm worker area that has no service. That area we may not be able to serve because of changes done through the Middle Mile map process. And respectfully, I do have to disagree with how those changes are being described here today. Mr. Monroe said that they were simply what was the word? Simply making parallel routes in Greenfield one of the areas that we really want to serve. The Middle Mile was changed and moved miles over across a river. Moving something across a river now we have permitting problems. We have [SQL] problems, and it may make that project inviable. Another area, Imperial County, the Middle Mile used to run north to south. It now runs east to west. We had projects based on the Middle Mile going north to south. Those projects, again in Imperial County largely disadvantaged communities may no longer be viable. So, I think that we need to be really clear how these changes are affecting our overall investment into broadband and the digital divide. And we are asking that there is more transparency in the process. I think, as Commissioner Houck stated earlier, the PUC has a very robust process, for they have comment periods, they have document requirements, and we have none

of that with the Middle Mile Initiative, and we would like to see more of that, and engagement with the community before changes are made, not after. Thank you.

Permission to proceed with Zoom comments.

Yes, please.

Alright. I am seeing, and I apologize if I mispronounce your name. I'm seeing Wina del Campo. Please go off mute to speak. Alright. We'll circle back if needed. Michael Terlep from SANDAG.

Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Michael Terlep. I'm a Digital Equity Planner with SANDAG, the Metropolitan Planning Agency for the San Diego region. I wanted to start by commending this Council, the CDT and CETF's leadership for providing the resources our State needs to continue helping people sign up for the ACP. Here in San Diego we're actively tackling our residents challenges with connecting to affordable and reliable broadband and collaboration with many local partners. In our digital equity strategy and action plan, we've identified ways to bridge the digital divide. One of our strategies involves connecting underserved communities to affordable technology and Internet resources. Helping enroll people in the ACP program does exactly that. While SANDAG did not receive one of the FCC ACP grants, we continued to convene stakeholders in our supporting region wide efforts in this front. Key stakeholders in our region, including the County of San Diego, the San Diego, San Diego Housing Commission, as well as local jurisdictions, like the city of Chula Vista and the City of San Diego, are working hard to sign qualifying households up for the ACP, and can attest that there is a significant demand for this program. Earlier this month we organized a highly successful enrollment event through a mass text campaign which resulted in more than 150 attendees and thousands of independent enrollments. To share an anecdote at this event, staff assisted 75-year-old mother living on food stamps, who had previously been paying $138 for her monthly Internet bill, and were able to reduce her bill to just $20, allowing her to use these funds for other crucial living expenses. As you can see, receiving assistance from trusting trusted messengers is vital for the community members who would not otherwise be able to navigate this complicated process. As cost of living rises across the country, the ACP is an even more indispensable tool for keeping disadvantaged communities connected to the opportunity they need to thrive. We want to continue to do as many successful events like this into the future so we please continue so please continue to advise and advocate for Federal funding for this program and for funding that will allow community partners to continue assisting the ACP

enrollments. Our region is unified and ready to continue our efforts getting people enrolled in this program who desperately need it. Thank you.

Alright. Next public commenter, Chennie Sudana.

Hi! Can you hear me?

Yes, we can.

Hi, I'm Chennie. I'm a business consultant and a member of the DTLA Chamber. I want to make a comment on small businesses, and how this is really important to budding entrepreneurs. My very first job was at Google and the advertising department so I have a lot of firsthand experience about how the Internet can influence a small business. I've also volunteered at SCORE, which is an arm of the SBA and we would often counsel people from low income areas that were starting a business. There were many businesses that needed, you know, a desktop to create a website or flyer or even, you know, small brick and mortars that needed a point of sale system or an order taking system that requires the Internet. So all of this is important to students. It's important to the community, but it's especially important to small businesses to thrive. So not having access to proper Internet handicaps of small business and their potential for success. We are the wealthiest nation in the world and known for our technological innovation so we need these places to have better access to something that can greatly impact the lives of the small, not just the small businesses, but also the micro economies around them.

Ms. Nguyen, is it possible to shift the Zoom so that we're actually seeing the individuals that are speaking, if possible? No, there's no opportunity. Okay, I just want to make sure.

