Health Outcome Area Working Group Meeting Transcript
February 16, 2023

All right. Well, good morning. My name is Anh Nguyen. I am the engagement and operations manager with the California Department of Technology, Office of broadband and digital literacy. Welcome everyone to our first health outcome area working group meeting. A few housekeeping items before we begin. As I said earlier, this meeting is being recorded. The California Department of Technology will be posting a video of this meeting, the Slides, transcript to our Broadband For All Portal under Past Events. So just to review on a few housekeeping items. Next slide, please. Our ASL interpreters are spotlighted, and if you need to see them. Please select side by side, Speaker View in order to see it on top of your screen. And if in later portion, when you want to see everyone on to side by side Gallery View, where you can see everyone on the call all at once. Closed captions is available. Please go down towards the bottom of your zoom screen to select closed captioning. In the chat, we invite you all to introduce yourselves. I know folks are already doing that. Include your names, pronouns, organization, title, where you are joining us from. And at any point throughout the meeting, feel free to drop questions or information that's relevant to a conversation. And our staff will reply, Monitor Chat throughout. Lastly, and you all will have a chance to share your lived experience, and so feel free to use a raise hand feature towards the bottom of your screen. What that would do is that it will help me see that your top of my list and I can unmute you, and when you're on camera we're able to spotlight you as well. But if you're not in a place where you can go off camera, that's totally okay. We can still unmute you and have you join us. So without further ado, let's go to the next slide. Okay. So today's the today's agenda, we're starting with an introduction to the State digital equity planning process. Next, we would invite our guest speakers to talk through what is digital equity and why is it important to the organizations, to California, and to the communities we serve. With that, we'll go on to community and lived experiences where you all have a chance to share with us, what you're seeing on the ground as barriers to digital equity and any progress or successes that you will see. Lastly, is our call to action. Knowing all that we did, we hope you can take away from this conversation with you action items to do, and then we'll close the meeting. With that. I would like to introduce Scott Adams, our Deputy Director of the California Department of Technology Office of broadband and digital literacy to begin our discussion on the State Digital Equity Process.

Thank you so much Anh, and really just want to welcome everyone who has come to be a part of this? You know. First Statewide Digital Equity planning Group Healthcare outcome area working group, but it's critical. We seek both your partnership and your subject matter expertise. In the space of health as we seek to develop the state's digital equity plan. As Anh said I am Scott Adams. I'm the deputy director of Broadband and digital literacy within the California Department of Technology, and our office has broad responsibilities to coordinate the States's Broadband for All efforts and specifically over the next year to develop the State Digital Equity Plan. If we go to the next line. So a quick primer here. We wanted to make sure that we talk about the digital equity and the work of the health outcome area working group in the context of broadband for all. And broadband for all is the state's and the Newsom Administration's overarching program and related initiatives to close the digital divide and foster digital equity throughout the State. And that program is really based on the fact that access, affordability, and adoption are critical pieces to creating digital equity in the state and digital literacy and inclusion is the outcome. Next slide, please. And so real quick wanting to just give folks an understanding of the evolution of broadband for all, at least from the state's perspective, and where our coordinated efforts began. Really started in 2010, with the development of the California Broadband Council, which is a 12 member body, consisting of 9

State agencies. Including the California Department of Technology, the Public Utilities Commission, the Department of General Services, the Libraries, etc. And their work for a large portion of time was coordinating broadband deployment and adoption efforts throughout the State in under and unserved communities as defined by the Public Utilities Commission. You'll see, the next key point is in 2020. During the pandemic, you know, Governor Gavin Newsom issued his broadband executive order, which, amongst other things, directed the California Broadband Council, to redoubled their focus on the State digital divide and direct attempt to oversee the development of a statewide broadband action plan. That action plan was developed in 4 months at the height of the pandemic, with input from over 700 entities and organizations. I'm sure many of you here participated in that process. And it really laid out a path, for, you know, key steps the State can take to close the digital divide. The next key piece came in July of 2021, and that was when the Legislature and the Governor passed Senate Bill 156, which was really an historic piece of legislation that created a structure framework and funding to address a lot of the broadband access needs in the State of California. And part of that were the complementary middle mile and last mile programs. So 3.25 billion dollars was allocated to the Department of Technology to oversee the development of a statewide open access middle mile network. We have secured a third party administrator, Golden State Net. And are working closely with them and Caltrans who will develop the constructed segments of the network along the California State highway system, and that is intended to offset the cost for providers to or other eligible entities to develop broadband network solutions for under and unserved communities. You'll also see that it in Senate Bill 156, also set aside over 2 billion dollars that was allocated to the Public Utilities Commission to develop last mile infrastructure grant programs and other programs to support ISPs and other entities to develop those last mile network solutions that would connect back to the middle mile and help create the access, where robust and reliable access was needed. And then the bottom section of this visual really shows that in 2022, you know, multiple State agencies have been aggressively going after a broadband funding that was included in the Investment Infrastructure and Jobs Act. That program over 65 billion dollars that would go to States and local entities to promote broadband adoption and deployment. And really want to call out here in California again. The Legislature and the Governor passed Assembly Bill 2750, which directed the California Department of Technology to seek Federal funding to develop a State Digital Equity Plan and then capture additional Federal dollars to support its implementation. Next slide, please. So wanted to give a context of where the working group sits as a part of the digital equity planning process. And our approach is to try to be as inclusive as we possibly can, and provide multiple touch points and opportunity, both virtually and online, and by other means for as many California partners, stakeholders and residents to participate in the process. So, the first piece of that is, we've established a Statewide Planning Group, which consist of the 10 member entities of the California Broadband Council, and has extended out to another 12 entities that either have a connection to the covered populations that the digital equity plan is intended to focus investments on and then other subject matter expertise. The second piece is the outcome area working groups. The next slide will go into more detail about those. But that's really where we bring folks together to bring their subject matter expertise, and what we include in the plan. The third component is a series of digital equity surveys that will focus both on capturing information from organizations and then information from residents throughout the State about digital equity barriers, and we'll go into those later on in the meeting. And then we really want to underscore that we appreciate the value of technology, and how it enables us to convene large groups of people, you know, in settings like this. But understand there's also a need for in-person engagement. So the California Department of Technology is partnering with the California Public Utilities Commission and

