SUMMARY
AB 14 prioritizes the deployment of broadband infrastructure in California’s most vulnerable and unserved rural and urban communities by extending the ongoing collection of funds deposited into the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) to provide communities with grants necessary to bridge the digital divide. AB 14 is part of the Legislative Broadband package with SB 4.

BACKGROUND
As evidenced by the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic, the capacity to rapidly connect all California residents with evolving emergency information is essential to safeguarding public health and safety during these unprecedented times. A Pew Research Study conducted in April 2020 found that roughly half of United States adults (53%) say the internet has been essential for them personally during the pandemic.

Although barriers to broadband connectivity have persisted for decades, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the digital divide that separates Californians without internet connectivity from those who already have and depend on fast and reliable internet access as a normal part of their daily lives. As record unemployment rates persist, internet access is vital for economic recovery and resiliency. This is especially important for our most vulnerable Californians who remain disproportionately disconnected, including those who are low-income, living in rural areas, and Black or Latino.

Further, lack of reliable access to academic resources and distance learning tools diminishes our youngest Californians’ opportunity to thrive. This is a preventable barrier for far too many students, as nearly 1 million (15.6%) school-aged children (ages 6-17) have no internet connection at home and over 1.6 million (27.5%) of children do not have broadband access.

THIS BILL
AB 14 recognizes that reliable internet connectivity is a critical necessity now, and that this will remain the case even after the COVID-19 pandemic has subsided. This bill is contingently enacted with SB 4, which equips Internet Service Providers, Local Governments, Electrical Cooperatives, and Tribal Governments with the opportunity to expedite the connection of their communities to reliable broadband access indefinitely. AB 14 ensures grants administered by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) from the CASF are awarded to applicants who are willing and able to quickly and efficiently connect households, community anchor institutions, small businesses, and employers.

Specifically, AB 14 in contingent enactment with SB 4:

- Extends existing collection of the CASF surcharge to December 31, 2032.
- Authorizes the CPUC to require each internet service provider to report information regarding each available free, low-cost, income-qualified, or affordable internet service plan advertised by the provider, including the cost of plan, eligibility requirements, data limitations, number of California residents enrolled in the plan, and a description of their outreach efforts to eligible populations.
- Requires CASF Infrastructure Grant applications must provide broadband access at speeds of a minimum of 100 megabits downstream and 20 megabits upstream.
- Identifies all households with speeds of 25 mbps downstream and 3 mbps upstream and below as ‘unserved’.
  - Maintains prioritization of those ‘unserved’ households with speeds of 10 mbps downstream and 1 mbps upstream in addition to prioritization of high-poverty unserved households, meaning those within a census tract in which at least 50 percent of residents are designated low-income.
- Ensures ‘anchor institutions’ defined as schools maintaining kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, community colleges, libraries, hospitals, health clinics, public safety entities, government buildings, and community organizations are eligible for CASF grants on a fair cost-sharing basis for interconnection along the path of deployment.
- Authorizes the CPUC to approve an application for funding to deploy or upgrade broadband services upon making a finding that the existing facility-based broadband provider is unwilling or unable to deploy broadband for the project application service area.
Fact Sheet for AB 14 (Aguiar-Curry)  |  Brooke.Pritchard@asm.ca.gov

- Requires relevant state and local agencies and national organizations to develop recommendations and a model for streamlined local land use approval and construction permit processes for projects related to broadband infrastructure deployment and connectivity.

AB 14 is a critical step towards expediting the deployment of broadband infrastructure throughout California. This bill along with SB 4 provides a vital pathway to connect California’s workforce to gainful employment, harness the life-saving technology of telemedicine, democratize distance learning, enable precision agriculture, and sustain economic transactions in times of emergencies.

**SUPPORT**

3CORE
Alameda Health Consortium
American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA)
American Academy of Pediatrics, California Chapter 2 (AAP-CA2)
America's Physician Groups
ARC
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Los Angeles
Association of California Healthcare Districts
Association of California Healthcare Districts
Association of California School Administrators
BKY Consulting
Broadband Consortium
Burnish Creative
Butte County Administration
CA Forward
CA Medicaid Health Plan
California Academy of PAs
California Alliance of Child and Family Services
California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT)
California Association of Public Authorities for IHSS
California Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems
California Children Trust
California Children's Hospital
California Chronic Care Coalition
California Chronic Care Coalition San Diego County
California Commission on Aging
California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls
California County Superintendents Educational Services Association
California Dental Hygienists' Association
California Department of Education
California Department of Insurance
California Federation of Teachers
California Health Collaborative
California Health Information Association
California Legislative Women's Caucus
California Medical Association
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network
California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley
California Senior Legislature
California State Association of Counties
Central Valley Community Foundation
City Council Member Zach Hilton of City of Gilroy
City of Alameda
City of Arcata
City of Bishop
City of Brea
City of Chico
City of Colton
City of Fountain Valley
City of Goleta
City of Hidden Hills
City of Inglewood
City of Lakeport
City of Lawndale
City of Los Angeles
City of Moorpark
City of Mountain View
City of Novato
City of Oceanside
City of San Pablo
City of San Rafael
City of Thousand Oaks
City of Torrance
City of Tustin
City of Ventura
City of Vista
City of Walnut Creek
City of West Sacramento
City of Whittier
Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce
Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County (CCALAC)
County Board of Supervisors; Alameda
County of Contra Costa
County of El Dorado
County of Imperial
County of Mariposa
County of Monterey
County of Napa
County of San Diego
County of San Luis Obispo
County of Santa Clara
County of Tulare
County of Yuba
Digital Equity Coalition
Economic Development Collaborative
Economic Vitality Corp.
Eden Housing
Fresno State Connective Initiative
Generation Up
Greater Oxnard Organizations of Democrats
Inland Empire Community Foundation
Kern Community College District
League of California Cities
Los Angeles Community College District
Monterey County Board of Supervisors
National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter
North Bay Leadership Council
North State Planning & Development Collective
OCHIN
Parent Institute for Quality Education
Reach Central Coast
Regional Economic Action Coalition (REACH)
Rural Caucus, California Democratic Party
San Joaquin Valley Rural Development Center
Sierra Business Council
Siskiyou Works
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Southern California Association of Governments
Stanislaus Community Foundation
Western Center on Law and Poverty
Yuba Community College Districts
Supervisor Cindy Chavez, District 2, County of Santa Clara
Tahoe Prosperity Center
Teach Plus- California
TechEquity Collaborative
Tenet Healthcare Corporation
The Fresno Center
Triple P America (Positive Parent Program)
Unite LA
United Ways of California (UWCA)
Valley Vision
Western Center on Law & Poverty, Inc.
Yolo Healthy Aging Alliance
Yuba Community College District

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