

## **Broadband for All Roundtable: Schools, Libraries and CBOs May 12, 2022**

### **Transcript**

Recording started.

Good afternoon. Welcome to the Broadband for All roundtable. A few housekeeping items before we begin. For attendees. Please use the q&a function if you have a question. Questions will be answered at the end of the roundtable so we can combine similar questions and maximize our time. The host will use chat to provide links and information referenced during presentations, a video of this roundtable and the slides will be made available on the Broadband for All portal the link will be provided in the chat. A reminder to presenters, please cue Jeffrey Nolish to advance your slides when presenting. We do have a full agenda today and respectfully request that speakers keep to allotted timeframes and attendees use the q&a functions for the questions. With the housekeeping items addressed, I'd like to introduce government operations agency secretary Amy Tong who has been playing a key role in advancing the state towards broadband for all: Secretary Tong.

Thank you, Jules and welcome everyone and good afternoon to this Broadband for All roundtable. We are pleased to see so many education, library and community-based partners united around our common goals to close the digital divide and foster digital equity and inclusion in California. Broadband is essential in modern life. Today with school work and healthcare increasingly an often entirely available online, California's ability to access and use broadband is the difference between being able to fully engage in or being cut off. And yet too many Californians still do not have access they need. It is time to close the digital divide. We face, we face complex and deep-rooted challenges in delivering broadband for all. We also recognize achieving broadband for all will require partnership with a support from the broadband industry, federal, local and tribal government. Schools, libraries and community-based organizations are critical partners in this effort. Thankfully, we are at the moment in time where federal and state policies, priorities and fundings are aligned around the goal we share. The state's Broadband for All program is based on the foundation that broadband access, adoption and training are essential components of digital equity and that the digital equity is the goal for every Californian. Today you will hear about the progress that the California Broadband Council members have made on the implementation of the Broadband for All

action plan. We will provide updates on the state's historic 6 billion investment on broadband middle mile infrastructure and last mile grant programs that the governor and the legislature created and funded last July when passage, with the passage of SB 156. Furthering these efforts, and the recent federal bipartisan infrastructure legislation allocated an additional 62 billion to further support states through a variety of broadband and digital equity programs. California is actively pursuing these funds to support our digital equity effort and augment the effort that you are undertaking at the regional and local level. We are eager to expand existing partnership, create new partnerships and align efforts with yours to achieve broadband for all in California. Thank you, back to you Jules.

I believe Secretary Thurmond is next.

Thank you, Secretary Tong for those wonderful remarks. Greetings to everyone who was part of the Broadband Council and to everyone who's participating in today's program. It's great to see our state librarian Greg Lucas and Sunne McPeak and so many others who we've had a chance to work with in making sure that we close the digital divide in California once and for all. I don't have to tell any of you how hard these last two years have been for all of us, seeing disruptions of every kind experiencing the loss of loved ones to COVID, watching acts of hate in many of our communities starting with the killing of George Floyd, the spike in hate against the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, seeing bullying and mistreatment of many of our LGBTQ+ students. Our communities have experienced multiple pandemics, the COVID 19 pandemic, as well as the pandemic of racism, not to mention that 20 counties in our state experienced wildfire during the pandemic and other forms of natural disaster. We know that there are many challenges that our communities have faced, but California continues to rise to meet the challenge where our families and students are. And so for those of you who I'm seeing for the first time, it is a moment to say thank you for the work that you did to help us. Within days of the start of the pandemic we uncovered that many of our students were without the basic tools that they needed to be connected to their educators and to their school communities. Sadly, we found that as many as a million students as we were moving into distance learning in every school in our state, as many as a million students were without computers, and maybe another million students were without access to high-speed internet. And so clearly, this made it difficult for our students to stay connected and we know that there have been some impacts for our students. Many of you rallied to the cause. I'm grateful for all of you and the governor, our legislators our first partner, the State Board of Education President Linda Darling-Hammond, who joined with me as we work to get donations for many of our students. I'm grateful to those of you who joined the efforts of our taskforce on closing the digital divide that was able to secure low-cost internet for many families in our state. And I'm grateful to our partners or internet service providers who agreed to provide internet to our students and families for as little as \$10 a month. Thank you to you for your partnership. I'm also

grateful to our partners in the legislature and the governor who provided billions within days of the pandemic that ultimately allowed us to secure 1 million computers for California students. And I'm certainly proud to have served as a as an author. I'm sorry, as the sponsor of legislation that ultimately led to the \$6 billion that we now have to build out the infrastructure so that we can have broadband for all in every part of our state and that never again will our students have to go without the basic tools to be connected. Let's go beyond that. We know that technology is an important part of every aspect of learning. And so let us work to a day when every student in our state will have access to computer science training and other types of training that prepare them for the jobs of the future. We know that these are incredible opportunities that can go unfilled, unless our students have the training and STEAM and other topics that can help them prepare to take on these incredible roles as we move forward. So I'm grateful to everyone at the Broadband Council. Thank you for the work of the affordability connectivity plan that provides additional support to Californians. I know there's a lot of work to do to get past the middle mile and the last mile, but we are California, and this is something that we can do. And I hope that you all will continue to think in a spirit of innovation, in the same way that we've named that innovation challenge. We're offering a million-dollar cash prize to an entrepreneur, an innovator, a researcher who helps us think through a way to make great strides in innovation and creating connectivity and closing the digital divide. On behalf of our 6 million students, I'm grateful for what we are doing and how we will allow technology to align with all the things that we're doing to help our students moving forward. We're going to provide them with 10,000 counselors to recover and heal from the trauma of the pandemic. We're gonna make sure our students learn to read by third grade and have access to great programs that allow them to learn another language and the work being done by the Broadband Council is in direct alignment with all of these efforts to prepare our students for the jobs of tomorrow. So that's it for now. Please accept my thanks. And we look forward to the recommendations that come out of this roundtable and further efforts in creating greater connectivity for California students, educators and families. Thank you all very much.

Thank you, Superintendent Thurmond. State librarian Lucas?

Well, hi, I'm Greg Lucas, the California State Librarian. Thank you, Amy. And thank you, Superintendent Thurmond. Not really sure what else I can add, other than to say how grateful I am to be included in roundtables like this. It's ...given all of the investment that the state is making both in connecting hard to connect places in parts of California and the middle mile it's... it's important for us to come together and figure out where we all fit into this enormous multibillion dollar puzzle. I mean, when you strip it all away, ultimately all of us on this call are in the business of connecting Californians to opportunity, and there isn't a single one of us here that can do that by themselves. And success comes from collaboration and finding the

places where each of us can make the contribution that ultimately leads to success. And I did, I did also want to just say... what you know already, which is that libraries are an essential part of our education system, that they also build community resilience. There's 1,130 local libraries, community libraries in California. That's the most of any state in the country, which says something about us as Californians as a starter, but it also provides an important network to connect California. And I so enjoy the collaboration that we've already begun with local libraries working with the emerging technology fund to.... to make more people aware of the affordable connectivity program. And so... with and, you know, I mean, I see that the agenda says I should be done. So, let's, let's get on with the substance. I mean, as former Speaker Willie Brown used to say enough about me let's talk about what you think about me.

Deputy Secretary Adams?

**Hi, everybody.** Thank you, Jules. And just, thank you to Secretary Tong and Superintendent Thurmond, and state librarian Lucas, it's really a testament to the state's effort that the leadership is really behind the state's programmatic approach to closing the digital divide. If I could ask, are the are the slides up? I can't see them. Thank you. Can we go to the next slide please? Excellent. And so, I also wanted to welcome you all here, I know we have a really big group of schools and libraries and community-based organizations, and I think that, you know, State Librarian Lucas said it best, who are all in the business of connecting people to opportunity. Certainly, the digital divide, you know, presents a gap to those opportunities who need them most. And so, what this roundtable is intended to do is, as well as others that will have in the coming years, is to align folks around the shared goals that you know, the state really believes our plan is focused on, and that's that access to, you know, reliable, affordable internet service, increasing the adoption and use of that, you know, services and devices and then creating access to skills and training are essential to digital equity and inclusion. Next slide, please.

Just real quickly, our role at the Department of Technology and Broadband and Digital Literacy Offices, is really to work with the California broadband Council, which since 2010 has been the collaborative entity that has been working on the deployment of.... at the state level, the deployment of broadband infrastructure and also broadband adoption, in areas that are defined as unserved and underserved by the California Public Utilities Commission, and what's unique about the broadband Council is it's a 12 member body that includes nine state agencies, including the Department of Technology, the Public Utilities Commission, the Transportation Agency, Department of Education, state libraries, the Travel Advisor, et cetera, and the Department of General Services, and the California Emerging Technology Fund and really shows how the state is working together to leverage the power of government to

support the digital divide. I think as Superintendent Thurmond said , as we all experienced with COVID in the pandemic, that an additional light was shown on the digital divide and the work of the Broadband Council was significantly changed by the governor's broadband executive order in response to COVID, which directed the Broadband Council to develop, really in just four short months with a lot of input and collaboration from you folks, to develop the state Broadband For All Action Plan. It had a number of actions designed to, you know, address affordability, increase the state's mapping, identified funding, and really look at policies and processes that could improve to support the digital divide. And then as you know, we have all of our previous speakers that indicated that Senate Bill 156 really changed the game in providing the much needed \$6 billion to support middle and last mile infrastructure that was called out in the Agile plan, and the Middle Mile effort is being led by Department of Technology and my colleague Mark Monroe, who you'll hear from later, and then the CPUC is really leading effort on the last mile. Next slide, please.

So, this portion here of the program is to give folks an update on the work that we're doing on the Broadband For All Action Plan. So, while the Department of Technology and our office helped support and monitor the overall progress of the action plan, we lead on six specific items: the first is working to enhance permitting process at all levels of government to support the expeditious deployment on a lot of the broadband infrastructure that's being deployed over the next several years, to work with the Department of General Services on identifying state properties for possible use for broadband infrastructure, to look at ways to promote state contractual vehicles to support cost savings and efficient purchasing of broadband services and equipment. The next item is to promote and track the progress of adoption programs and device programs throughout the state. This roundtable, and many others to follow are really, you know, an example of number 18, where we're working with a number of other partners to develop a multi-layer network of digital-inclusion stakeholders to address needs, share resources and coordinate initiatives. And then lastly, working to establish a broadband for all portal which would serve as a central repository of what's going on in the state. Next slide, please. I'd like to introduce Jason Kenney, from the Department of General Services to share with you about some of the work we're doing on state property identification. Jason.