Next, we have Samia Zuber.

Samia Zuber. Hi, good afternoon, Council. Thank you for your time and opportunity to speak today. My name is Samia Zuber and I serve as the Director of Programs and Partnerships for Hack the Hood. We're an Oakland based nonprofit that provides free tech education programs focused on exploring foundational technical skills through a justice lens. Let's talk about justice. Funding for SB 156 the govern, the Governor's historic Broadband for All Bill came from the American Rescue Plan Act and handing down the dollars the U.S. Treasury instructed States to advance racial equity by targeting resources to the communities of color, tribal communities and low-income communities disproportionately negatively impacted by the pandemic. In November of 2021, the Governor announced that South Central LA and Oakland to communities ravaged by COVID-19 were selected as initial projects for the Broadband for All

investments. For two years, our communities partnered alongside the State to actualize this commitment and reverse decades of divestment. Then, without any advance notice or discussion, the State defunds 28 million or over half of the planned investment, citing a broadband map that is demonstrably inaccurate and discriminatory, an action antithetical to the intended purpose of this once in a generation investment. This process is not broken. This is playing out exactly how it always has divestment and red line communities. This is the default, unless this council affirms that this time will be different. In solidarity with Oakland Undivided, Digital Equity LA, CADE and advocates across the State, we urge the CBC to take the time and take the lead on putting equity back into Broadband for All work. Thank you for your time.

Thank you. We have Shalvi Bakar. Alright, Senator Steven Bradford.

Good afternoon. Can you hear me?

Yes, we can.

Thank you and I appreciate this opportunity to speak and I just really want to commend all the public commenters who voiced their concerns. I, too, want to just recognize the work that the Department of Technology is doing with the deployment but I think we would all have to agree. It's movement at a much too slow of the pace. I'm also concerned about the complaint that we've heard from Californians all over the State, especially low-income individuals regarding the Middle Mile and the last mile deployment and the maps that continue to ignore or just eliminate those communities. That should be a problem for all of us, and I think it's no accident that Compton was ignored. I represent the city of Compton. I represent the most diverse Senate district in the State. It's not a poor district. We do have pockets where we have low-income people but to continue to generalize black and brown people is all poor, not all black and brown. People are poor, and not all poor people are black and brown, but when we see the neglect it's usually where black and brown people are gathered regardless of their income. And I think the PUC needs to really be more committed in making sure these funds for the last mile get to the projects that are needed the most, and make sure adoption and connectivity happens. And I just don't think it's happening in a real, serious manner. And as we heard from so many speakers here today we have communities that are desperate in need of getting broadband connectivity. We saw it during COVID-19 and it was exacerbated, and it hasn't improved since then. And, as I said, I've seen and heard this move before. I've been in the Legislature now for 14 years. I've chaired Utilities both in the Assembly and now in the Senate, and we've heard from the same individuals. We should be concerned that the same message of

lack of attention is being continued. And I just want to take my hat off to Sunne McPeak, somebody that I know is on the front line on the ground. She worked with me directly in the city of Inglewood when we had connectivity issues almost a decade ago, and making sure that those communities were connected and our libraries with hotspots, but more needs to be done. And just an example in 2012, when I was in the Assembly, I offered a bill that provided 30 million dollars to connect public housing. Not a single public housing facility has been connected in 11 years. I asked if PUC. Where is that money? It's time for the PUC to provide funding to establish that adoption programs to these low-income communities. But you know it's just, it's just not happening so I think today is about accountability. We deserve accountability but more importantly, we deserve the information also to make sure that these dollars are going to the programs that are needed the most. And there's communities that need it the most. So I stand committed to continue working with you. But it's a lot of work being done, but we shouldn't rehash what I've been hearing for the last 10-15 years about lack of connectivity in the same neighborhood, and many of the times, they're not poor neighborhoods, and I just would want to just clarify something earlier. One of your first speakers talked about the Crenshaw neighborhood. I'm going to be a specific. There's no Crenshaw neighborhood. Crenshaw is a boulevard that runs 23 miles through LA County. It borders or intersects some of the most affluent communities in LA County. The only difference is where there is lack of connectivity those areas are predominantly, predominantly black and brown communities again. So, we need to really take a look at the racial bias that exists in providing Internet to our community. So, thank you for this opportunity.

