



BOARD AGENDA FACT SHEET

CLERK USE ONLY
BOS ACTION

Executive Office _____
 Department /Agency _____

April 27, 2021 _____
 Requested Board Date

1. Request:

Board Approval	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Information Only/Presentation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Schedule Hearing Time: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Requested Action: *Type requested action below*

Adopt Resolution supporting increased broadband access to underserved communities throughout Southern California.

3. Cost \$ 0.00 Source: N/A
4. If approval of Contract, reviewed/approved by County Counsel on: N/A
 By: N/A Action Request # N/A
Assigned by County Counsel's Office
5. If approval of position allocation change, approved by Human Resources on: N/A
 By: N/A
6. Electronic copy submittal date: _____ By: _____



 Department Head/Agency Representative

INSTRUCTIONS: Back-up must be submitted 11 BUSINESS days prior to requested date. Back-up submitted must contain an Original and 6 copies. Copies must be submitted double sided and three (3) hole punched. Back-up must be submitted in a PDF format to cobstaff@co.imperial.ca.us.

CEO/CLERK USE ONLY:

DATE STAMP

BOARD DATE: 04/27/21

Action _____ Filing _____

Consent x Presentation _____

Hearing _____ CEO Approval _____

Other (specify) _____

 _____ 07/21/21
 CEO Date

COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Tony Rouhotas Jr.
County Executive Officer
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www.co.imperial.ca.us



County Administration Center
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El Centro, CA 92243
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April 20, 2021

Board of Supervisors
County of Imperial
940 Main Street
El Centro, CA 92243

SUBJECT: Adoption of Resolution supporting increased broadband access to underserved communities throughout Southern California.

Dear Board Members:

Background:

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced residents of the Imperial County to completely restructure the way we live, work and, learn and access to “broadband” (which includes both wireline and wireless technologies) has become essential to advancing public health, education and equity. However, not everyone has equal access to high-speed broadband and the pandemic has exposed the vast and damaging effects of the “digital divide.” Families left between are concentrated among communities of color, low-income and rural households. As such, it is imperative that local governments address persistent differences in who has high quality internet access at home.

Broadband is an essential 21st Century infrastructure in a digital world and global economy. It is vital to the economic prosperity and quality of life for Imperial County residents and throughout California. And, it can enable the County to mitigate economic, educational and health disparities within underserved communities. The deployment and adoption of broadband is a major strategy to spur economic development because it improves productivity, which attracts more capital investment and generates jobs, while saving both time and money for consumers.

Although California is home to a wellspring of innovation that has given rise to the evolution of information technologies and broadband, the use of broadband technology by California residents is only approximately equivalent to the national average and there is a significant Digital Divide that must be closed to remain globally competitive.

Recommendation:

Therefore, it is recommended that the Imperial County Board of Supervisors adopt the enclosed Resolution supporting increased broadband access to underserved communities throughout Southern California.

Fiscal Impact:

There is no fiscal impact to the County's general fund with the recommended action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tony Rouhotas, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tony Rouhotas, Jr.
County Executive Officer

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF
IMPERIAL SUPPORTING INCREASED BROADBAND ACCESS TO UNDERSERVED
COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

WHEREAS, closing the digital divide is important and provides long-term community benefits that include the ability to fully engage in the digital economy, access existing and emerging services, expands economic opportunities and bridges the economic divide; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the need for available, reliable and affordable broadband services in all communities; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused schools to shift to distance learning; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has made the digital divide within underserved communities and/or areas (which include people of color, low income households, residents in rural areas, and senior citizens) more apparent; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that cost and household income is a primary barrier to broadband access.

WHEREAS, all residents, businesses and institutions need high speed broadband services where they work, live, learn and play; and

WHEREAS, high speed broadband enables Work from Home and remote workers, enhances business efficiencies, drives job creation throughout the region, and connects customers and partners worldwide to goods and services; and

WHEREAS, high speed broadband is a “green technology” that reduces our impact on the environment, shrinks our regional carbon footprint, offsetting vehicle trips and use of resources; and

WHEREAS, high speed broadband greatly expands the ability of residents to access medical, behavioral, oral health services and the capacity of public health officials to monitor and respond to health threats such as COVID-19 and other diseases; and

WHEREAS, high speed broadband enables greater civic participation and brings communities together, helps improve public safety, and makes our transportation systems more resilient and efficient; and

WHEREAS, effective emergency services require using high speed broadband to integrate data in real time from all available sources, so decision makers have access to the information necessary for the protection of lives and property; and

WHEREAS, to accelerate the deployment of broadband, the primary objective is to deploy private-sector capital as quickly as possible through improved public cooperation; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors does hereby as follows:

1. Supports FCCs (United States Federal Communications Commission) and CPUCs (California Public Utilities Commission) rules, regulations, programs and funding opportunities that support broadband deployment opportunities to bridge the digital divide.
2. Supports Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-73-20 signed August 14, 2020 that seeks to accelerate work towards closing gaps in access to reliable broadband networks throughout California; and
3. Supports collaboration with broadband providers, school districts (K-12), community college districts, universities, community and business stakeholders, Regional Broadband Consortia, California Emerging Technology Fund, the State of California and other federal and regional organizations that have similar goals to increase broadband access throughout Southern California; and
4. Determines that closing the digital divide is important and provides long-term community benefits; and
5. Supports the request for grant funding from the State and/or Federal government for a regional program that provides funding for free internet access for qualifying residents that bridges the economic digital divide; and
6. Supports a minimum broadband speed capability of 100 megabits per second today and 1 gigabit per second by 2030 for all residential and business customers within the urban, suburban and rural communities of our region; and
7. Supports working with collaborating jurisdictions to identify broadband opportunity zones in underserved communities; and
8. Upon identifying broadband opportunity zones, supports the adoption of an emergency ordinance which would allow local jurisdictions to develop specific rules to expedite low cost broadband deployment such as: waivers for microprojects, deployment of broadband infrastructure in underserved communities and fixed wireless or other broadband technologies in rural communities; and
9. Supports the adoption of consistent fees and expedited broadband permitting processes within collaborating jurisdictions; and

10. Supports the concept of “Dig Smart” and/or “Dig Once” whereby conduit is installed for future or immediate use for wireless towers, fiber optic or other comparable broadband network installation, whenever underground construction occurs in a roadway.

PASSED AND ADOPTED, by the Board of Supervisors, County of Imperial, State of California, on this 27th day of April, by the following vote:

Michael W. Kelley,
Chairman of the Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

Blanca Acosta,
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors