



MAYOR ROBERT GARCIA
CITY OF LONG BEACH

February 18, 2021

The Honorable Lena Gonzalez
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 2068
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for SB 4 (Gonzalez)—Telecommunications: California Advanced Services Fund

Dear Senator Gonzalez,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I write in support of Senate Bill 4. This legislation amends the California Advanced Services Fund to award telecommunication infrastructure projects that provide modern, high-capacity infrastructure to unconnected and underconnected areas. The City is committed to addressing the digital divide through its Digital Inclusion Initiative (Initiative), which focuses on ensuring that everyone in Long Beach has equitable access to and use of digital literacy training, the Internet, technology devices, and other digital resources. The City would benefit from the funding SB 4 proposes to secure digital infrastructure investments.

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 Internet and technological devices. SB 4 aligns with the City's efforts to provide economic relief to Long Beach households following State and local emergency declarations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Digital inclusion funding mechanisms are imperative to foster stability, particularly during times of uncertainty; and SB 4 will help support the City's commitments to digital infrastructure investments during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given these reasons, the City of Long Beach supports SB 4.

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 Tom Umberg, State Senate, 34th District
The Honorable Steven Bradford, State Senate, 35th District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 64th District
The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell, State Assembly, 70th District