

# COUNTY OF NEVADA

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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May 9, 2017

Assembly Member Miguel Santiago, Chairman  
Assembly Member Jay Obernolte, Vice Chairman  
Assembly Communications and Conveyance Committee Members  
State Capitol, Room 6027  
Sacramento, CA 95814

*Via Email*

**RE: Internet For All Now Act (Assembly Bill (AB) 1665 – Garcia)**

Dear Chairman Santiago and Vice Chairman Obernolte and Committee Members:

The County of Nevada strongly supports the Internet For All Now Act (AB 1665 – Garcia), and respectfully urges your support to continue the progress of closing the Digital Divide in California. Digital Inclusion is a matter of fairness and opportunity for all residents to be able to participate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy and contribute to California's prosperity.

The County of Nevada understands first-hand how important it is for rural communities and low-income neighborhoods to have high-speed internet access. Nevada County broadband speeds and availability in the region still lag behind non-rural counties, despite being equal to or above average in comparison to other similar rural Northern California Sierra communities. Ensuring adequate broadband connectivity is critical for furthering economic development and prosperity for businesses and residents alike throughout Nevada County. For example, in partnership with Nevada County, the Nevada County Economic Resource Council (ERC) conducted a Sierra Digital Media Campus feasibility study through a \$500,000 Science and Research Park Development grant from the EDA in 2015, which identified an opportunity for Nevada County to become a front-runner in the industry of Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality (VR/AR). Subsequently, the ERC has worked with VR/AR companies, locally, nationally and internationally, to further establish a niche tech industry within Nevada County. However, without adequate broadband connectivity, industry expansion will be significantly limited.

We recognize and appreciate that the authors of AB 1665 are negotiating in good faith among the stakeholders to reach consensus on the specific provisions of the bill and we respect that process. However, we urge you to support a version of the bill that includes as much as possible of the original Internet For All Now Act (that was submitted by the California Emerging Technology Fund in consultation with civic leaders and community organizations throughout the State) to reflect an appropriate and workable balance between community needs and industry interests. Your leadership is needed to forge ahead and ensure that California remains a national leader in Digital Inclusion and Digital Equity by passing the Internet For All Now Act.

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Respectfully,

Hank Weston  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors

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