ALEX PADILLA
CALIFORNIA

(202) 224-3553
PADILLA.SENATE.GOV

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:
BUDGET
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
JUDICIARY
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

February 24, 2023

Honorable Alan Davidson
Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C.20230

RE: Letter of Support for the California Department of Technology's Application to NTII's Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program

Dear Assistant Secretary Davidson:

I write in support of the California Department of Technology's application to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program (MMG). The Department's application focuses on securing vital federal funding for the construction of California's Middle-Mile Broadband Initiative (Initiative), a statewide open-access middle-mile fiber network.

The State of California's ambitious plan to create a 10,000-mile middle-mile network will serve as the backbone for last-mile deployment of affordable, equitable, and reliable broadband service to all. The Initiative calls for an open-access network that offers public and private service providers wholesale access to middle-mile services at fair, reasonable, and equal terms, regardless of the technology used.

The State has allocated significant resources but needs additional funding to ensure that the broadband network being built is able to reach all areas of need that have been identified by the California Public Utilities Commission. Due to the current funding gap, nearly 300,000 California addresses would remained unserved. The Department's application aims to address this funding gap. It is my understanding that securing the additional funding needed from this grant would enable the Department to extend service to areas that would otherwise remained underserved by middle-mile facilities.

The California Department of Technology's proposal aims to facilitate high-speed connections in communities where many Californians urgently need access to broadband and the essential services that such a connection enables. Without broadband connection, services in the fields of government, education, telework, healthcare, and economic development will continue to be inaccessible.

For all the aforementioned reasons, I urge your full and fair consideration of the California Department of Technology's application consistent with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

Please keep my office informed of the status of this application, and if I can be of further assistance, do not hesitate to contact my Northern California Field Representative, Roberto Rizo, at (916) 247-8122. Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

ALEX PADILLA
United States Senator