



September 15, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 14 (Aguiar-Curry) – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), I respectfully request your signature on Assembly Bill 14. AB 14, authored by Assembly Member Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, makes changes to the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF). RCRC is an association of thirty-seven rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each member county.

This year, you signed into law a historic State Budget Package that included a total of \$6 billion over the next three years for broadband deployment in California. AB 14 builds on this investment by extending CASF through 2032, continuing the only dedicated and ongoing funding source to bridge the digital divide. Additionally, AB 14 makes needed structural changes to the surcharge that funds CASF and other Californian Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) funding programs. These changes will close a loophole that created a consistent under-collection of needed funding by allowing Voice over Internet Protocol service providers to choose a revenue allocation methodology. Lastly, AB 14 authorizes the CPUC to require Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to submit information regarding each free, low-cost, income-qualified, or affordable internet service plan advertised by the provider. Creating internet accessibility for all Californians includes ensuring affordability of high-quality reliable service.

Rural areas of the state have long lacked essential broadband services, creating barriers to economic growth, remote learning, and telehealth services. AB 14 makes much-needed changes to the state broadband infrastructure and deployment funding system, and, coupled with other significant measures enacted this year will move California forward in its efforts of Broadband for All.

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Again, RCRC respectfully requests your signature on AB 14.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tracy Rhine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

TRACY RHINE
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, Member of the State Assembly