



Press Release

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RCRC Celebrates Governor's Signing of \$6 Billion Broadband Investment

SACRAMENTO, CA – The Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) extends its appreciation to Governor Gavin Newsom for signing Senate Bill 156 on Tuesday, July 20 establishing a landmark \$6 billion investment in broadband infrastructure. RCRC also applauds the work of assembly members and senators representing rural areas of the state in championing this effort. This monumental event represents the largest investment in broadband infrastructure in the country and a significant step towards closing the digital divide throughout the state.

Access to broadband is an increasingly essential resource for educational opportunity, health care access, economic growth, and civic engagement. However, despite the importance of broadband, access remains uneven throughout the state. [A 2020 report](#) by the California Public Utilities Commission found 51.3% of rural households did not have access to high-speed broadband, measured at 100 Mbps.

The approval of this \$6 billion investment through Senate Bill 156, as part of the budget package, represents a significant step in reducing that digital gap. The legislation provides \$3.25 billion to construct a statewide open-access middle mile network and \$2 billion, including \$1 billion specifically for rural communities, for last-mile network construction. These investments will aid in increased connectivity and affordability for all by making it easier for more internet providers to provide faster, cheaper service throughout the state and creating opportunities for more entities to build last-mile infrastructure in more places.

“We are grateful that Governor Newsom recognized the harm that the digital divide causes to our rural communities and the necessity of broadband access for families and businesses,” said RCRC Chair and Mono County Supervisor Stacy Corless. “We are confident that this monumental

investment by the State in broadband infrastructure will aid in the establishment of a more equitable system of access to opportunity and economic growth for all Californians.”

RCRC attended the signing ceremony of Senate Bill 156 in support of the Governor’s approval of the legislation and in recognition of the important impact it will have for rural communities. RCRC is dedicated to ensuring equitable broadband access and has already begun developing strategies with rural counties for implementation.

ABOUT RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES OF CALIFORNIA (RCRC)

The Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) is a thirty-seven member county strong service organization that champions policies on behalf of California’s rural counties. RCRC is dedicated to representing the collective unique interests of its membership, providing legislative and regulatory representation at the State and Federal levels, and providing responsible services for its members to enhance and protect the quality of life in rural California counties. To learn more about RCRC, visit rcrcnet.org and follow @RuralCounties on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

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RCRC President and CEO pictured with Governor Gavin Newsom



Governor Gavin Newsom addressing the audience along with fellow speakers (pictured left to right) Monterey County Supervisor Luis Alejo, State Assembly Member Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, State Senator Anna Caballero, State Senator Lena Gonzalez and (not pictured) Tulare County Supervisor Eddie Valero



Governor Gavin Newsom signing Senate Bill 156