Thank you, Senator Bradford. Your comments are always well received and we appreciate, we agree accountability across all. And we look forward to working with you to make that happen.

Alright. I have 2 public comment that was sent via email prior to the meeting from Andrew Maurer, resident living within CalFire Zone 267. Existing wireline, fiber, or transmission routes are now failing or will fail for the 3rd time, due to severe entanglement with pole vegetation. If any new broadband transmission deployment is done using existing poles, it must mandate seasonal vegetation trimming funded by government agency code enforcement. Current lower pole cabling connects E-911, CodeRed Alerts, premise alarm, safety-of-life telephone service (VoIP and/or copper residence service). And a second comment came from Kevin Horejsi. I would like to make you aware of a problem that is occurring throughout the state and is specifically effecting me. I own a condo built in the early 90's. The condos are 6 row houses with a utility closet on the outside of one

garage. We have original coax and telephone lines. There is a fiber company that has public access in our street and owns a box from a former company in our outside utility closets. The HOA board has been refusing for almost a year and a half to allow the company access and allow me and my neighbors to get fiber. The fiber company is putting up all their money and even offered over $15,000 dollars to allow them to install. It is rather ridiculous that I would have to hire a lawyer which I can't afford just to have access to good quality wiring. I'm sure this is a problem among a lot of Condo units. Not only condos are effected but renters can also be effected by not being able to get access to a service that is at their doorway. There needs to be in place some type of right to access law if a broadband company is willing to pay to bring the service to your residences. I hope you can understand my circumstances and hopefully find a solution legislatively. Thank you for your time.

Thank you. Ms. Nguyen. Is there any other public comment?

I do not see any in person or online and we are complete with email public comments.

Thank you very much. I. Obviously, this is the point where we get an opportunity as council members. If there's any comments that you'd like to make, I want to just thank the public who came here today that traveled, that participated remotely, their engagement. Their voices are very important. You know, as public servants we are here to serve the public, and we take that responsibility to heart. And the way we do that is to continue to improve. Sometimes it's difficult to you know, to hear areas that we need to things. So obviously, we're doing well. But there's obviously always ways too that we can be improving communication transparency, so I look forward to working with the community to do that. With that, I'd like to open it up to my council members, both in the room and online, to see if there's any last statements. This is, remember, the last one for 2023 before we go into 2024. I just want to commend my partners here because there is a lot of hard work that has been going on for over a decade. But obviously there's been a lot of a lot that's happened in 2023. So, I will look. I first one is Deputy Secretary Flores.

Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. First of all, I want to echo your sentiments about the public testimony. I was struck by some of those young folks that got up and testified, and I don't think I would have had the courage at that age to do that. But, given the importance of the subject matter, I think it, they were driven [by sound reasoning] to do so. Also, I wanted to commend you for allowing them to go over their time. I have, as a former chair, many boards and commissions were not as lenient sometimes, but I certainly appreciate the fact that you let

them go way beyond their time limits. So I wanted to ask staff a question, though, if I could, about the State Route 71 in particular. and you know it's a little bit alarming to think that Pleasanton would get money for Middle Mile, whereas the City of Oakland, which is quite impoverished in many areas, would not. So I was wondering if the staff could talk about that, and then maybe we might want to have a presentation on process in the future about how these changes are coming about, and maybe the public isn't brought along in that process. If we need public buy in, we've got to bring them along. We can't just announce either secretly or whatever way. I'm not sure how it was done. But I was wondering if the staff could address that.

Mr. Monroe, do you have a comment to the Deputy Secretary Flores's question?