Yeah. Hi, everybody. Hope you all can hear me. There were some technical glitches on the last one of these... But assuming you can, wanted to talk a little bit here about, kind of, what we're doing on the state side, and, you know, at least a couple of starting ideas of how collaboration might be possible with partners on the school district level, libraries and the like. At the end of the day, we have 44,000 pieces of property in California that's under state control. Some of these, as you can imagine, are lakes and forested mountain tops and beaches and those sorts of things. Others are state office buildings, Highway Patrol offices, it really runs the gamut. But, you know, working with our partners at CDT in kind of overlaying

state property with, you know, middle mile network proposed paths, there's quite a bit of overlap between where the state property sits and the potential installation spaces. Beyond that, the state has its inventory of about 24,000 buildings. Some of these are lifeguard stations, we're not putting an antenna on a lifeguard station, but you know, other structures, you absolutely could. We do own comms towers, some for emergency-use some for non-emergency use for that could be piggybacked off of. So, the opportunity for state property to be leveraged is pretty critical. One of the things that we are doing or will be doing is working with industry partners on a survey to try to better understand the types of installation on state property not just where, but how, some of this broadband infrastructure would be best deployed. Is that underground infrastructure, is that siting of a 40-ft. tall tower, is that putting antennas on buildings and those sorts of things. You know, given the proximity of state property, especially in some rural communities, there's a last mile element there, that's quite attractive too. But as we learn, I think there's an opportunity to share that with local partners. You know, if we find out for example, that the vast majority of providers want to put antennas on roofs and those roofs need to be you know, no more than two stories tall in certain areas, you know, that that might have benefit, to I think, to school districts and others who, maybe we don't have property in the area, but there's an opportunity to partner and see something happen there. And so, I think as we get intelligence, as we sort of go down this path you know, our lessons learned could be, could be your lessons learned. There's an opportunity, even potentially, for further partnering. But yeah, we are excited. I think there's a great deal of flexibility that's possible with state property and to Superintendent Thurmond's point, seeing this rule realized in every facet of state government to bridge this, this digital divide is near and dear to all of our hearts. Scott, thank you.

Thank you, Jason. Really appreciate the work that you're doing on the property identification front. I encourage folks, you know, state agencies to continue to, you know, make sure that that when relevant and Jason and DGS's SBI database is updated with the most current information because that's really critical. Wanted to move on to the next portion of the Broadband for All presentation, and that is Laura Sasaki who is our Broadband Initiatives Manager is going to do a brief demo and walkthrough of the Broadband for All portal.

Thanks Scott. Okay, as Scott had mentioned, we were kind of going over some of the previous Action Items, action item 21, from the Broadband for All action plan, called out developing a Broadband for All portal, a central repository for all things broadband in California. And this site is live, it went live mid- March this year. It is our first iteration. We're continuing to build off of it and add to it, hopefully with your help, and other partners help. We do start off with the Broadband for All program. That is the overall program over the other broadband initiatives, and that includes the broadband for all action plan, the middle mile broadband initiative, and then the last mile and adoption programs both of which you will hear more about later in

the presentation today, and will have an opportunity to ask questions about as well. These go out to the respective sites where you can learn more about those particular initiatives. If you want to subscribe for updates, you can subscribe for Broadband for All updates here. And we do really want to touch on some of the tools that we have for partners really recognizing that schools, libraries and CBOs are critical partners in communities in getting information out there about broadband. Engaging, creating awareness for affordable offers and the like. So, one of the areas I'm really going to focus on today is the affordable service programs. Some of you are already aware, some of these may be new to some of you, but we've partnered with Everyone On and the California Emerging Technology fund to provide this service on the Broadband for All portal. And what I'm going to do, is I'm going to go ahead and I am going to put in my home zip code in the central valley, right off of 99. And we're going to look for affordable service offerings for internet service and devices in that area. So, we come here to start clicking some of the conditions that might apply to me in my household. And as you do that, you're able to see offers that start to come up that are available in your zip code. The first thing that we always are leading with, is with the Affordable Connectivity Program. Again, you're going to hear more about that later on. Some of you are already very engaged in this and very engaged in creating awareness. And so, we have that feature here because in a lot of instances, that \$30 a month subsidy may actually be able to offset the full cost of the low-cost offerings from these providers in this area. So, if you have folks that are coming to you, asking for help finding internet, this is a place that you can come, help them navigate to putting in their zip code and then finding offers and then subsequently being able to sign up for those, and as well as for the affordable connectivity program that may zero that cost out. It's a huge, huge area of help. I will touch briefly on the planning area of the portal. Again, the portal is something that we're going to continue to build off of, and this is where we really want to engage with you and receive feedback, and get some help from you. So, currently we have some resources and toolkits that we have put together and shared out on here. These are all for you to download, take a look at, see if it helps with efforts in your area. Specifically around the digital inclusion, a lot of you are actively involved in this currently. And it's also an opportunity to see what other areas are working on. I do want to call out California State Library as having one of our digital skills training tools, it is featured on here. We have skills under Parent University, really catering to being able to have those digital skill sets. We also have an area for residents where they can find the same thing with affordable service offerings. And then we have an area for Broadband for All giving you kind of a little bit of the background on what has created all of this. Scott touched on that on some of the previous slides. And then, if you do need to reach us for anything, if there's something that is missing from the website, we have an opportunity for you to contact us. Let us know what it is that is missing. Or, if you have something that you want to contribute, that's also something that we really want to hear from you on. Going back over here to the area for our partners, we have a funding database. This is in the process of being updated. We're going to have some of the newer programs that are coming up, and it's a searchable funding database. So, I am just going to go under libraries, I'm going to look for... let's see, we're going to do deployment, and

we have some of the programs that come up that education entities are eligible to apply for. So, it's a way for you to search for funding, provides more information if you're looking for that, and if you say hey, this sounds like something that I want to go ahead and apply for, then you can actually link out to that and start the application process. So, I think that kind of summarizes really what we wanted to cover today. We will be continuing to post events on here. So please, keep an eye out for that. This is basically where you will come to see events like this, or events that our partners are hosting. And that will be up here and updated on a regular basis. So, I think with that I'm going to turn it back over to Scott.

Thank you, Laura. Just wanted to say great job to you and the team for your work putting together the portal, and to your commitment to collaborating with a whole host of partners to build this out in a bi-directional fashion. So, it's like, you know, like you said, we're putting information together but really the call to action is to, you know, solicit and feature the great work that's being done by local and regional partners, and to go feature that and share it out to others who may benefit from that. So really appreciate it. I want to say that this concludes the portion of the update on the Broadband for All action plan. Just want to really point out that the action plan itself is a series of action items related around, you know, both policy process improvement, identifying funding, you know, creating a framework for collaboration between entities. We're going to go into the next portion of the agenda which is on the middle mile broadband initiative which really addresses the need to address the missing middle mile infrastructure to make last mile connectivity more affordable and accessible to individuals. And I'd like to introduce Mark Monroe, from our office to take over this portion.

Good afternoon, Scott, and thank you. So, I'm Mark Monroe, I'm the Deputy Director for the middle mile broadband initiative here at CDT. And, go to the next slide. I think this is, this was really created by the SB 156 last year, it was enacted last July. The budget package provides a full \$6 billion investment over three years to expand broadband infrastructure statewide and increase affordability and enhance access to Californians, and particularly those that are underserved, or unserved and underserved. The package provided \$3.25 billion to develop a statewide middle mile network, that was estimated at the time to be more than 8000 miles long, and also provided \$2.75 billion for last mile infrastructure grants as well as a loan loss reserve account to help with um, to back financing and to provide some technical assistance to, to some of the communities that would be looking to expand last mile in their area. Next slide. SB 156, it you know, assigned a number of roles and responsibilities, and in this endeavor specifically relative to the middle mile broadband initiative, equip CDT as the manager kind of overseeing the project as a whole. The Public Utilities Commission helps identify where the unserved and underserved areas are located throughout the state, and go through their public proceeding process to get public input on that. SB 156 also required the state to work with a third-party administrator and Golden State net is that administrator that we're working

with, they have the added lens of having operated, having experienced operating a network, and ensuring that what we design is not something that just works on paper but actually works as a network that provides reliable service. And then of course, a key partner is Caltrans, the overall perspective or the concept of SB 156 was using the state's infrastructure to put in the broadband infrastructure, and so understanding that state highways Connect, you know, can get most of the way to most to unserved and underserved communities throughout the state, the \$3.25 billion dollars was really intended to develop as much as possible and build as much as possible but develop a statewide middle mile network that could link up these, these communities. So that when last mile providers would have a mental model to connect to. And then of course, there's department of finance, they handle the budget side of this project. And really key is that SB 156 and the budget package is really funded with federal funds from the state and local fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF). And most of us will be familiar with ARPA, that was the term used for the first nine months, but it has certain guidelines that are associated with that. And the Department of Finance is really pulling together all of the reporting requirements that the US Treasury needs for that. Next slide, one of the one of the functions that was required by step CDT in SB 156, was establishment of a Middle Mile Advisory Committee. Most of the folks on this call have been logging on to those, they happen usually about the third Friday of every month. And in doing that, we started with establishing some guiding principles, and first being to provide affordable Open Access middle mile broadband infrastructure to connect to these unserved and underserved communities throughout the state. Second, to build the network expeditiously, including the use of existing infrastructure. And so, as we'll get to later there is SB 156, while the intent is to build as much as possible, there is room... to the extent that the funding is insufficient to build all of it, to use, to deliver existing infrastructure to fill in the gaps. And then the last is to prioritize the connectivity to unserved and underserved communities, including community institutions. So, these are really, this is the really the intent of the project and the guiding principles for them. This slide here just illustrates the fact that, this project is moving forward in stages, not surprising for a project of this size. We started last August in terms of the Public Utilities Commission, in addition to the MMAC being established Public Utilities Commission, taking in public input and August and September, through a proceeding to help better identify where the areas of need are in the state. At the same time, the Golden State Net and Caltrans have been working with CDT to design and engineer the network that we'll be building. And as we move, as we identify where we need Caltrans to ...where the system potentially, where we need Caltrans to do the pre-construction work, and this is something that historically takes you know, one or two years at least to go from the point of deciding to do a project to actually being able to go to contract for it. It involves all the design and engineering, and the survey work and environmental [inaudible]. Next slide. This slide here really... kind of is more illustrative. It just shows that the vast majority of the expenditures will be driven by the actual construction work once that starts, and it also reflects the fact that a lot of that won't happen until we start ramping up until the start '23 and '24 as that pre-construction that Caltrans is doing is finalized and we move to construction. Next slide. So as mentioned before, the funding package of \$3.25 billion for the middle our

broadband initiative is ARPA funding. And some of the requirements for the ARPA funding include that it be under contract by December 2024, and that those contracts be liquidated and the project be completed by December of 2026. So, we have a very tight timeframe for moving from where we're at right now, to be able to identify where the where the unserved and underserved locations are, to moving through the pre-construction and getting to construction. And then as mentioned before, the \$3.25 billion was not initially anticipated to be enough to build out what was initially estimated to be a system have more than 8,000 miles. And so, I think we, as a rule of thumb have indicated that we hope to be able to actually build at least 6,000 miles of the network assuming that size, (8000 miles) and then we will anticipate then filling in the gaps there using the leasing of existing infrastructure and dark fiber buy or use. Next slide. With that, I'll turn it over to Erik Hunsinger of Golden State Net to talk through where they are with their mapping efforts.

Thanks, Mark. Appreciate that. Erik Hunsinger, Senior Vice President of Infrastructure, at Golden State Net. Next slide, please. So, we're gonna do a quick overview of some of the objectives for the network, some of the elements that came into the decision-making process, and then you'll get a look at the recommended network design as it is across the state and how that's broken out into the development regions defined by the TPA. Next slide, please. Thank you. Jump right to the heart of it. So, the third party administrator as defined by SB 156, had responsibility for developing the network in coordination with the CPUC and CDT. So, under Secretary Tong's auspice as well as contributions from Deputy Secretary Mark Monroe and Deputy Secretary Scott Adams, we began analyzing the need, which there is a variety, one of the largest economies in the world has the potential to bring to bear a substantial amount of connectivity to all its constituents across the four corners of California. There's a varied region by mountainous, farmland, urban, rural, so many factors. So, we started with the CPUC middle mile map to begin to guide the recommended construction routes. We engaged with a diverse set of communities, including Regional Broadband Consortia, public comment, collaboration with the CPUC on their gathered data about public comment, as well as analysis, economic analysis, and then CDT as well, coordinating through partnerships with the legislature in guiding this process. So, once we received those comments, we began to define where the network priorities were. Those are important because there's only so much funding to go around. And the priority here is to construct as much network as possible. The benefit of construction is that the state will own the asset for as long as it's usable, typically 30 years, maybe 40 years, with the option to upgrade that infrastructure when it's needed. In addition to that, the flexibility of design is put into place. So, the standard rule of thumb is that we will treat the network as almost a metropolitan network with connection points about every 2,500 feet. They won't be built in advance but they will be... the philosophy is to allow connection, where last mile opportunities might be created in the future. So, whatever is ready now can take advantage but whatever is planned for in the communities can leverage the investment that the state is making in this network.

