

Resolution for SCAG to Bridge the Digital Divide in Underserved Communities

Southern California Association of Governments

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Pre-COVID Conditions



- As of December 2018, 23 percent of California's housing units (8.4 million residents) lack broadband service entirely
- 2,000,000 Californians have broadband/internet service but not "high-speed"
- Within the SCAG region, 650,000 (10 percent) of households do not have access to adequate internet speeds or no internet access
- Households are disproportionately located in low-income and rural areas:
 - Black
 - Latino
 - Senior Citizens

Barriers to adoption



- Expensive – subscriptions range from 50 to over a 100 a month
- Lack of digital skills or distrust in new technology
- Physical infrastructural gaps

COVID-19 and the Digital Divide



- 124,000 schools within the U.S have closed, affecting 55 million students
- 10 percent of households in SCAG region lack broadband
 - Students in underserved communities cannot compete
- Divide is apparent in telework, telemedicine, food delivery, e-commerce and entertainment

Response from the State



- Governor Newsom signed Executive Order N-73-20
- SCAG, SANDAG and stakeholders convened a working group to assist in bridging the digital divide
- Working group drafted a sample resolution and policy paper for local jurisdictions to adopt

Resolution and Policy Paper for Local Jurisdictions



- Key items include but are not limited to:
 - Collaboration between stakeholders
 - Request for grant funding
 - Adopt policies to expedite permitting, lowering fees and emergency ordinances
- To date, three of the six counties (Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Riverside County) have adopted a resolution

SCAG's Resolution to Bridge the Digital Divide



- Allows SCAG to develop its own Broadband Action Plan
- Key items include but are not limited to:
 - Pursue grant opportunities to assist local jurisdictions
 - Convene an official working group
 - Inclusive Regional Economic Recovery and Strategy
 - Incorporate findings to our programs and 2024 RTP/SCS
- The resolution would support SCAG's commitment to equity and social justice



Thank You

Please feel free to send additional questions to Roland Ok at:
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