Yes, in terms of. I'd have to I apologize I have to go back to look at state route 71 but what I what I'll say is I this is really important when we're developing an overall network. And so in there are any given segment of a network. It's, you know, there, there's it's crossing the State. It's going to go through some affluent neighborhoods to get to the disadvantaged communities. That's the way the connection works. And so I think there's concern and so I know that as the public and locals look at some of the you know what what's been the way we've developed it we so sometimes so here's talk about kind of a kind of a wheel structure. But we have in order to have a in order to serve the greatest number of communities, we'll create these large rings, and some of them might go through affluent neighborhoods. We're not. It's not favoring those we go through those neighborhoods because we have to light has to pass through fiber that has to go. And you know and I think of the you know the 405, for example, that goes through a number of disadvantaged communities. But the circle the ring connects through Los Angeles. It does go through Beverly Hills, and then it goes all the way down through a number of disadvantaged communities, down and down the 405 corridor through throughout Los Angeles. So just in terms of where that particular route goes, it goes. It actually goes through a number of those communities. But a network won't work if you just if you only build in those disadvantaged communities. And I think that that's a really key piece that I want everybody to be aware of is that we've created this this structure. Now, when we go on to as we continue to build, we need that to connect to things too, right? And so in a lot of these cases, you'll see where we're constructing segments But if we just construct those segments, they don't connect anything. And so we've created this overall architecture where, when we build segments they have. then there are. They connect to the broader network throughout the that are going to provide that it's going to provide that connectivity throughout the state. So the same applies. For some of the joint

build agreements that we have. The again, the idea is we have to get from where the Internet currently is to disadvantaged communities. And so we have to, you know whether we're following a freeway or we're using existing infrastructure. We're partnering with somebody. We have to be able to get through those. We have to get to those communities. And sometimes the network will pass through more affluent communities. And it's not like those were favored by any means. We're trying to really connect where all of the unserved communities are.

So you would say that going through Pleasanton cost more money since money was allocated from I guess the Oakland area. The Oakland area is sounds like testimony today said that money was defunded from the Oakland area to fund a project going through Pleasanton, which is, by the way, you know, geographically on the other side of the mountain away from Oakland, quite a distance. So I'm just wondering. Is that what you're saying so, or Oakland is just not. It's so not feasible to put more investment in there to this is those or communities. I'm so I wanted to. But follow your logic. So. Yeah, so.

And I'm glad you're asking that question. We did not defund Oakland. We have a 10,000-mile map that continues to go through all of the areas that were originally identified the original routes. So no area has been defunded but when we looked at the you know, the initial phased route we were trying to get within a certain distance that we're not doing that anymore. Right now, we are all of the original routes going through Oakland are still on the map. They're still being, you know. Caltrans hasn't stopped. We're still developing all those. So we wouldn't say that any areas been defunded. As soon as an area is ready to build, we're going to build. And while we're doing that, we're also looking for where is their existing infrastructure where we might be able to get service faster. So, I want to be careful about that and really provide clarity. We haven't defunded any segments that. And so in terms of where we use the you know

It sounds like there was a different route that might have been more feasible instead of using, I think they used it as an example. Was the State Route 71 going through Oakland?

Yeah. So we I mean, we when we chose the routes we use. There's a lot of public input that have gone into, you know, the re originally trying to where? Where do we need to serve? And then we use the highway. Serve the highway system is the as the corridor, right and there wasn't any. The most important part of that aspect was, if Caltrans is going to build it or the State was going to build it, it makes the most sense to build it on State land and use the department that actually has done this work before. But when we. When we looked at other

alternatives, we found other alternatives that were going to get us get us many more miles, and so that in some of those cases. We chose some parallel routes that. But I yeah, and I'd be happy to kind of talk through and look more closely as the routes you're talking about in the maps. But I think that's really important is that as we've looked at these the leases and the joint built that we're talking about they were providing the best. the best connectivity, and the best, the fastest way to provide service to the greatest number of people throughout the State. And then and then, as we build the rest of the network will be, we'll have now a framework and a backbone to connect to.

I'd really like some additional information in particular rural counties. Because as you are awared, food and ag, and that's our purview. And so farming community. The working community is extremely important and needs this access. So as we go forward, I'd like to hear what you folks are doing there. Thank you.