Next slide, please. So, as Mr. Monroe noted, Caltrans is an important partner in this effort. They have a sizable experience, a sizable organization with experience in project managing, experience managing a large amount of real estate, and then in addition to that, they have a lot of right of way, and that is the key elements to getting this done quickly. So, they are the linchpin to getting this constructed in an efficient and cost-effective manner, as well as holding the rights of way which are so important to telecom networks. In addition to that, we may strategically, where it makes sense, leverage commercial partnerships, where perhaps public funding has already built infrastructure, or if there's commercial infrastructure that might be relevant to the core components of the network, but that does not supersede the plans that CDT has placed to do construction into the various areas of California. In addition to that we're seeking out joint build opportunities with commercial carriers and community organizations, anyone looking to do construction, through dig-once policy. We want to partner with them to reduce the overall costs associated with the construction of the network. Next slide, please. So, as we go through this, we'll be determining the priorities of build versus buy versus joint build, as I've kind of described a little bit before. And we'll work with CDT to maximize the budget capabilities and the construction of the network. We'll be determining where the newly built routes are, focusing on areas that are completely unserved due to the lack of commercial investment. In addition, the underserved, which I believed, Secretary Tong called out earlier, so difficult to figure out where unserved and underserved do exist. Often there's infrastructure there so creative solutions have to come into play in regards to solving broadband for those constituents. We started with an initial 18 projects as the analysis to develop a way of understanding how the network can be pieced together across the state, and you'll see where we were six months ago, and then we'll be showing you what we're recommending going forward statewide. Next slide please. So here we're just breaking out the state into five regions to help manage the projects more effectively. Of course, we'll be partnering with Caltrans in the various districts allocated across these regions. Next slide please. So, in region one, starting on the northern part of the state, this theme of catastrophic outages and fire hazards kind of plays through the entire deck here that I have today. It's a common theme on many parts of the state. In addition to that, there's extremely difficult regions to do construction in some of these areas. In Region One, particularly coastal areas. They're roads that are literally one lane wide with mountains on both sides. So, they're very difficult areas. So, partnerships are really key to getting the network configured and put in place. In this particular region, we have the good fortune to cooperate with two of the largest tribal entities in the state of California, the Hoopa Valley Tribe in the Yurok Tribe, and in addition to that, there's a commercial partnership that we've recommended with Siskiyou Telephone to finalize their network elements and to help build a more robust connection for Siskiyou Telephone and their residents. And in return, we would be getting assets that are with the State of California in perpetuity of the relationship. Next slide, please. Here we're showing the Caltrans districts as defined in region one. Next slide. And here you can see some of the analysis that we worked to confirm with the CPUC. This data is originally CPUC data. We did

some additional analysis and didn't find any variation in this. But what's important about this is that they're very sparsely populated areas in the Northeast. Those have not been left out of the design. You'll see as we go through this, every corner, every inch of the state of California is considered prime opportunity to construct the network. Next slide. Here's the original projects associated with this region. We had four different projects identified six months ago. Next slide. Here, we're interconnecting those more robustly. So, the recommendation here are these routes, and there are a few of these routes where there's a potential commercial relationship for an IRU if it's decided that we want to reduce those costs, at least, for core portions of the network, that might be a possibility, but the majority of this will be constructed. Next slide. And here in the next slide, as it comes up, we'll be showing you the CPUC overlay. There you go. Thank you that's fine. That's fine. There wasn't anything too important to see from that. And we'll see more of that later. In region two, again, very difficult to mountainous regions to do construction parts sparsely populated, as well as dense urban areas and high fire risks. One of the elements of urban areas is the lack of adoption is really driven by socioeconomic factors. And some of you may be wondering how middle mile can help with that. Well, by reducing the cost of backhaul associated with infrastructure so that local area providers can interconnect to the larger telecom world. Reducing those costs in between the last mile and telecom centers is one of the key elements of the recommended network. Next slide please. So here, the Caltrans districts are defined. Next slide please. Again, the sparsely populated regions. You'll see in a moment how we do recommend constructing network near those areas so that we can leverage future potential designs in the last mile. What's important here too, is one of the most advanced areas of technology in the world, Silicon Valley, has a very high rate of unserved and underserved populations. So, technology has left some folks behind and the Golden State Net network intends to address those populations as well. Next slide. This was the original project list and it was never intended to be a full network design. It was just an initial project look at how one might construct in these areas. Next slide please. And here, with guidance from Deputy Director Monroe, we've expanded the network topology to include rings. They're not perfectly round, but they're interconnected with each other to afford reliability and resiliency in a network so that if one side goes down, there's connectivity in another direction, addressing the populations that are in need, where we can on Caltrans right of way. This would not be the final network. Next slide please. What I want to say is that, here, you know, we can identify that the CPUC has called out some needed connectivity in some remote regions that are very tough to build resiliency, and so we have to look and understand how the network can be constructed in a way to benefit these populations as well. Next slide.

So, as we move further down the state, we'll see again: urban areas, mountain regions, an additional tribal entity, the Tule River [Tribal Nation] will be noted here. I want to point out that the interconnection capabilities (that I described earlier every 2500 feet) is available for any entity that wants to use the network: any community, any tribal entity, any commercial entity,

in essence the state is constructing a truly open broadband access network. So that will help address the socio-economic factors that are limiting broadband adoption and delivery to remote parts of the state. Next slide. Here Caltrans districts five, six and nine... please move to the next slide. And again, the demographics as confirmed with CPUC of area of need. Next slide please. So originally, our proposals in this area you can see that there's some in the top corners that aren't connected, these again were projects that were started, or recommendations that were started to analyze where the fit was needed in the region. Next slide. And you can see here that we've expanded the capabilities and the opportunities for constructing a more robust infrastructure. Next slide, please. And overlaying the middle mile. Thank you, next slide. So, region four is a bit unique. It's densely urban, but there's interestingly enough very remote rural areas which are often left forgotten. Not in the case for the Golden State design, with coordination with the CDT and the CPUC, we've tried to develop a network here that will reach into all the corners of this region to provide connectivity. There are joint build opportunities with commercial carriers that have been identified. So, we're working with Deputy Secretary Monroe to analyze those and prioritize those, and we'll get those locked in to reduce costs, and perhaps increase time to market. Next slide. Los Angeles and San Diego areas... I'm sorry, Orange County areas. So, dense urban areas. Next slide. Also, as you can see here, we need to address the socio-economic factors. There are numerous fiber networks in this area, but they're not able to fill in and do the job that is expected to provide broadband to these communities. So, Golden State needs to step in and develop network for them. Next slide. The original projects we had expected that maybe we could leverage more infrastructure in these areas that's existing through commercial partnership and that's still a possibility. However, with the CPUC's recommendation, construction of some core corridors of fiber, is a priority for the CDT and the TPA. Next slide please. So here again, you'll see network rings, where we can develop resiliency again, and reaching into the far rural parts of the north eastern portions of the area. And then in addition, we've identified potential commercial partnerships that might address the broadband needs in Catalina which surprisingly enough, there are numerous entities, numerous households that are lacking in broadband. Next slide. Here's the CPUC evaluation of the region as well. I think we're about to move to the last region. Next slide, please. Region Five. So, this region has a mix as well of dense urban areas, rural areas, numerous tribal entities, too many really to put on the list. It would take a slide into itself, as well as mountainous regions that are difficult to do construction. Next slide. Thank you. So, San Bernardino. These are Caltrans districts and Imperial County, obviously is here, as well as San Diego. Next slide. What's important here is that there are vast areas that are unpopulated, but the state has identified that the need to cross and traverse those areas in order to supply services and communities that have been left behind. I want to call out Blythe in particular as an area. There's limited capabilities in that area and so the Golden State network would augment the existing network and there's a potential for you know, communities to step up or any partnership there in those areas. In addition, San Bernardino and as you see San Diego, again, dense urban areas with a need for connectivity. Next slide. And so, the original project list really addressed core areas of San Bernardino and Coachella

Valley. But we'll see in the next slide. Can we go through that, please? We'll see... there, thank you through the coordination with CPUC and CDT we've added incremental routes that really address the regional needs. And I want to point out, that in all the design considerations, we've really focused on redundancy, so that there's resiliency and capabilities and there will be continuity of service. Next slide. There's a CPUC see version of that way. I believe that concludes... next slide. I want to point out, this is recommended, so these are still under evaluation. There's an element of where commercial partnerships might replace some of this, but the core essence is that if there are a few of those identified, the majority of this is going to get built and service the people of California. I'll hand it back to a deputy secretary, Deputy Director, sorry, Mark Monroe.

Thank you very much, Erik, for GSN's work on that, putting that map together, and for that walk through on the methodology and kind of the routes that it yields. So, just real quick here- So you know, we've got this, we now have the PUC's maps. We have Golden State nets map, this was really kind of intended to answer the question: if we were to build, where would we would we need to build throughout the state? And, we know that we don't have enough money to build but we don't know how much money exactly it's going to cost per mile to build. And so, kind of looking forward here, we want to get Caltrans working on their pre-construction work to start the, you know, one to two year timeframe, they need to complete that. And part of that will be identifying how much it cost to build. But, then at the same time we'll be looking at where existing infrastructure can be leased. And so, and you know, in the next month, months to come, to maybe a year, we would try to really kind of hone in on where we can afford to build and where leases will be the best alternative. So with that I'll go ahead and send it back to Scott.

Thanks Mark and Erik, and folks, we know this is a lot of information but we think it's important and wanted to share it with our partners and stakeholders, the progress that's been made. It's, it's very complex, but they're making good progress. Now to go to the next portion, and really the last mile programs that are designed to help, you know, communities and regions connect to the middle mile. We have Eileen ODell from the California Public Utilities Commission. Eileen?

