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April 12, 2024

The Honorable Lori D. Wilson
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Ste. 8110
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SUPPORT, AB 1588 (Wilson) – Affordable Internet and Net Equality Act of 2024

Dear Assemblymember Wilson,

On behalf of the Solano County Board of Supervisors, I write in support of AB 1588, which would ensure that all low-income households in California will continue to have access to affordable, quality home internet service. Currently, almost 3 million households (2,803,589 as of January 1, 2024) of 5.8 million eligible households in California have been connected to the Internet through the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). However, the existing federal funding of \$14.2 billion for ACP allocated in the Infrastructure and Jobs Act (IIJA) is projected by the Federal Communications Commission to run out in mid-2024. This is problematic, because if the federal government does not reauthorize funding for ACP these nearly 3 million low-income households in California would be left without affordable, quality internet service.

AB 1588 is a vital backstop to ensure these individuals can receive high quality and reliable internet that is affordable. Internet access is a necessity and not a luxury. It is essential to access jobs, education, health care, economic opportunity, public safety, and other public services. It also helps government administer services more efficiently. Therefore, Solano County supports AB1588 because it will ensure that low-income residents and disadvantaged communities across the state are not left behind in the 21st Century and have an affordable Internet service to get ahead and help grow the California economy.

AB 1588 is a common-sense policy that recognizes the right and authority of the State of California to require vendors receiving taxpayer funds to help achieve Digital Equity in the public interest. It requires Internet Service Providers being paid by the State to offer and promote their own affordable, quality internet subscriptions, including federal programs such as the ACP if Congress extends, reauthorizes or establishes a successor subsidy program. AB 1588 also sets standards for eligibility and quality of service to ensure equity in affordable offers so that digitally disadvantaged rural and urban residents alike have equal opportunities to affordable internet service regardless of where they live.

For these reasons, Solano County is pleased to support AB 1588

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mitch N. Mashburn".

Mitch Mashburn, Chair
Solano County Board of Supervisors

Honorable Lori Wilson

April 12, 2024

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CC:

Honorable Members, California State Assembly

The Honorable Bill Dodd, California State Senator

The Honorable Solano County Board of Supervisors

Tim Flanagan, Chief Information Officer, Solano County

Paragon Government Relations

Karen Lange, SYASL Partners, Inc.