Thank you, Deputy Secretary Flores and I also the other question you had about transparency on the maps. The public should not just see a revision number and then try to have to figure out what changes so we are committed at Department of Technology to provide more transparency and more opportunity. We do have a new communication and stakeholder relations Deputy Director Monica Hernandez, and so she is going to be helping build out that program to make sure that there's more communication. So thank you very much for your comments.

Is there any other? Oh, I see, Deputy Director Green.

I just wanted to go back to the maps real quickly, I mean, is the most current map that we have accurate? And does it solve the problem that was brought up today by the public comments?

So yes, the map that is currently that we currently have is accurate. That is you know that we and. In terms of the comments we've heard. We have. We've posted everywhere where we have a lease that is, those are now layers to our, to our map. So if you go into the map, go into our website, you'll see the full 10,000 mile map and then there are layers to turn on to see where we leasing? Where do we have joint builds? Where are we purchasing? And where are we constructing? And so all of that information is currently there, and up to date. And I think there have, you know, to the point of when information was updated. There, there may have been, you know, small segments here or there where you know we were. We have a GIS team that's always that's going through the map trying to provide some to improve the map all the time, and I think that's where you know I can. I'm sympathetic with the idea that if I don't

know what's what the changes. And I just see there's a date, and I don't know what changed and that's that is a challenge that I think we need to solve for. But the map that is on our website is accurate as of this point, and provides the information in terms of how we're developing each segment of the network.

Thank you.

Thank you, Deputy Director Green. Yes, Ms. McPeak.

I just want to commend you as other members have about allowing all of the testimony, and being the comment that was made by some of the speakers that the staff was very welcoming so that's important.

Thank you, Ms. McPeak. Yes, Commissioner Houck.

Yeah, I just wanted to thank the public for showing up and traveling to be here. A lot of people came from far away. And for the students in particular, especially since this impacts them exponentially given the world we're living in today, and how much the Internet matters. So, I just want to recognize that and just the heartfelt and real issues that were brought to our attention today. So, thank everyone for that. I want to thank you for allowing everyone to be able to be heard. And I want to thank Senator Bradford for his comments and context. And the PUC is working very hard to address these issues and just want to assure him of that as well. And again, we've got a lot of work to do over the next several months and look forward to continuing to engage with all of the communities impacted.

Thank you, Commissioner. Are there any committee or council members that have any comments or questions online? Not online. Well, again, this concludes our last meeting in 2023. Thank you all for your leadership. We can't achieve this without all of your organizations. You're holding us accountable to the goals and the mission of the Broadband Council. And again, the public comment was something that was very important to all of us. I'm glad that we were able to make sure that everyone had the opportunity to speak because only through partnership. But I think, was my comment last time is, it's not what we say is what we're we do that people remember. And I want to just relay that at the end of the day it's, you know, obviously this we talk about what we're going to do in order to address a digital divide the world California is looking at to us to make sure that the actions are in alignment with what we're trying to achieve, which is Broadband for All. So with that, I'd like to conclude today's meeting. Our next one is scheduled for Wednesday, January 24th. Well, we actually have already had CBC approval for the agenda. It will be from 9:30 to 11:30. We look forward to seeing you there and this concludes today's meeting. Thank you very much.

CADE

Name of Event: CA Broadband Council Meeting
Date: Wednesday, October 25, 2023 | **Start/End Time**: 9:30 am -11:30 am
In-Person: 1601 Exposition Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95815

Contacts:
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About California Alliance for Digital Equity (CADE): CADE is a coalition of local and statewide advocates dedicated to advancing all forms of digital equity, from device acquisition to broadband access to digital literacy. We believe every Californian deserves access to fast, reliable, and affordable internet to effectively navigate the digital world. A fast connection without bandwidth or data limitations, coupled with technical support, is a civil right—not a luxury. CADE is currently comprised of ten non-profit and philanthropic partners - including Digital Equity LA and #OaklandUndivided - that work together to advance the alliance's statewide priorities.

Unsolved Problems:

1. **State Reliance on Discriminatory Broadband Map**: The State has decided to rely on a demonstrably inaccurate and discriminatory Broadband Map to drive funding decisions. This reliance on bad data threatens to squander the Governor's once-in-a-generation $8B public infrastructure investment and perpetuate divestment in historically redlined communities. The State Broadband Map systematically overstates need in wealthy communities—many that already enjoy multiple options for affordable high-speed internet— and understates need in low-income communities that are persistently the least connected in the state. This systematic error means wealthy communities are prioritized for state investment at the expense of disadvantaged communities - the same communities that have been deemed uneconomic and bypassed by private broadband investment for decades. Since February, equity advocates, including CADE, have provided the CPUC with evidence of the discriminatory data in the maps and the discriminatory outcomes of relying on that data; the CPUC has made no effort to change the maps and has failed to develop any process to improve the demonstrable inaccuracies.

2. **Disproportionate Middle Mile Broadband Initiative (MMBI) Divestment**: Last month, state regulators abruptly decided to veer away from the original intention of Governor Newsom and the Broadband for ALL plan by divesting tens of millions of dollars from unserved and underserved neighborhoods of low-income folks in Oakland, South, and Southeast Los Angeles, in farmworker communities in Colusa County and Monterrey County, and in other critically disadvantaged, historically divested parts of the state. While only 17% of the statewide network was proposed to be cut or moved to a future unfunded phase of work, Oakland's proposed network was slashed by approximately 56% and South Los Angeles by 77%. This translates into a $28 million divestment in public dollars from two of the least connected communities in the state. Many of California's wealthiest, most connected communities, including Pleasanton and Beverly Hills, faced no divestment whatsoever. In fact, a brand new line was added through Beverly Hills, one that was not on prior versions of the map.

3. **Lack of Transparency**: Decisions about how and where to spend nearly $4 billion in public funds for CDT's MMBI have been made without any publicly available data, analysis, or explanation. The extent to which CDT has executed these secret decisions about nearly $4 billion in public spending has also been hidden from public view. Executed leases are secret. The terms the State has agreed to in these leases are secret. Even the outputs from the RFI2 process completed at the end of last year have been kept secret.

CADE Proposed Solutions: Equity, accountability, and a renewed commitment to center and uplift community in the various state broadband projects.

1. **Middle Mile**: CDT should prioritize middle mile broadband infrastructure investments in the least connected, lowest-income communities with the $4B in secured middle mile funding and shift investments in the best-connected communities to be covered in funding the Governor has committed to include in his January 2024 budget proposal.
2. **Last Mile**: Uncoupling the upcoming $4B grant funding ($2B FFA Last Mile & and ~$2B BEAD) from the CPUC's demonstrably inaccurate State Broadband Map until a non-discriminatory map developed with community input can be completed.
3. **Process Transparency**: The process of allocating this once-in-a-generation $8B State broadband infrastructure investment has lacked transparency, oftentimes leaving communities blindsided to unannounced sudden reversals and no understanding of why disproportionate cuts were made to their communities. Moving forward, CPUC and CDT need to bring the process back out into the open by:
   a. **Meeting Cadence**: Returning to Monthly Broadband for All Meetings, potentially alternating Middle Mile Advisory Committee and Broadband Council meetings each month
   b. **MMBI Map**: Improve transparency of Middle Mile Map by including (1) a change log showing the evolution of network architecture over time, (2) active outreach to communities impacted by changes, and (3) feature layers that distinguish between segments *under contract* (for lease, co-build, build, or purchase) and those that will require a future budget allotment by the legislature (versus just a layer indicating the current intentioned delivery methods for each segment.)
   c. **Community Input**: Current maps rely entirely on data provided by ISPs, with community input left to project-specific challenges and objections. Instead, the data and process to develop the underlying maps should be weighted at least equally between community and ISP data.

CADE Recommended Questions:
CADE urges councilmembers to ask these questions following presentations:

Item	Topic	Presenter	CADE Recommended Questions
3	Broadband for All:	Middle-Mile Broadband Initiative - Mark	1. **Budget Priority:** • **Context**: CDT reported spending $1.8B of the $4B for the initial deployment of the statewide MMBI.

