

June 9, 2021



PERSONAL COURIER /U.S.REGULAR MAIL

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
Chair, Senate Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 5019
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: State Budget Funding for Broadband Investment
Letter of Support from the City of San Pablo**

Dear Governor Newsom, Chairperson Skinner, and Chairperson Ting:

I write to express our strong support for Governor Newsom's proposal to invest \$7 billion as part of a plan to expand broadband infrastructure, increase affordability, and enhance access to broadband for all Californians. As State Budget negotiations finalize, I respectfully urge the Senate and Assembly to incorporate language which keeps the full \$7 billion and allows local jurisdictions to access these funds, into the Legislature's final budget.

As you all know, the pandemic has underscored the importance of making broadband accessible and affordable for various aspects of modern life. California needs the ability, to work with and empower local partners to deploy this broadband infrastructure at large scale—specifically, we appreciate and support the Governor's proposal to create a public financing program that backs municipalities, non-profits, cooperatives, and others to access long-term financing which will unlock their potential to build 21st century access. Additionally, I support the construction of an open access "middle mile" fiber network so that all communities have the ability to tap into a quality network.

In order to bridge the digital divide, local governments and their technology partners must have access to these critically needed dollars. Complete funding with the ability for local municipalities to access these funds to facilitate future connectivity and technology projects in their communities which is essential in this rebounding COVID-19 economy.

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Without State funding support, local cities must rely on the complete discretion of private ISPs on determining what selective communities will receive private technology investment which is not determined by public or social need. Rather, private ISP investment is often determined on which market areas will generate the greatest return on critical mass of private subscribers to justify their investments. In lower-income communities, where this is limited private, ISP investment, the digital divide is exacerbated for low-income, working class families who desperately need broadband and wireless connectivity for access to distance learning/education programs, job and workforce training, and telehealth opportunities.

Therefore, I urge the Administration and Legislature to work together and ensure that these funds are part of the final State Budget.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elizabeth Pabon-Alvarado". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Elizabeth Pabon-Alvarado, Mayor
City of San Pablo

cc: The Honorable Toni Atkins, President Pro Tempore, California State Senate
The Honorable Anthony Rendon, Speaker, California State Assembly

San Pablo City Council
City Manager
City Attorney
Assistant City Manager
Police Chief