



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS

455 NORTH REXFORD DRIVE • BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA 90210

Robert Wunderlich, Mayor

July 30, 2021

The Honorable Lena Gonzalez
California State Senate, 33rd District
State Capitol, Room 2068
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 4 (Gonzalez) Communications: California Advanced Services Fund: deaf and disabled telecommunications program: surcharges
City of Beverly Hills – Support If Amended

Dear Senator Gonzalez:

On behalf of the City of Beverly Hills, I write to inform you of our SUPPORT IF AMENDED on your SB 4. This bill would extend and make various modifications to the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF), including increasing the minimum speed of broadband infrastructure funded by the program, expanding the communities eligible for grants, and increasing the maximum amount of funding the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) can collect for the CASF. The bill would also require the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development to coordinate with other relevant state and local agencies and national organizations to explore ways to facilitate streamlining of local land use approvals and construction permit processes for projects related to broadband infrastructure deployment and connectivity.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the massive gaps in internet connectivity at sufficient speeds for many Californians. Recent research from the University of Southern California indicates low-income households, Spanish-speaking households, Californians with disabilities, and rural households are disproportionately impacted by inadequate broadband access. As more families struggle to conduct distance learning, virtual work, access telehealth services, and safeguard small business participation in the virtual marketplace, the need to connect the State at sufficient speeds with adaptable technology has reached crisis proportion.

We applaud the goals of SB 4 as it seeks to address California's digital divide and expand access to broadband internet to California's disadvantaged communities. However, the City requests the following amendments to the bill:

- Include language that funding is for technology-neutral solutions and is not limited to 5G or fiber;
- Limit the charge by the State to one percent of the total bill;
- Prohibit a company from increasing charges to consumers or cities related to the installation of broadband, if the company receives funding from this program;
- Allow local jurisdictions to retain control over permitting and installation processes; and
- Create a consumer assistance fund to assist those less fortunate with payments for broadband services.

The City of Beverly Hills supports the noble concepts of your SB 4; however, we cannot at this time support the measure until the provisions listed above are included in the bill.

Sincerely,

Robert Wunderlich

Robert Wunderlich

Mayor, City of Beverly Hills

Cc: Members and Consultants, Senate Energy, Utilities and Communications Committee
Members and Consultants, Senate Governance and Finance Committee
The Honorable Ben Allen, 26th Senate District
The Honorable Richard Bloom, 50th Assembly District
Andrew K. Antwhih, Shaw Yoder Antwhih Schmelzer & Lange