other state and local partners to develop 20 regional and local engagement events that will occur in economic and broadband consortia regions throughout the State, between the months of March and June, and then the last piece is we're committed to ongoing public engagement through providing information on the California broadband for all portal, through monthly email communications and other AD hoc, you know, meetings and convenience as necessary. Next slide. So the 6 outcome area working groups. Well, this working group is going to focus on how digital inequities impact disparate outcomes and health. We're also looking to determine how once those digital equity varies are eliminated, we can from outcomes in the area of health. And so there are 5 other working groups, one on education, one on digital literacy and inclusion, one that will focus on essential services, accessibility and civic engagement, another on workforce and economic development and a sixth on collaboration with our tribal nation partners. Next slide, please. Wanted to center that is, we developed a digital equity plan on guidance from our Federal funding agency that we are really instructed to prioritize investments as we formulate the digital equity plan for 8 covered populations and really want to make sure that our work here and in future meetings is focused in and looks through the lens of these covered population. So individuals in covered households at or below a 150 percent the Federal poverty level, aging individuals, incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with disabilities, those with language, barriers, members of racial and ethnic minority groups and individuals in rural areas. Next slide. So the working group objectives like, Why are we all here? Really, our intention is to convene subject matter experts and practitioners together to develop strategies that align with the overarching digital equity plan priorities through the lens of the 8 covered populations. The very specific objectives for each of the working groups is to develop a a statewide stakeholder map for that outcome area. So who are the key folks we need to plan with, and who are the key folks that we need to implement the plan with. To conduct an asset inventory of existing programs, plans and services that that are really working in the space, and could be leveraged as part of the implementation process. Gonna issue a call to action to help, promote and encourage participation in the various digital equity surveys. Ultimately with those inputs, conduct a gap analysis for each outcome area and then develop recommendations to the Department of technology for potential inclusion in the digital equity plan. Next slide, or am I at the end of my presentation? I am. So back to you Anh, and just thank you all so much, really looking forward to this meeting and the future meetings coming up over the next couple of months.

Thank you so much, Scott, and thank you for giving us the context to the work that we're doing throughout the year. And next, I would like to introduce our guest speakers who will help us by expanding on what is digital equity, and why it is important. I encourage everyone to use the chat at this time as well to answer these 2 questions, and how they relate to your organization. And so, first of all, I would like to pass a mic to Gladys, From the National telecommunications and Information Administration and CIA partner. So Gladys, take it away.

Thanks, Anh. Hi! Everyone. Good morning. It's still morning, right? And good morning, and this is our fourth one of the week. So it's getting to be. We're getting used to him, anyway. Good that. Good morning. My name is Gladys Papalata. I am one of 2 Federal program officers, or Fpos and State leads for California from the N. T. I. A. The national telecommunications and Information administration. Thank you so much to the Cdt team for inviting us to participate in these sessions. and particularly Scott and his

