



April 29, 2021

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

RE: SB 4 (Gonzalez) Communications: California Advanced Services Fund.
Notice of SUPPORT *(As amended 4/19/2021)*

Dear Senator Gonzalez:

The Los Angeles County Division of the League of California Cities (Division), representing 86 cities in the county, is pleased to support SB 4 (Gonzalez), which would prioritize deployment of broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved communities throughout California through the ongoing collection of the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) surcharge.

As local governments mobilized to address the spread of COVID-19, lack of access to reliable and affordable broadband service was highlighted as communities struggled to stay connected to school, work, and healthcare in the new digital environment. While Californians are increasingly using the internet to connect with others, local governments have taken to online platforms to ensure civic engagement during these unprecedented times.

SB 4 is a step in the right direction, ensuring the continued collection of an essential source of broadband funding. This measure not only authorizes the ongoing collection of the existing CASF surcharge but also makes it easier for local governments to access these grants. Additionally, SB 4 would create a Broadband Bond Financing and Securitization Account to fund broadband infrastructure deployment by local governments. These funding opportunities would allow local governments to continue to play a vital role in deploying broadband infrastructure in their communities.

In addition to these essential funding opportunities, SB 4 also would expand the definition of "unserved." Expanding this definition increases eligibility for CASF grants, which are currently reserved for areas with internet at dial-up speeds or lower, leaving out many communities where Californians struggle to stay connected with slightly faster but still obsolete speeds.

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The Division strongly supports SB 4 and stands ready to work with the Legislature to further the state's broadband goals while implementing them in a way that will work for local governments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Blanca Pacheco', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Blanca Pacheco
President
Los Angeles County Division
League of California Cities