



MAYOR ROBERT GARCIA
CITY OF LONG BEACH

April 14, 2021

The Honorable Mike Gipson
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 3173
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for AB 1425 (Gipson)—California Advanced Services Fund: Broadband Public Housing Account

Dear Assemblymember Gipson,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I write in support of AB 1425. This bill proposes to establish a grant program to provide broadband connectivity to subsidized multiunit housing complexes. The City is committed to addressing the digital divide through its Digital Inclusion Initiative (Initiative), which focuses on ensuring everyone in Long Beach has equitable access to and use of digital literacy training, the Internet, technology devices, and other digital resources.

For the past 10 years, Long Beach has been named a Top 10 Digital City by the Center for Digital Government. While new technological advancements have helped the City achieve this recognition, a large portion of the Long Beach community does not have access to and use of in-home Broadband Internet. This finding led to a unanimous City Council decision in 2018 to approve the Initiative's development of a Digital Inclusion Strategic Plan and Roadmap (Roadmap). The City is in the process of co-creating the Roadmap with community members and local stakeholders. The foundation of the Roadmap will include a vision, goals, objectives, performance indicators, and strategies for advancing digital inclusion through a collective impact approach and equity lens as they relate to capacity, connectivity, and technology. Once the Roadmap has been developed, the City will work closely with community and local stakeholders to implement the plan.

The City supports legislation that eliminates the digital divide by increasing access to the Internet and technological devices. AB 1425 aligns with the City's efforts to eliminate the digital divide for the highest-need populations, such as low-income individuals residing in subsidized housing. Digital inclusion funding mechanisms are imperative to foster stability, particularly during times of uncertainty; and AB 1425 will help support the City's commitments to digital inclusion investments during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given these reasons, the City of Long Beach supports AB 1425.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Garcia".

Mayor Robert Garcia
City of Long Beach

cc: The Honorable Speaker Anthony Rendon, State Assembly
The Honorable Lena Gonzalez, State Senate, 33rd District
The Honorable Tom Umberg, State Senate, 34th District
The Honorable Steven Bradford, State Senate, 35th District
The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell, State Assembly, 70th District