	Year in Review	Monroe, Deputy Director, CDT	• **Question:** Given the uncertain budgetary picture next year, how does CDT plan to prioritize investing the remaining $2B in secured funding (e.g., first come, first serve vs. highest poverty communities)? **2. Transparency:** • **Context:** CDT removed the previously published map, which detailed which segments are funded with the secured $4B and which segments will require future budget allocations. • **Question:** Where can stakeholders see which segments have been leased or are under contract with the $2B spent to date? How will constituents be notified when contracts are finalized, and where will those contracts be published for public review?
		Last-Mile Programs - Darcie Houck, Commissioner, CPUC	**3. Budget Priority:** • **Context:** The FFA Last Mile grant program is over 2X oversubscribed, and incumbent internet service providers are proposing projects in some of California's most wealthy, connected communities. • **Question:** What is the CPUC's plan to ensure that this generational investment funds projects in the least connected, highest poverty communities? • **Follow-up Question:** Is there a scenario where the CPUC funds a project in a demonstrably served, wealthy community?
4	NTIA IIJA Programs – Digital Equity Planning and BEAD Next Steps	Scott Adams, Deputy Director, CDT Robert Osborn, Director, CPUC	**4. Discriminatory State Broadband Mapping** • **Context:** The CPUC will use the current State Broadband Map as a foundation for allocating future BEAD funding. The state process for generating these maps is opaque and results in disparate impact by fabricating need in wealthy communities and vastly undercounting need in low income, disconnected areas. • **Question:** Are we going to continue to see wealthy, demonstrably served communities – like Pleasanton, the Presidio, and Beverly Hills* – as funding eligible or unserved on the BEAD map? • **Follow-up Question:** What is the CPUC going to do differently from the FFA State Broadband Map? *Note: These communities are currently listed as un/underserved on the FFA maps.*

CADE

Press Links

Title	Date Published	Link
Mercury News Article: "Good old-fashioned redlining": Why was Oakland cut out of state plan for high-speed internet?	Aug 26	https://www.mercurynews.com/2023/08/26/good-old-fashioned-redlining-why-was-oakland-cut-out-of-state-plan-for-high-speed-internet/
SF Chronicle Article: "State's broadband plan could leave out one of its least connected communities: East Oakland"	Aug 30	https://www.sfchronicle.com/tech/article/broadband-internet-access-oakland-18327759.php
KCBS Radio: "Digital equity groups urge CA officials to provide broadband to city communities"	Aug 31	https://www.audacy.com/podcast/kcbs-radio-on-demand-011f4/episodes/digital-equity-groups-urge-ca-officials-to-provide-broadband-to-city-communities-a548c
Mercury News Opinion: "Editorial: Newsom plan to bridge digital divide becoming a boondoggle"	Sept 2	https://www.mercurynews.com/2023/09/02/editorial-newsom-plan-to-bridge-digital-divide-becoming-a-boondoggle
EFF Blog: California's Middle Mile Network Must Bridge the Digital Divide, Not Reinforce It	Sept 8	https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2023/09/californias-middle-mile-network-must-bridge-digital-divide-not-reinforce-it
LA Times Editorial: Newsom throws South L.A. under the broadband bus	Sept 8	https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2023-09-08/newsom-billion-dollar-plan-broadband-equity-leave-behind-low-income-communities#:~:text=The%20Middle%20Mile%20Broadband%20initiative.rural%20and%20low%2Dincome%20communities.
SF Chronicle Article: "Newsom reverses broadband cuts advocates portrayed as digital redlining"	Sept 13	https://www.sfchronicle.com/california/article/broadband-redlining-18363172.php
CalMatters: 'Back of the line again': California's broadband plan deprioritized underserved regions, advocates say	Oct 19	https://calmatters.org/california-divide/2023/10/california-broadband/

