

President Alice Busching Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear President Reynolds,

**Subject: Urgent request for the CPUC to work to establish an Affordable Connectivity Program for California**

On behalf of California's Interagency Equity Advisory Committee (EAC), we urge the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to take immediate action to work with the Governor and the State Legislature to create a state-level Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). With uncertainty surrounding the future of the federal ACP, California must step forward to ensure its residents maintain access to the affordable broadband services essential for modern life.

The EAC advises the California Transportation Commission (CTC), California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) on how to achieve meaningful outcomes in transportation equity, environmental justice, and equitable economic opportunities, especially as related to transportation planning and programming.

Caltrans is working diligently with your team at the CPUC and the California Department of Technology on creating the most innovative open access middle mile in the Nation in the hopes of closing the digital divide. But assuring affordable service for all is critical to that effort.

The federal ACP has played a transformative role in providing affordable broadband access to millions of low-income households across the country, including many in California. Reliable internet is no longer a luxury; it is a lifeline that enables equitable access to education, employment opportunities, healthcare, and essential government services. Unfortunately, if the federal ACP is not reinstated, the most vulnerable Californians—those in rural, underserved, and low-income communities—will be disproportionately affected, further widening the digital divide.

Without the ACP, millions of households are facing the devastating impact of losing access to affordable broadband, creating inequities that will hinder progress toward closing the digital divide. Almost three million households (2,863,491 as of January 22, 2024) of 5.8 million eligible households in California were connected to the Internet through ACP—more families and individuals than in any other state.

We urge the CPUC to work with stakeholders, including internet service providers, community organizations, and local governments, to design and implement a robust program that builds on the lessons of the federal ACP. California's diverse population and unique challenges demand a

**ATTACHMENT B:**

tailored solution that ensures no one is left behind in the digital age. The need is urgent, and the benefits are undeniable. We are confident that under your leadership, the CPUC can develop a program that reflects California's commitment to equity and opportunity for all.

Thank you for considering this critical issue. We are available to support your efforts, provide data, and connect you with impacted communities to ensure the program's success.

Respectfully,

William Walker, Chair  
California's Interagency Equity Advisory Committee (EAC)

Cc: Darcie L. Houck, Commissioner, John Reynolds, Commissioner, Karen Douglas,  
Commissioner, Matthew Baker, Commissioner

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