Hi. Thank you, Scott. Can folks hear me? Yep. Great. Thank you so much. Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for allowing me to provide an update on the CPUC last mile broadband funding activities. I'm so excited to be here. As Scott said, my name is Eileen Odell, and I'm an advisor for Commissioner Darcy Houck. Commissioner Houck is the assigned Commissioner overseeing our CSF rulemaking, which is one of two rulemakings, which the programs I'll be talking about today are developed and administered. The other rulemaking is headed up by our commission president Alice Reynolds, and that is our broadband for all rulemaking. So I'm

going to be talking a little bit about both those rulemakings in the presentation today. And there's going to be a lot of information here, and if we run out of time, I'm very happy to follow up with folks later. There'll be an email address for you to contact us in one of the concluding slides. The broadband legislation passed last year, specifically SB 156 and SB4 demonstrated the state's serious commitment to closing the digital divide by leveraging federal recovery funds to construct a statewide Open Access middle mile network and to fund last mile broadband networks. The CPUC responded quickly to begin implementing this historic legislation by scoping the various funding programs assigned the CPUC into the two critical rulemakings I just mentioned. Next slide, please. And next, there we go. Thank you so much. This slide provides an overview of the various broadband initiatives in which the CPUC is involved pursuant to last year's legislative package. Oops, sorry. To begin, I'm gonna summarize the group of last mile initiatives, and then I'll drill down into some of the more relevant programs in later slides. We have a varied audience here and so not all programs may be relevant to your organization. But there will be something here for everyone, and if you have questions about eligibility, there, again will be an email address shared at the end of this proceeding for you to reach out. First, on our slide here we have the broadband technical assistance programs, sometimes referred to as local agency technical assistance, and that will have \$50 million to award. Second, the loan loss reserve fund, which is still under development, will enable outside financing for local government nonprofits to deploy broadband networks, and the fund has \$750 million to award over three years. Number three, our federal funding account, sometimes referred to as our last mile account, which currently has \$2 billion to distribute over three years. And last but not least, the California Advanced Services Fund, which includes a number of sub accounts or separate programs that address broadband needs and a variety of areas: adoption, which is helping people who have infrastructure, get broadband, connectivity in public housing and other low-income communities, and funding for regional planning and expert consortia. And legacy infrastructure grant program with some statutory differences which between that and the federal funding account. And then the box on the right just briefly summarizes the CPUC's contribution to the middle mile initiative led by DOT for which Mark and Erik just provided their update. Next slide, please. So, I'm gonna go over this one fairly quickly. But the table on this slide categorizes various levels of public entity involvement in broadband networks in a number of ways that may be helpful for grounding the following discussion about last mile programs. I recognize that not all of this audience is comprised of local agencies or local governments that some folks here representing schools or libraries may want to take these ideas back to their cities, counties or education departments. I also think this chart just does a great job of breaking down different functions in network development and operations, so hopefully it's useful for everyone. It's from a white paper that's published by the US nonprofit US Ignite that does a lot of smart city work. And the table goes from fully public models in row one, labeled full municipal broadband to fully private in row five. And then the columns as I mentioned, divide the type of work that can be assumed by either a public or private entity over the course of full network deployment. The blue shaded cells are the work public entity does in each example and the gray shaded

cells denote private entity activities there. I want to highlight two points about this table quickly. First, I'll note that for the bottom row, the full private provider, the public entity still manages rights of way and utility infrastructure. And this is stating the obvious perhaps, but public entities will have a role no matter how broadband infrastructure is deployed. Second, I'll note the rightmost column lists example cities that have deployed broadband and row four, Fullerton, is California example or sci fi networks, built a privately funded service-based competition network where one private entity owns the infrastructure and sells infrastructure access to two or more ISPs or internet service providers to compete for customers, referred to in the chart as "private developer open access". So now, with this kind of background in folks' minds, I'm gonna move on to describing our specific last mile and adoption programs. But as we're going along, please keep in mind how one or more of the programs that I'm describing can support your work in any of the work areas listed in this chart. Next slide, please. Okay, the broadband package signed by Governor Newsom last year tasked the CPUC with awarding \$50 million in technical assistance grants to public entities and nonprofits to help them prepare to provide service in their communities. And so, a local agency is broadly defined in the program rules. It can be a city, it could be a county, there's a couple of different options, but I do also want to point out because of our audience that a local educational agency is an eligible applicant for this local agency Technical Assistance Program. Individual grants are to be no more than \$1 million per applicant, and there's an expedited process for requests of \$500,000 or less. The funds can cover a range of pre project costs to play last mile broadband infrastructure including environmental permitting, needs assessment, strategic plans, all those types of things. For next steps for you to be aware of, the CPUC will be hosting webinars and posting those videos to present the project application process with eligible entities and these actions are targeted for late May, with application windows opening in June or July. So, those are some things to keep in mind. And think about what work your organization may need to do to prepare for these programs, and how much of that prep work can be supported by the Technical Assistance Grant Program. So next slide, please. Thank you. This broadband package also committed \$750 million over three years for loan loss reserve funds, as mentioned earlier. The purpose of this plan is to assist local governments and nonprofit entities in securing financing so that they can build out their own last mile broadband infrastructure. The loan loss reserve will provide collateral to local governments to enable better borrowing rates and terms for bonds issued to deploy that broadband infrastructure. So, as far as action items, just be on the lookout for a CPUC straw proposal, we're intending to issue that sometime before August of this year. And then we'll have workshops to collaborate on the practicalities and details of the implementation of that program. If you plan to apply for a loan loss reserve funds, please engage with the CPUC, consider becoming a party to the CASF rulemaking so that you can share your expertise to help inform the rules and implementation of this program. Next slide please. Alright. So, another Last Mile program and part of the broadband infrastructure and service puzzle is the federal funding count. The CPUC adopted program rules earlier last month at the April 21<sup>st</sup> voting meeting. The rules included an allocation by county of funds out of this \$2 billion tranche for last mile projects. I and my colleagues know

that \$2 billion is not enough to meet even a conservative estimate of the Last Mile needed for unserved communities. So, keep in mind that the proposed allocation in this fund will not be the last chance for funding. For example, the bipartisan infrastructure law should bring significant additional funding to benefit these communities in need. For this program, the CPUC targets accepting applications by July this year, so look for data for interested applicants on priority or presumed eligible areas in the coming weeks. The data will be published on the Commission website as well as distributed to the service list for the two proceedings I've been referring to throughout this presentation. And then as the last bullet notes, it's a good time to begin planning for these applications. And again, public entities can evaluate activities for technical assistance grant to support this last mile Broadband Program as well. Finally, you can evaluate how you can support applicants to serve communities in your jurisdiction, even if you do not plan to apply yourself for this program. Okay, next slide, please. Great. For over a decade the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) broadband grant program has supported a range of broadband investments. The program was updated and reinvigorated by a number of pieces of legislation last year. A proposed decision is up for the CPUC to consider next week that would modernize program rules for another a number of long-standing CSF programs, including the adoption account, which folks can use to apply for grants to provide either public broadband access or digital literacy training, the public housing or low income communities account which provides funds for wiring for these eligible entities for the inside wiring for connections. And then finally for our consortia account, which funds our Regional Broadband experts. Actions that you might consider coming up: joining the distribution lists, service list for CASF activities, which is how grant timing and applications will be announced. You can check out the CPUC website for information on how to add yourself to service list for proceeding for a rulemaking, or you can use that email but I'm going to share at the end of this presentation to ask questions. Finally, additional actions that you can consider potentially engaging with the Commission to inform the implementation of these programs, maybe by becoming a party to the CPUC rulemakings, this one is being looked at again in the CASF rulemaking. Next slide, please. Okay, this is the broadband public housing account as I mentioned, this account provides funds for inside wiring to qualifying low-income housing such as publicly supported housing communities and also farmworker communities. And so, this infrastructure would require, the grant would require for the residents to be able to access a free broadband service. So, we're targeting applications for that in June or July. Next slide please. Here, we have a survey. So, this is, apologies because the survey isn't going to be relevant again for the entire audience here, but if you are representing a local government or local government agency or anything similar to that, we would ask if you do have the time to please fill out this survey. The survey assesses each community's broadband assets, broadband needs and interest in state grant programs, and it'll be a really valuable tool for us as we're putting together the loan loss reserve program and the rest of the rules for these implementations. So, if you do have time, please give that a look. Next slide please. And this concludes my remarks. Please let me know if I or my colleagues can follow up on any questions that these slides may have brought up. And this email here is a good single point of

contact for the commission. For folks who are on the phone, statewidebroadband@cpuc.ca.gov. So, I think that's it from me, I'll turn it back to Director Adams.

Thank you, really appreciate the work that you and the CPUC is doing. So, we've covered the last mile programs that PUC is working on. We'd like to introduce, Sunne McPeak the President and CEO of the California Emerging Technology Fund, and Susan Walters, who is the Senior Vice President at CETF, they're going to give an update on the Affordable Connectivity Program. A really, a big call to action because the Affordable Connectivity Program is part of the state's very strong focus on increasing broadband adoption rates. Sunne and Susan?

Thank you so much, Scott. I appreciate very much the fact that in each of the roundtables sponsored by the California Department of Technology and California Broadband Council, that we're talking about both deployment, the infrastructure, the ubiquitous deployment and construction of high-speed internet throughout California, and we're talking about how do people actually use the technology, which we refer to as adoption. And we use the word adoption to talk about all facets that are required to ensure that a household who is not online today can understand the value of the technology and make a decision to subscribe, get online and know how to use the technology. Generally, there are three barriers to a low-income household that is not online today deciding to adopt the technology. And the first is cost, and that cost includes both the cost of the internet service at home. and an appropriate device for that household, for all the family members in that household. The next is relevance. Understanding why if I'm trying to decide how to either get food on the table or have a connection to the Internet, why I would try to struggle to actually make that decision to subscribe to service, provided it is affordable to me, and the third is I need to know how to use the technology in order to do any of that. So those are the three barriers that Dr. John Horrigan identified in research in 2013 that we continue to cite. What you'll hear today from our panelists is why there is this need to mobilize around getting everyone online with this unprecedented federal benefit called the Affordable Connectivity Program. It is the goal of the California broadband council to get as many Californians online as possible and to secure not only our fair share, but we hope even more than our fair share of federal funds or California households. I do want to say in this particular roundtable, we are speaking to schools, libraries and community based organizations: "CBOs" as you heard from Secretary Tong, State Superintendent of public instruction, Tony Thurman, and state librarian, Greg Lucas , all three talked about the imperative to get everyone online and they also talked about the role that their respective partners throughout California can contribute, can play and contribute to this goal. Libraries and schools are, without a doubt, a very credible source of information. If a household a family a parent, a student gets information from a school, from a library, they're absolutely going to trust that information. In many cases, schools and libraries

are also the trusted messenger. It is really important to understand we need credible sources of information and the ability to reach out in language, in culture, to those who are not online and be that trusted messenger to talk about the relevance of the technology, how a household can get online with an offer or a service that's affordable, get an appropriate advice and learn how to use it. So that's what we're going to cover today. We have a huge mobilization that is going on in 2022 that you'll be hearing about. It is my real pleasure to be able to introduce my colleague, who is the California Emerging Technology Fund Senior Vice President, Susan Walters. In the 15 years that CETF has been in business, Susan has led an effort, a network of more than 100 community-based organizations, grantee partners, who have trained more than a million people in digital literacy, and who have been able to assist more than a half a million households get signed up connected to the internet. And so, with that, let me turn to Susan Walters.

Thank you, Sunne. Thank you, everybody. for making the time to join this afternoon. As you've already realized, there's just a ton of information here. And thank you to Scott in the Department of Technology, and of course Golden State Network. So, let's go to the next slide? And so, I'm going to cover just a couple things really quickly, and then we're going to bring on the speakers. I think, let's bring it to the next slide. I think everybody is probably fairly familiar with ACP as we refer to it, which is really Affordable Connectivity Program. It's \$30 a month, unless you're on tribal lands and then it's \$75 a month. You can get as a credit on your Internet Service bill. So, people do not receive a check or cash, you know, as an account holder. This is a credit that shows up on your internet bill. You'll notice under eligibility there are *quite* a few programs that qualify. And they line up with the programs that people would use to qualify for lifeline service. Today in California, most lifeline participants as in 98% of them, use the benefit for mobile service. But the really good news is here, if somebody is a lifeline participant, there's absolutely no application they need to complete for the Affordable Connectivity Program. They can simply call up an ISP and subscribe to a home internet service for example, and just let them know they are on Lifeline. And so that makes this process certainly a lot easier for those clients. Let's go on to the next slide. And so there, you can see for California, our goal is set by the Broadband Council, is 5 million [households]. Okay, and we have targets for 4.5 million by 2025. And then three quarters of that 5 million by 2027. We know that the activities listed here in the plan of action are going to be key, and they are not activities that we do once, right they're sort of a continuing stream of activities that reinforce each other, and you'll hear that through the speakers that we have. Let's go to the next page. Before I introduce the speakers, just a couple more relevant details. In terms of our enrollment for California currently, we're looking at 1.4 million households. So that's great. We have a good start. We do know that 30% of those who receive the ACP benefit, which was formerly the EBB or Emergency Broadband Benefit, which some of you may have heard of, that evolved into the Affordable Connectivity Program. 30% of the people who are signing up use their benefit for home internet, and 70% use it for mobile. And we refer to people who have a mobile connection

only as "under connected," in part because when they leave the household, that means others in the household no longer have a broadband connection. ACP allows us to help this low-income constituency really move into our modern age, where you can have both a mobile phone and home internet. So that's an important message to get out according to the data we're getting from USEC. Many people, now who are low income, will subscribe to a home service for a few months and then transition off because it's just so expensive. So, ACP at \$30 a month really can be a significant help, and when using it you have a choice to apply that to any internet service offered by an internet service provider. And just one other quick note on this page, I want to keep us moving, is the screenshot you see. This is an early screenshot of a map that CSU Chico is been working with us on, and now the Department of Technology is going to take this map and really make it accessible on their Broadband for All site so everyone will have access to it. And what makes that exciting is that it is a map that shows how many households are eligible by county and by zip code, and then how many have enrolled, and we keep it current with the data that USEC presents, not quite every month but almost every month, of enrollment. So that you can go in, put in a zip code and see how many households are eligible and then see how many are enrolled, or you can do that by county. So, we're excited to keep track of our goal for 5 million with this map. Next page, please. All right. So, we have two panels for you this afternoon. We're gonna start with the K-12 libraries and CBOs, and then the next panel will focus on higher education. So right now, I'm going to ask Eric Calderon from the Riverside County Office of Education to come off mute. He has some exciting and interesting things to share with you about what the County of Riverside is doing in the county office of Education. As we think about closing the digital divide, and Sunne was mentioning this right, it is not simply about ACP, but this is a lead. This is a major piece of getting people to think about the other steps that are necessary. So, devices are currently a gap. But we know people will not think about subscribing to internet at home if they don't have a device. Right, so that's one thing we want to address and discuss and you'll hear more about that in the presentations. This morning. Welcome, Eric.

Thank you, Susan. And you know, hopefully everyone can hear me. I just want to say thank you- I want to say a lot of thank yous to different folks that have been part of this. One, I want to thank the representative officials that we had earlier today, thank my superintendent Dr. Edwin Gomez, Tony Thurdmond from CDE. The folks that do work at CCSESA, California IT in education, our folks in K 12, our districts, the districts that are actually in this meeting that helped create the dialogue and the need for the things that are being promoted. And, Sunne thank you again for the invite here and just thank you for California IT and everyone that's been a part of this to carry the conversation of connecting not only our students but the community as a whole. And I really appreciate that the momentum and that the conversation still carries today, I'm so glad to hear that there's such opportunity for our LEA's to apply for some of those broadband grants. Because the last couple of years have forced our districts, our LEAs to become ISPs to be providers of internet to our students and our communities. And I

see a lot of attendees on here right now, and a lot of them are from the local school districts, and the regions and it's great to see the transition from EBB to ACP. And it comes very, very timely, as many of my colleagues from our school districts understand that our technology footprint for our students has grown in the last two years due to COVID and distance learning. So, the number of devices have now increased at each of our districts. Our districts will be challenged in trying to sustain the cost of providing hotspots, and Wifi for our students. And I think ACP is a great vehicle that allows our students and the community to be able to get those resources as this goes on. So, in regard to Riverside County, we are currently starting with our first five and early students to provide them the resources and thank you again, Sunne and Jeff Fellow from CDE for connecting us with some of those mailers that we can send out for our districts, that will hopefully create the awareness of this program for our students. And it comes at a very good time as well. It is May, and for many of our students, graduation is coming this June and a lot of them are going to matriculate into college or career. And usually when they graduate, they lose their device. They lose the district provided hotspot, they lose those things. So now there becomes a gap between when our students exit and entering college and career. And this program, I believe allows them to be able to get that connectivity after they exit the K 12 system have resources to get a device, and allow them to stay connected and that allows them to get ready for the fall classes, apply for jobs, be part of the society that we're building in making things more digital. So, I really appreciate the idea that we are trying to promote this to our districts and that we'll be promoting those resources in the coming months. I know that other county offices, other districts throughout the state have had a lot higher in terms of participation rate, and we're hoping to track those participation rates to show the efficacy to not only our communities, but to the policymakers, that this program is something that can benefit our students and our community. Because it is.... there's an old adage that says "it takes a village," and it really does. It really takes a village of community members that we have in this call, that communities that are in our cities and our districts, to really bring the resources for our students and this idea of equity. I think when I talk about the digital divide, and we talk about the idea of the device, the connectivity, and the ability to use those two things, and I think Sunne uses the term "adoption" for that. And I think that is what allows us to close the digital divide, is taking a look at those three things. We want to make sure that they have a device, we want to make sure that they have that connectivity, we want to make sure they know how to use it, and be safe in using it. I saw something on the Q&A about cybersecurity and things like that, and just making sure that our folks that enter into using these resources are aware of all the things that are there. And I think some of our partners are able to provide that professional development. I think a lot of our school districts were forced to be that professional development for a lot of our parents as well. So, it's great to have those conversation on what really allows us to close that digital divide. So again, I don't want to take too much more time on here, but I just want to just close off by saying that it's great to see that program ACP being put out there. What we're hoping to do is promoted not only in marking it through paper, but talking with our districts to see if they can have places to sign up for in their front offices. Maybe working with our other city folks to create centers for

them to sign up, because if you're asking folks to sign up using technology and they don't have technology, you have to make the means to allow them to do that. So, we want to cast the net as wide as we can, take some of the best practices from the counties around us. I know there's been some good work in the surrounding counties, and really leverage that so that we can affect all the students and the community in our region. So that's it from me, Susan.

Thank you, Eric. And that's tremendous, we really value the work that you're doing to get the schools to begin helping people with enrollment, because it's one thing to do to provide information, but we know for the communities we are trying to reach, you really have to also offer to help. Not everybody will need it, in our experience, we see about 20% of the low-income communities that are eligible need that assistance and so as a school, there's, you know, through the school lunch program, that's one of the major qualifying efforts, it's the Lifeline is how people qualify first, CalFresh, medical and then the National School Lunch Program comes in. So there's a big swath of people who do qualify through the National School Lunch Program. And it helps tremendously if the schools can provide an easily accessible ladder that includes the child's name, the parents name, and the address on letterhead for the district or the school to parents, because they need that to enroll along with their child's ID. And so finding ways to make that easy for parents to get will move us far along on the path and we're looking at a large effort with school districts starting in July, with the back to school. And so if you're interested in joining that, let us know. We will certainly want to include anybody who's interested and available. So now we're going to go to another anchor institution in the state, and one that I prioritize very highly. I think I have four library cards currently, so they also of course provide a lot of information. But as you'll hear from Anne, they're meeting a lot of other needs that really add up to digital equity. And so we have Anne Grabowski from the city of San Jose library. Anne?

Thank you so much, Susan. Hi, everyone. My name is Anne Grabowski. I'm the Division Manager of digital equity for the San Jose Public Library. The city was doing work long, long before the pandemic started and really our work found... our study, even our evaluations, our understanding of the community, found almost exactly the same findings that Sunne articulated earlier: that people were unconnected. Nearly 90,000 people in the city of San Jose were unconnected, either due to lack of infrastructure, lack of a device, or frankly, fear, fear and concerns about safety for being online. So, the San Jose Public Library in the city of San Jose have started our approach to digital literacy and digital equity. Long before the pandemic, we created a grant program in partnership with CETF that funds community-based organizations to perform adoptions as Sunne spoke about earlier. So really working deeply in the community to help people have access to affordable connectivity, now through the ACP, which is very exciting to us to ensure that they have a device to use to access that

connectivity at home and actually make good use of it. And for that device to be meaningful and of high quality, and to have digital literacy to address those fears and safety concerns, to ensure that they can be safe online. So, I'm speaking both on behalf of the City of San Jose, and the specific and narrow focus of the Santa Jose Public Library. The city did all of this to create a grant program funded by small-cell revenues in large part. The library has really come in and understanding its role as both a safety net and a springboard to ensure that at all times pandemic or non-pandemic, residents could come into our public libraries and access a hotspot, access a computing device, check those out for at-home use, and then through our learning systems, could have access to digital literacy programming. When the pandemic struck, we took major action very quickly to stand up 12,800 hotspots that were distributed directly to our students through their school systems because we knew that that that was the easiest for families is to receive a hotspot through a known distribution channel of their schools, and also very trusted. So through 32 local education agencies, which still exhausts me to this day to think about, that we stood up all of those hotspots to ensure that people have access to the information that they needed at home specifically digital literacy, and schooling. We've also stood that up through the public library, we have 3000 hotspots and 1500 Chromebooks that are available for checkout at any given time. And then we went out and we built community Wi Fi networks and so all of these things we did to address this issue of affordability and access at home. So on a go forward basis, what we're working on diligently is continuing to support our grant program where our CBOs are achieving those adoptions citywide, we'll continue to support that, we're continuing to find opportunities to enhance our funding sources for that. I think the key point there, is that it really operationalizes ACP in a way that is culturally relevant, that's in language, and that that provides warm support for our residents who, who really do want to understand, they really do want literacy, and they really do want affordable programming. And so for our grantees out in the community to be able to sit next to someone or be on chat with someone with the devices that they've received free of charge through all of these programs. To get them signed up into the ACP is really critical. As a library, we will continue to distribute devices out in the community and we'll continue to distribute and support enrollment in the ACP. So, we'll make that information available at all times to our residents. Ensure that residents who are in need of a hotspot or a Chromebook have access to ACP enrollment information, and then support enrollment for those residents when we're asked to do so, or when a resident indicates support. So we're thrilled with the new federal efforts. We certainly think that it's not enough, and that we could do more to remove barriers for residents and as a library, we're committed to continuing to do that whenever we can. And so, I think I'll just I'll close my comments there. I'm happy to take any questions later in the program.

You can! Appreciate you joining us. So, for this section, our last speaker is AJ Middleton. And AJ is Senior Vice President with Human IT many of you have probably heard from AJ or one of

his co-workers. They have done an amazing job over the years and have really been our trusted partners. So AJ?