CADE

Elected Official & CBO Support Letters

Oakland – Support Letters:
- #OaklandUndivided Letter
  - In order to ensure that this bill achieves the intended purpose of Broadband for ALL, #OaklandUndivided formally requests that the California Department of Technology ("CDT") take the following actions:
    - 1. Prioritize investments in the least connected, lowest-income communities
    - 2. Uncouple the upcoming $4B grant funding (FFA Last Mile & BEAD) from the California Public Utility Commission's demonstrably inaccurate State Broadband Map until a non-discriminatory map can be developed
- Congresswoman Barbara Lee Letter
  - "The challenge process is not designed to remediate inaccuracies at this scale. As such, it is critical that federal funding is uncoupled from the demonstrably inaccurate State Broadband Maps until they undergo extensive revision."
- Senator Skinner Advocacy Letter
- Assemblymember Mia Bonta Advocacy Letter
  - "It is my understanding that the decision to move these middle-mile segments to phase 2 was almost entirely based on state broadband maps that rely heavily on invalidated, self-reported information from Internet Service Providers (ISPs). As these maps are demonstrably inaccurate, we must uncouple funding from these existing maps."
- Mayor Sheng Thao Advocacy Letter
  - "Furthermore, the California Public Utilities Commission report concluded that, for decades, internet service providers have persistently divested in historically redlined communities while overinvesting in wealthy communities. These business decisions, informed by short-term profit motives, have created disparate impacts for communities of color and individuals with disabilities."
- NAACP State Advocacy Letter (Governor's Office)
  - "..Oakland's proposed network was slashed by approximately 56% and South Central Los Angeles' by 77%. This totals a $28 million divestment in public dollars from two of the least connected areas of the state."

Los Angeles – Support Letters:
- Mayor, City of Lynwood
  - "The Gateway Cities region has spent nearly two years working on their project design based on the previous Middle Mile project routes. These route changes were implemented with no prior notice, and with no regard for the preexisting project planning that was created by the previous map. Since the new plan was released, there has not been an opportunity to provide input from the localities this open access middle mile network is meant to serve. This has left communities scrambling to re-configure their broadband infrastructure plans, including plans to apply for Federal Funding Account last mile grants, resulting in a cascading disinvestment in our region's lowest income communities."
- Mayor, City of Paramount

- - *"As other urban communities across the state are also elevating, these maps prioritize demonstrably served communities that already enjoy multiple options for affordable high-speed internet due to decades of private broadband investment. The need for Middle Mile investment in underserved communities only increases in importance with the upcoming Federal Funding Account allocation and other imminent state and federal broadband grants. Reformation begins with working with community leaders in the areas we know are the least connected and historically redlined urban areas."*
- Mayor, City of Lakewood
- Mayor, City of Southgate
  - *"These revisions completely disregard our most underserved communities experiencing the widest digital divide epidemic in the State. This is absolutely a disenfranchisement of our communities of color and only enlarges the digital divide and threatens any equitable shot at participating in our region's many economic, educational, and civic opportunities."*
- Mayor, City of Hawaiian Gardens
- LA CBO and Education Agencies
  - *"As you know, prioritizing unconnected and under-connected communities in efforts to eliminate the digital divide would not only create equal opportunities for all but also pave the way for a more inclusive and prosperous future for Los Angeles. We hope to identify a solution to ensure that the local planning our leaders have already done and foundation they've already laid, based on expectations built from working with the state the past year and a half, is not wasted."*
- BizFed Letter to Governor Newsom
  - *"In LA as in other areas across California, the new MMBI maps prioritize demonstrably served communities that already enjoy multiple options for affordable high-speed internet thanks to decades of private broadband investment, at the expense of disadvantaged, disconnected communities. Absent evidence to the contrary - evidence that so far has not been made public for scrutiny - this does not appear to be the most efficient or effective expenditure of limited public dollars to close the digital divide. Maintaining a public, accountable process that includes thoughtful analysis, transparency, and collaboration with those closest to the ground will help illuminate the best path forward."*

Rural Counties – Support Letter:
- Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) letter
  - *"The repeated changes to the middle mile maps are not a solution, but a symptom of the problem. A $3.87 billion open-access, state-owned middle mile network is an unprecedented investment, yet the only mechanism for public and stakeholder interaction is a quarterly meeting. The Phasing approach was unveiled without any prior interactions with stakeholders and the "Delivery Method" maps were likewise released without conversations, input or any public forum that is customary with a regulatory process (e.g., Administrative Procedures Act). Further, with such a large expenditure of public funds, it seems a more transparent process would not only be appropriate, but necessary."*