Thank you, Susan. And thank you everyone for being here and taking the time to kind of hear a little bit more about the very important topic of digital equity and specifically the ACP program. At human IT for those who aren't familiar, we are a nonprofit actually founded out of Los Angeles, and we take in technology from cities, school districts, corporate partners across the country, all old technology and we actually have the mission to wipe, refurbish and then redistribute that out to communities who don't have access currently. And then when we distribute our device out, we actually pair that with wraparound resources to ensure that everyone has all the access they would need to be online. So that includes things like assistance and getting connected to internet, digital literacy training and then pairing those with quality technical support should /when things go wrong, because things go wrong technology wise for everybody, including myself. Specifically looking at the conversation today, how we support in the ACP aspect of it, is we have a team of internet assistance representatives that really give one-to-one support the household in helping guide them from awareness of what all of their options are, from different internet providers to subsidies like ACP, or anything else available in their area, all the way through adoption. So, we have that one-to-one assistance in both English and Spanish that allows someone to come to us and say, okay, here's all your different internet provider options, here's how you sign up the ACP, here's the documents that you're going to need, and we walk them through step by step through that entire process. That allows us to one, allow people to answer any questions, get that buy-in and trust that what a program is, and then two, to remove any roadblocks. This is, I think I saw in that q&a, a long process to get through, to go through all of these different offers. So we're here every step of the way to kind of help that be as easy as possible. Since the launch, we've been able to, or lucky enough to support more than 30,000 households across the country innavigating what these options are, and we look forward to doing even more of that work here across California and then communities across the country as well. To really look at you know, one of the major problems of ACP and kind of how we solve it, though, is really around that awareness standpoint. There's still a lot of households that, one, don't know what this program is, or two don't know where they can get assistance for it. And how we really work through the awareness issue is really through partnership. I know there's a lot of school districts city, different entities on this call today. Partnerships with people like yourself, or different community-based organizations, other nonprofits, really trusted entities to get the word out about a program is really what we've seen is the best way to drive this awareness. And how we do that, is we would partner with an organization, we would give you all of the different resources to plug into communication channels you already use. So, that could be things like a flyer that you hand out at events, that could be things of your school district and you have you know, a banner in the front of a school, and it could all be go into different things like email communication, text message, phone calls, there's so many different ways that people

get information already from entities that they trust. And we really want to make it easy to really plug into those already trusted channels to allow this information to get to the people who are in need of at most. We provide the full suite of different language that can then point them to an entity like us, where we can give households that one to one assistance, so that shouldn't need to fall on any existing staff or things like that, and we can help guide them through that process I just mentioned. So that's kind of how we've approached both the awareness and the assistance aspect of it. And then pairing that with resources such as you know, the device aspect of ACP, it's somewhat under-utilized at this point. But we would, you know, pair that with other resources to ensure that people are fully connected. I can wrap up there and you know, really, you know, Human IT is here for any other entities across the state that would want assistance in kind of getting this to their communities happy to reach out and have a conversation about that.

That's great. We really appreciate it, both from the environmental standpoint as well as, like you said, nobody really thinks about getting home internet most they have a device and you're always - you and your colleagues are always willing to help. So, we're going to make a transition now to higher education. Because one of the qualifications is the Pell Grant. And, we, as I mentioned have this goal of 5 million. So Tamara Armstrong is going to share with us, what one of the community college districts is doing and has already done that's going to make a big dent in that 5 million. Tamara?

Good afternoon, everyone. I'm happy to talk about the work that that we have done. I'll first start off, you put in next slide, thank you so much. I'll first start off by just by talking a little bit about the foundation of our work in digital equity. Next slide please. And that is really about the digital equity definition that was provided by the National Digital Inclusion Alliance and for the sake of time, I won't read it, but it was really it was really an anchor for us. Next slide, please. I want to tell you a little bit about Los Rios. We serve approximately 65,000 students and we have a 2400's Service Area mile that we serve in the greater Sacramento area. And what I want to call your attention is that 55% of our students are either low income or below poverty, which really ties into what Susan was saying about our Pell eligible students. Next slide please. So as we were looking at our work, what we wanted to have as our guiding principles, is the fact that we have students that were on ground and students that weren't 100% remote environment, and certainly we believe that if you don't have broadband or a device, right, and you're taking an on ground course you have a severe disadvantage but with the onset of the pandemic, our focus became that of: we believe that students cannot effectively continue their studies in 100% remote environment without having broadband and computer access, either at home or off campus. Next slide please. So, we really focus on four areas: technology and internet access, digital literacy. And then this last concept we'll call :removing

digital access barriers". We work the digital work digital equity workgroup, across our four colleges in collaboration with our Academic Senate and college leaderships to best serve our students. Next slide. So, I'll talk a little bit about program eligibility. Our priority was obviously those that had verified financial need, and again, that includes people that were eligible for Pell grants from our California College Promise grant, and foster youth, and obviously that tied to that 55% that we spoke about earlier. We highly leveraged higher education emergency relief funds for the programs and the opportunities that I'll share with you next. Next slide. In the area of technology, we had a couple of partners that were on the phone certainly, Human IT was one of them, we work to provide new and refurbished devices to our students from multiple vendors, and really looked at, over the course of since March 2020, over 10,000 devices! Chromebooks and laptops that we have issued, and when we decided to all go mobile, we went from everything from hand in and out walk ups, to drive throughs, mail, and we also installed secure lockers during the pandemic on our campus so that people can pick them up when they weren't working, because we found that scheduling was a big deal. We also installed software where we could on those devices, and when we couldn't, we really leveraged on virtual labs in support of our students. We scaled those up using the cloud, and had well over 100,000 user connections to those environments since we stood them up. Next slide please. So, in the area of internet access, you heard a lot about giving up hotspots. We did the same thing. We gave out lots of hotspots, over 4,000. We partner with a mobile citizen, Verizon, and certainly AT&T for giving out those hotspots. We realize though, that there were some limitations in some certain circumstances, and we really wanted them to have higher data speeds. And so, what we did is we worked with Comcast, who partnered with us on our Internet Essentials Partnership Program, and that allowed us to give our students high speed in the home, but also, we knew that our students weren't always studying from home, they were sitting in different places. So, it was really important to us as well, was that that program also gave you access to the nationwide network of XFINITY Wi Fi hotspots, which was a big deal. We also streamlined the financial qualification process. So, if a student had submitted their financial aid documents, and then verified through us, we would work with Comcast that they didn't have to re-qualify again with Comcast and we believe that that was important to reducing barriers. And to reduce another barrier, we made sure that we paid the bill directly, by Los Rios, so our students wouldn't have to potentially have their service jeopardized right, by having to take the money and then pay someone else. So that was a really important program for our students in terms of broadband. I will also say that to try and recognize where we may have limitations for our students and where there are students may be underserved. Los Rios partnered with Valley Vision, UC Davis and CSU Sacramento to create regional heat maps of where students were, and what their data speeds and service were in those areas. And we leverage CPUC data to actually make those maps so that was an important partnership. Next slide please. So, in the space of digital literacy when we gave students devices and broadband we really wanted to make sure that they didn't just walk away with something they couldn't use. So, we focus very heavily on when we gave them devices or broadband and we provided them with information about how to use those items and about

unpacking, security, all kinds of different things that we could give them. We also updated our website for digital resources and support where they could find, including referencing and libraries in their neighborhoods where they can go and get access as well. We trained our faculty to support remote teaching so they would understand what the impacts were for highly video intensive teaching, what it would do for mobile device. We also established a tech support hotline, we realized that we were not supporting our students on the evenings and weekends when they were doing most of their homework. So, we established student tech support line that was also very helpful, and then our websites have so much information, we wanted to make sure our students had an opportunity to navigate it intentionally. So, we did the Chatbot on our website. Next slide, please. So what we also knew is that people that had not had a financial need at the beginning of the pandemic very quickly did have a financial aid, and so that financially was unverified. We wanted to make sure that they did not go without and so we allow them to have devices and hotspot loaners for the entire term while they were enrolled with us. So that was important. We looked at the students that were dropping, and if any of those students marked that they were dropping because they didn't have tech, we followed up with them to make sure that we got tech in their hands. We obviously increased our Wi Fi in charging stations across the campus. We worked hard when we were communicating with students to also tell them at the time about EBB, right, and about the availability of that program. And it is also our interest to continue to market on the ACP program to our students as well. That concludes my presentation. Thank you.

Thank you so much. So much information, so much valuable work, as many people are commenting and probably as your own experience. These are some of the positive results of COVID and the challenge is how do we really integrate them systematically, and approach this in a sustainable manner. Camille Crittenden is next. Thank you. Thank you for being here.

Yeah, thank you for the opportunity. This is really good timing, as you'll hear in just a moment for some work that we've been doing here at Citrus in the Banatao Institute. So if you go to the next slide, you'll see that together with my co-author, Brandie Nonnecke, who directs the CITRIS Policy Lab, we convened a multi stakeholder working group that just finished our work in the last week or so, and created a report called Building on UC Broadband: Strategies to Improve Broadband Access throughout California. So if you go to the next slide, just a quick refresher on UC for those of you who might not have these details at your fingertips, so we have 10 campuses, six health care centers and manage three national labs. The student population is nearly 300,000. And most of those of course, are undergrads and the Pell eligible undergrads are about 30%. So, we have about 100,000 students or so who would be eligible, I think, for the ACP based on their Pell eligibility. The other asset that you might not think of immediately, when you think of the University of California is our extensive network of Agricultural and Natural Resources stations. They have projects and all 58 counties to help

provide training and outreach and development and research on agriculture throughout the state. They also manage more than 26,000 community volunteers who are horticulturalists or gardeners or other kinds of agricultural related outreach, and they manage a four H program that enrolled something like 100,000 youth. So, if you see the map there on the right side of the page, we really have an extensive footprint throughout the state. And the purpose of this report was to examine how we might be able to leverage both the physical facilities that UC has some control over, as well as the many hundreds of 100,000s of people who are involved or affiliated with UC. So, if you go to the next slide. These are the four guiding strategies that we arrived at in the report. So, our recommendations are really focused around these four areas, and I'll put a link to the report in the chat here when I'm finished. The first was around enhancing infrastructure and streamlining policy. So, a lot of what you've heard already about how might we use the buildings and towers and other kinds of physical infrastructure to extend broadband access throughout the state? How can we help to streamline policies across the campuses? As you might imagine, each campus is fairly independent as far as the relationships that they have with the local city government, as well as with the ISP providers in the region. So, is there a way that we could help to provide some guidance from a system wide level that would perhaps smooth some of those conversations? The second was around strengthening services and programs enabled by broadband? As a research institute, we use a lot of data related to all kinds of applications, so anything from telehealth research, public health applications, also environmental monitoring, and, you know, earthquake, early warning uses a lot of data, fire/ wildfire monitoring, uses a lot of data. That all has to be enabled by broadband. So, what are some of those programs that would be strengthened by broadband? I'm really going to focus on the last two - I think these are most aligned with the conversations you've heard already. One is to establish tailored communications and outreach campaigns. So, I'll dig into that a little bit more, and to grow partnerships with the public and private sector. So, if you go to the next slide, you'll see a few more details here about our ideas around Outreach and Communications. We want to evaluate not only the access to broadband for students, but also for faculty and staff. We have thousands of staff members as well who had to go remote during a pandemic, are they just as well equipped with the tools and technology but they need to do their jobs well and affordably? We want to raise awareness, of course of the existing subsidies, including the affordable connectivity program, which is what we're here to talk about today. So, what are the ways that we could do that? How can we use, say this vast student population, to do some outreach both to them as part of communications around eligibility and financial assistance? When they apply to UC or when they're accepted at UC, how can we include this as part of the regular communications to them, as well as also alerting the faculty and staff who might be qualified to take advantage of this benefit.

Another idea that we wanted to explore and would love to talk with some of you as well, including Human IT perhaps, is this idea of creating a Connect California Corps. So, either

building on some existing internship program, so for example, the #CaliforniansForAll College program that was stood up recently. Perhaps we could work in a broadband access theme to that. Citrus has also recently created a Workforce Innovation program where we are helping students to gain internships, paid internships through, through CITRIS, to work in these areas of emerging technology of importance to the state. So now those include things like robotics, and aviation, and semiconductors. In future years, perhaps that could include broadband access and create a specific internship to work with host organizations, companies or nonprofit organizations who would be able to do some of this communications work and get the word out into the communities who could take advantage of the program. Next slide. Here are the partnerships, and this is really why I'm delighted to be here today, and really appreciate the invitation, and appreciate I should also say, Scott and Mark's participation on the taskforce that created this report. So, we're looking forward to continuing close contact there to see how we can collaborate. We really recommend that we maintain some kind of multi-stakeholder working group where we would include representatives from UC also the CSU system and the California Community College system. We have a lot to learn from the programs that you have already rolled out. And I think we could all benefit from each other's experiences and expertise. Of course, we want to also make sure we're working well with the private sector with the internet service providers and others, and then just to be realistic about how these are going to be managed within a government governance structure and staffing at the office of the president. We're recommending some staff be allocated to working specifically on these projects. So, if you go to the next slide, I will close there and you'll see the link there and also put it in the chat. So thank you for including me.

The last speaker we had, hopefully you've heard me say thank you Camille, we appreciate the work that UC is doing, and we have as our last speaker Kendra Ard. With the CSU system that has done some very deep thinking and has some analysis of some of the work they've already done around ACP and getting folks connected. And so, we appreciate you being able to carve out some time and share what you've learned and what you're doing with us.

Thank you for allowing me to be here with you today to talk about this important topic. We can go to the first slide, I can just quickly share with you a bit about the California State University. We are the nation's largest four-year public Higher Ed institution. We have 23 campuses, across the entire state. We have about a half a million students, and so we award half of the state's bachelor's degrees annually. 129,000 and 9 out of 10 of our first time, first year students are graduates of California's public high schools. Half of the CSU students receive Pell grants. And so, our student population looks a lot like the k-12 population and we've faced some of the challenges that the previous speakers spoke about as it pertains to our K 12 population. So, of course digital equity is critical to us and similarly to previous speakers, we look at the concept of digital equity with three important elements: devices, connectivity, and

digital literacy. So, focusing in on the first two, if we can move to the next slide. As we look at addressing equity gaps related to technology, and we look at device equity a year ago, we launched an important initiative to provide devices to our first-time students who lacked a reliable device to use for their education. So, this program included first year students as well as transfer students, and the program was called C success. And so far, 14 of our CSU campuses have participated in this program. And it provided these students with a device bundle for free for the duration of their educational journey with the CSU. A key focus of our program was to eliminate administrative barriers and really reduce complexity. So, our students that participated in this program, they did not have to navigate a complex needs verification process. They just needed to tell us that they needed this device, and that was all we requested because what was most important to us was getting the devices into the hands of the students who needed them as easily and efficiently as possible. So we've passed out 29,000 devices thus far and 10,000 mobile hotspots to support those devices as well. And we're right in the middle of our assessment of this program. We have a survey for the students that participated that will be completed at the end of the month. But I can share with you some preliminary database on the results that we have so far. And it's very promising. For example, the... there was a question about whether students felt that they were more prepared to be a successful student based on being a member of this program, and 91% of our responses so far, said that that was the case for them. So, devices needed connectivity, of course and we did provide mobile hotspots as part of the program. But moving on to the next slide. We also provided students with information about the ACP, our campus website to have that information and we provided information throughout their communication channels as we gave the devices out to the students. And we continue to share information about the program, with, you know when students come to technology support pages, but there's opportunities for the future if you want to move to the next slide. Looking forward, we have several ways we can enhance awareness of the ACP to our CSU students. And that's really a priority for us, because reliable access to the connectivity is obviously a critical component for students' success and also their quality of life. And we have about... roughly 250,000 students that we... you know, should be eligible to benefit from this important program. So, as we continue to provide devices via C success or other loaner programs that our campuses run, we can help ensure that we use those touch points as opportunities for sharing information about the ACP. In fact, anytime a student reaches out in order to receive technology support from their campus, that is an opportunity for our campus to share this kind of information. And additionally, our California University basic needs initiative can be another direction by which we can promote the ACP. Our campuses connect their students with services that they need to address things like food insecurity, housing insecurity... and so, when these connections are made, that's really an opportunity to also address what is essentially digital insecurity. Lastly, we have an opportunity to be strategic and reach out to students based on their Pell Grant eligibility to promote the ACP and ensure that the students benefit from this program and support their success in their higher education journey. And I think that concludes my remarks. Thank you so much for including CSU in this event.

Thank you Kendra and all the other speakers this morning. Scott, are returning it back to you?

Sorry, yes, Susan, and just want to say thank you to both CTF and on the panelists. I mean, I think it's a prime example of, you know, how it really is going to require collective action and outreach at all levels to promote the ACP. You know, we erred on the side of, you know, trying to provide more information today, and we realize that we've gone over. We're all doing our best to want to be as transparent and share information as possible. We know there are a lot of questions out there. So, we're going to jump past the last portion which is the update on the NTIA IJ broadband funding programs, what we will say and I think this will address some of the programs is that, many of the state entities that are in this meeting, are monitoring those programs closely. And will be, you know, are collaborating aggressively going to go after those fundings to both augment the existing programs you've heard about today, and then also go further in support other digital equity needs that are not addressed or haven't been addressed fully from the programs you've heard. So, I will kick it to the staff, Laura and Alex, I believe we're gonna present some questions to the panelists, or the speakers.

Thanks, Scott. Yes, this is Laura Sasaki, I'm gonna go ahead... and what we're doing is we're gonna go through the questions that were posed in Q&A and I'm gonna start with the Broadband for All section. One of the questions that we've had a couple times is regarding the portal and how it can be updated with new service provider programs. And I believe, Vanessa, I know that you're still on if you want even just pop a response back into Q&A. I believe you're referring to the affordable connectivity portion of the portal. Is that correct?

Laura? While we're waiting for a reply to that, I do want to say just in general, that we are endeavoring to update the portal, at least on a quarterly basis, if not more often, and it's really going to depend on the relevant information that comes out. And we would also issue a call to action back out to you folks that if you, you know, identify gaps for additional information that would build out the portal. Please reach out to us, and let us know, or share content that you have and we'll work to put it up as soon as we can.

Right, and I think that does address it. Definitely, we've got that contact page on there, reach out to us, we'll touch base with you and work through any of those things. So, we have a question about... is cybersecurity going to be covered in some of the initiative planning?

Yeah, and I saw that question. I think it was related to the Broadband For All Action Plan. It's not specifically addressed in in the Action Plan itself, but it's something that the Department of Technology, you know, is actively working on and we anticipate that, as part of the efforts that are funded out of the IJAA programs that some portion of you know, the programs or the plans that are developed will factor in cybersecurity.

Thank you, Scott. We have a question... how can an Oakland senior center access funding for the monthly service costs necessary for bringing seniors online. This might be one for you Scott or one for a combination on the panel. I'll send it to you first.

Well, I think it's a combination on the panel, because if it's related to individual seniors, I think definitely, you know the Portal has tools to find both low cost offers that seniors might qualify for, and, you know, access to the affordable connectivity program. If the question is about bulk... Eileen, do you want to jump in here and then potentially invite Sunne, Susan to follow up if they need to?

Yeah, sure. I think you hit on the individual options, but there's also an option through the CPUCs California tele connect fund, which could help subsidize the center's monthly service costs. So, if you want to take a look at the CPUC website for that, that's the California Teleconnect fund. And so, I think that provides a 50% discount and that's, that's not really part of the umbrella of programs that we're talking about here, but it's certainly an opportunity that's available for you.

Sunne or Susan, do you have anything to add to that?

Susan: I was going to provide the same response.

Awesome. Great. Thank you. And I think that's a perfect example of how we're all coming together to to address these challenges and questions in California. We do have one more question about regarding on Action Item seven, are you also identifying county property including hospitals for possible use in broadband infrastructure?

No, we're not, because we're limited to ...well on action item seven, that specifically relates to state properties. And you know, we are actively working to increase the Department General Services State Property Index. However, we would love to hear your thoughts, and if you have, you know, information or mapping data that can support... or that, you know, at the county level or health institutions, I know that both the Department of Technology and the PUC would be interested in receiving that and adding that to, you know, the CPUC's mapping in and CDTs mapping for the middle mile.

Great, thank you, Scott. We did have a question regarding trainings, and then this is I believe this is specifically trainings on the portal and whether or not they are explicitly in English. And I can respond to one piece of that, and then I think Scott, that I'll have you respond to the other. And that is that, we are really trying to leverage our partners in this space, in this ecosystem. And I definitely know that one of the things that we have listed on there, and that's the program that Fresno State is doing with the Parent Training that is available. I believe in Spanish. I don't know if there's other languages there. Maybe Sunne or Susan could probably also chime in because they're aware of that one. But I think the answer to that is that we're trying to aggregate as much information and as many formats and languages and accessible formats as possible, and we do need your help for that. So those of you who have training out there, please, when you can reach out to us, use that contact form, say hey, I've got this out here. I'd love to have it featured on the portal, and then that becomes a resource for folks who are looking for things in specific languages or specific formats. And that really just helps build this ecosystem and network. As Susan is saying, yes, the Parent University is also in Spanish and that is currently out of CSU Fresno in Central Valley. Scott, anything you wanted to add to that one?

No, I fully agree that at the moment, we're, you know, the call to action is that we're hoping we can all build this together and to pull from, you know, best practices and curriculum, particularly in-language curriculum that's being created and you know, are just committed to having resources on the portal be as both accessible and in as many languages as we can. So thank you.

I'm gonna hand it over to Alex to start some of the Middle Mile questions.

All right, thanks, Laura. So yeah, thanks. Thanks to all the attendees for submitting all these great questions. We have a number of questions for Mark and Eric on the middle mile Robin

initiative. So let's start with the first one. What will the requirements be to connect or use the middle network?

So, I think, what other than what's in SB 156, I don't know that we have fully developed what the requirements will be, and obviously the concept is that we want everybody to be able to provide some level of Affordable Internet service, you know, last mile internet service, but I don't know that we have yet worked out the details on that yet.

Got it. So, this next question is about transparency. So, what transparency will there be as to who has access to metadata or traffic on the Golden State Network? Eric?

Can you hear me now? Yep, we can hear you.

Okay, sorry to use a Verizon tagline! So, the metadata, there's no current plan to collect data on traffic that crosses the Golden State Network. I'm not sure that there's a requirement in SB 156, we will be required according to state law to collect some information, the majority of the network is going to be dark fiber, so that will be a significant portion of the service offering. Lit services at layer two will be DWDM 10 gig 100 Gig etc. I'm not sure what regulatory requirements are for collecting data across that. If you're wondering about users as part of the metadata, I would have to work with CDT to define that ... many carriers require their network to be under nondisclosure arrangements. And then I do want to back up and say, Mark, Deputy Director Mark is absolutely right. We don't have the interconnection elements fully designed. But there's one basic requirement to connect to the network, and that is we're going to be establishing.... that any entity that connects will have to bring their own vaults so that they have a meet in vault or shadow vaults to interconnect allowing continuous access for their own network, but not disturbing the larger network. So, the approach is to allow users to have unfettered access while protecting the main lines for all users. So hopefully that answers that question.

Great, we have a couple of questions about accounting of dark fiber. So, is there any accounting of dark fiber by the incumbents, and how is the dark fiber being planned to be used by the middle mile planning committee, and who is leading the effort to identify dark fiber?

Yeah, so we can probably have Eric jump in on this but, but basically, you know, as I mentioned, right now SB156 really envision the building of as much of the system as possible. So we're focusing on the map to get Caltrans started with all they would need to do. And then, another effort that we have going on at the same time, is we're having GSN identify where existing infrastructure is, and kind of going through a separate layered map to be able to put that over the top to see what /where any gaps could be filled using existing infrastructure. And so that's another effort that Golden State is working on, that we're working on with Golden State.

In addition to that, as far as any dark fiber that might be commercially available, it has to meet a bare minimum litmus test for the state, which is it needs to be truly infeasible right of use, and it needs to be flexible in interconnection. These are policies that some carriers limit. There will be no investment by state funds, unless it is actually usable for the purpose of Golden State in its full form. You know, those things are come down to contractual arrangements, often, they're less about the physicality or capabilities and more about the policies of individual businesses. And in order to participate in collaborate with Golden State, it needs to have it needs to meet a minimum threshold of usability that CDT is setting for interoperability.

Okay, yeah. We have.... also, two questions about hospitals and healthcare entities. One, have you mapped all the hospitals which could be potential anchor institutions along each of the middle mile projects, and how are healthcare entities, which could include hospitals and clinics, being leveraged as anchor institutions along the middle mile?

Yeah, so, I know, the Public Utilities Commission, you know, looked into this as they built out and identified the unserved and underserved populations. Specifically, they have been consistent about identifying residential, non residential and I think that falls into that residential level that they've given it. So, that's, in terms of kind of the extent to which they dove into that- I think I'd looks a little more to the Public Utilities Commission in terms of how they did that, but I know that was considered and they built that in on some level.

All right, last one, on the middle mile. This attendee is wondering why there's no build up Highway 108.

Yeah, I have to go back and look at Highway 108. So maybe we can kind of circle back on that. Generally speaking, you know, and I don't know... if you have a map in front of you to kind of talk through that... but in general, like I said, we had the Public Utilities Commission kind of came out with their initial build, or initial map, for where services were needed, and kind of

connecting that with the state highways... and the GSN kind of added to that, coming out with a kind of a different outlook, using a bit of different methodology. We are still trying to reach those communities and build in some topolog for resiliency. But, yeah, in the end, we're really targeting certain communities, and at some point... we you know, we're we haven't finalized the map yet so, so I think we might have to come back and circle back with you on that. Eric do you have anything to add?

Guess not. Thanks so much, Mark. And Eric, I'm gonna hand it back to Laura.

Thanks, Alex. Okay, we've got some questions for the CPUC, Eileen! The first question is, how will the Biden administration's dollars supplement the \$2.75 billion for the last mile and how much more is expected to supplement that?

Sure. So, the quick answer is we're not sure yet. And we're really watching this closely. The amount will depend on the federal agency actions and calculations that are based on FCC mapping, which is not complete, and then the main administering federal agency, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration is to issue a Notice of Funding Opportunity, no later than May 16. And so, we hope to have more guidance soon.

Thank you. And, is the CPUC considering a specific sub account for hospitals, clinics and other health institutions?

That's a good idea, or a good question, sorry. And the answer is that, not at this time, however, these entities are, could be and are likely eligible for a number of existing federal and state grant programs or other subsidy programs. And that includes the program that I just mentioned a little bit earlier, the California Teleconnect Fund, which subsidizes monthly service connections for qualified entities. So, I think that there are a number of programs out there the healthcare entities could already be eligible for, and if folks want to reach out to their PUC for more specifics and what they're actually looking to be subsidized, I think that would be great.

Thank you. Is there any talk of a fiber first protocol being adopted? Wireless and only infrastructure solutions may leave some of the residents at the bottom and access ladder. For example, 125 Meg issued by certain counties in the **e state for a solution** [audio unclear].

We at the PUC really do understand this concern, and we set speeds delivered requirements to encourage fiber deployment. (Those are speeds delivered requirement for our infrastructure grant programs.) And the CASF Infrastructure Grant Program statute specifically requires tech neutrality from us. And so, no technologies can be categorically excluded under our rules there. And we also recognize that there are areas where fixed wireless last mile connections might make sense. So, kind of a long answer there. But, so, we do recognize kind of the importance of fiber and we do set policy to encourage that.

Okay, one final question. How are you engaging communities including hospitals and clinics to ensure community driven last mile adoption?

That's a great question. So, we do plan to hold workshops later in the year regarding our loan loss reserve program, so that that will be an opportunity. We recently held our annual workshop where we got folks together, but I do know that outreach is one of Commissioner Houck's priorities here so I do hope that folks will keep an eye on Commissioner Houck's webpage and then our CSF web page for additional outreach information.

Great. Thank you, Eileen, thank you for being here representing the CPUC, and I'm going to pass it back over to Alex for some ACP questions.

All right, thanks, Laura. So yeah, ACP questions I guess these can go to Sunne and Susan first and then others can jump in. So, the first one is about the length of time being that it takes to complete the application people are spending two hours completing the ACP application. Is this a standard that others are experiencing and yeah, why is it so complicated? And what can be done?

With these CBOs that are supporting the ACP program, the only time it takes a long time, it's actually a simple application, which is almost unheard of when you talk about the federal government. And like I said, right now, if you're on lifeline, there is no application. But if you have to fill out an application, it may take a while to understand what's required, what you need to bring to the application to be able to upload and I think the most complicated process is the National School Lunch Program. But that's why in our promotions, we provide a phone number. And so people can call and get clarification on that instead of trying to just

maybe sort it out themselves. The application itself is very short. If you have the right information. It can be completed in less than 10 minutes.

Thanks, Susan. So, since the ACP is a federal program, is it required for applicants to have their social security number and or an ITIN number?

Applicants do need what's called "Identity Documentation." It can be a social, a social is not required for Internet service, nor is it required for ACP. An ITIN number is accepted, a valid passport is accepted from any country as well. You can also apply if you're an adult, and you have a child that is, for instance, has a green card or I guess not a green card, is born here, you can use the child as the qualifying benefit person. So, there are any there are a number of ways to apply that do not require a social security number.

Thanks. So, the next one is about outreach. So, how are you planning to roll out ACP information to beneficiaries of state public programs? For example, Medical beneficiaries, WIC participants, childcare or CalFresh recipients?

So we are working with the qualifying agencies that manage those programs where we have counties stepping up to do promotion. And that's been one of the tremendous benefits of working in collaboration to put these roundtables together, to really put the broadband plan together. And from these efforts, a number of counties are stepping forward to engage in that outreach. We ... in December, we did a combined outreach advertising program with LA County that increased enrollments by 44%. Just in that one month, we're doing work again with LA County. Riverside, San Bernardino County are coming on board, San Diego County is doing a lot, so there's a lot going on. Generally, we have been focused on county because they have the departments that administer the majority of the qualifying programs, and then of course school districts. And school districts, as you know, have been doing a lot, we're looking to try and help make it easier for school districts to communicate and be prepared to support parents using the National School Lunch Program.

Yeah, and Susan, I just wanted to add on to that. Leveraging existing state programs is part of the Broadband for All action plans. So it's something, it's really a multi layered approach. And then, there's the, you know, the regional and local level that we're really hoping to, you know, issue a call to action, or there's the state level and, you know, we are, you know, have convened and will continue to convene other state agencies that have programs, and work

through with them ways to promote this... and a really exciting announcement occurred earlier this week, where the White House talked about not only some ISPs developing new lowest cost programs with higher speeds, but how the federal government is going to do the same and really work with other government agencies, and particularly they reference Pell grants, and use their vehicles to help promote awareness of the ACP program.

Yes, it's excellent. Everybody working at all these different levels to reach an audience we know is qualified. It's great.

Thanks, Susan. Next question, I'll direct to Scott. So, what happens when the subsidy of ACP expires? What is the plan beyond ACP? And is the issue of fairness and pricing going to be addressed?

Mmm, got it. Thank you for the question. Alex. I think the good news about the Affordable Connectivity Program is that it's, you know, \$14.2 billion, and I think the projected runway for that is somewhere between three and five years. So, there's... you know, it's a significant amount of time for folks in the state to leverage that subsidy to support ....you know, broadband adoption and how effective we are at that. We want to be the most effective state for working with our partners to leverage that. You know, I don't quite have an answer for what happens when that funding, you know, runs out, but at least they'll give us time to work on that. In terms of the fairness question that really relates to... and I'm sorry, Alex, what was the term that was used? Fairness in pricing?

Yeah, in fairness and pricing.

I think that that's really, you know...California doesn't have the ability to regulate rates, and so not quite sure quite how to answer that question, in terms of our ability to address that issue, but I do want to defer to our colleague, Eileen over at PUC, I think she's could share some information about a potentially related proceeding going on over there.

Yeah, so thanks, Scott, as you suggested, it is kind of a complicated legal question about regulating rates. However, the commission is absolutely looking at this issue and we do have a proceeding open we call it our affordability rulemaking. And it's multi-industry, we're looking at energy and water as well as telecommunications. But this proceeding is looking at

telecommunications as an essential service. And whether that essential service is affordable across the state. And so, there's going to be a lot of data coming out of that. There'll be an annual report that looks at affordability across the state of these essential communication services. So, take a look at that and follow that proceeding. And I would say just stay tuned.

Thanks, Scott and Eileen. Just one last question. I think this is a good one for Susan and Sonne. I think this came up during ... when we're talking about how we want schools to send out letters to students. So just quick question, do you have an example of an acceptable letter?

We do! We have flyers, we have letters, we have inserts for newsletters. Can you let me know what school district it is? I'll reach out to them.

Unfortunately, it was sent anonymously but yeah, sounds like we have a lot of materials that we could post the link in the chat.

Alex, we can work together to build it out on the section on the portal, also. I know we're over time. I think if we could do one more question and then wrap.

That was the last one on the list.

Great! Well, I know that there was a lot of questions that were asked and I think there's still more information that we can provide... you know, wanted to let you know that that I think our staff and all of our partners will continue to align and collaborate and work together to ...you know, make sure that the answers, or the questions that were asked, that we put together answers for those, and you know, we put together an FAQ on the Broadband For All portal to address those.

This was the third of four, we're going to have another one next week. So, I would imagine that those FAQs, we would try to shoot for some time in June for those to be up. But I do want to reiterate that the event recording, the slide presentation, and a transcript for this event will be posted online, and we will send an email confirmation with those, or to all who attended. We will also be sending out a post event questionnaire, we hope that you folks will fill that out and

provide some feedback to all of us on how we can make future broadband roundtables... to make improvement and prove the experience of you, are partners, are participating on those.

And just wanted to say thank you to all of you for taking the time out of your day to convene with us and to you know, hear about the work that the state is doing on the digital divide, and share with us the work that you are doing, and provide feedback and guidance on how we can better align. It really is going to be a collaborative effort for us to close the state's digital divide and foster digital equity throughout the state and we are just honored and grateful for your partnership. Before we say goodbye, I do want to again acknowledge all the presenters, all of our partner entities for the work that they put in into getting to the point where they could provide presentations today, and I want to thank all of our staff for the hard work and long hours that they put into making sure that we can deliver this roundtable and so thank you very much and we look forward to seeing you next time.