team and the CPUC For all the work that they've been doing. It's been great to see everything coalesce in with these teams, and it's exciting for us at the at N. T. I. A. To see all the progress. It's also great to see so many long time partners on the call. I did a few hellos in the chat, so i'm also excited to see everyone who's we're an unfamiliar with, but know that have been working in this sector for a long time. So welcome to those new folks. So let me get started for the Digital Equity Act at NTIA. And for the Administration. Digital equity is defined as the condition in which individuals and communities have information, technology, capacity that is needed for full participation in society and the economy. Digital inclusion enables or leads to digital equity. Digital inclusion, and really means that the activities that are necessary to ensure that all individuals have access to and use of affordable information and communication technologies, such as reliable, fixed and wireless broadband Internet service, Internet enabled devices that meet the need of the user, and applications and online content designed to enable and encourage self-sufficiency. Participation and collaboration. It also must include obtaining access to digital literally literacy training the provision of quality technical support and obtaining basic awareness of measures to ensure online privacy and cyber security. To us digital equity is the goal, and digital inclusion is how we get there. As Scott already mentioned, the CDT was awarded a 4 million dollar State, planning Grant for one year, beginning in December 2,022 through November 2023. This planning process we're currently in. The objective is to develop a state digital equity Plan. The planning process requires engagement and with major key stakeholders and the public throughout the State to solicit input and feedback from communities and sectors like yours, to develop the digital equity plan, as part of BILL, or the bipartisan Infrastructure law, the Digital Equity Act and be the broadband equity, access, and deployment. Their program goals is connecting 100% of all Americans. so local and regional participation is a must, and all voices need to be heard in order for us to be successful. The State will need the help of each working group to reach and engage your networks statewide. Deeply and meaningfully. The planning process will factor into the next phase. The State capacity grant only entities who complete the planning Grant program can apply, and a State digital equity plan is required. In order to be eligible. The State capacity grant will be used to implement the State digital equity plans and to promote digital inclusion. NTIA anticipates a no-fo or a notice of funding opportunity for the State capacity grant, by the end of this year. By mid 2,024. We anticipate that the 5 year state capacity implementation will have begun. That's the end of my presentation. We look forward to the discussion today as the discussions in earlier in the week have been really robust. Thank you, and we look forward to working with each of you, and please feel free to reach out to us if you would like more information or would like a briefing for your organizations.

Thank you and back to you, Anh. Thank you, Gladys, and your information was so great that folks are asking for the verbatim on the slide. So do know that Gladys can connect. And if you can answer Larry in the chat to you guys, that will be great. Thank you. Thanks. And then I would like to introduce our next speaker, Marissa Montano, She is the director of policy from Insure the uninsured project. Welcome, Marissa.

Thanks, Anh, and thanks California Department of Technology for including it up in this work. As Anne mentioned, my name is Marissa Montano, director of Policy in Insure the Uninsured Project or, as we are more commonly known, by ITUP. We're so thrilled and excited and frankly pretty honored to be

partnering with the California Department of Technology to bring and uplift the voices in needs of health care to the digital equity conversation. And, you know, the point for this conversation to provide input to the State digital equity plan, so that the plan ultimately meaningfully addresses digital barriers to help. For those of you who are not familiar with ITUP we're an over 26 year old, Health policy, nonprofit, and convenient convener with the mission to promote innovative and workable policy solutions that expand health care, access, and improve the health of all Californians. ITUP is an educator, a convenor, and a directed choice of information, and every year one of the tenets of our work is to travel. Most recently it's been virtually across the State to bring local and community based health and health related providers and stakeholders together at this in the same room to really connect on how State level policies impact our local communities. During the pandemic telehealth and virtual care for the very first time became a real option for many of our most disadvantaged communities to access health care. And throughout the last 3 years of working groups the message has been incredibly clear. Tele Health and virtual care have tremendous opportunity to close equity gaps in healthcare, access. But and this is a very but, but it means absolutely nothing if we don't close the digital equity gap. These very same communities that have lacked access to care for well before the pandemic hit and persisting beyond the pandemic. You know, our partners report them, having not having access to reliable, internet not being able to afford, Internet if they do have access to it or can't afford enough Internet to support their needs. Whether it's telehealth education, workforce development, you name it, not having access to appropriate and sufficient devices or digital literacy skills to meaningfully engage with their health care. And so the question posed here what is digital equity? It's such an important level setting question for this, for this conversation, and why healthcare partners should get energized and engaged in closing the digital divide and then giving input into the State digital equity plan. For us at ITUP, we believe that an equitable health care system means that people can access that care when they want it, how they want it, and in whatever manner they want and need to access their care. Building a health care system that works for the person. And so for digital equity and health that means that if we achieve digital equity, then all of the digital barriers that I mentioned, and many more are no longer a reason why folks don't access their health care. And in achieving digital equity. That means we can forge into the future of health. And we can, far as innovation and data exchange current and future technologies that can help people live their healthiest lives and to really make good on the promise of telehealth and virtual care. And with that I'm going to hand it back over to Anh. Thank you. Thank you, Marissa, and thank you for the question you have in this work. now that you've been working on this for quite a while, so thank you for joining us today. Next, I would like to introduce Jasmine. Let's see if she's on.

Yes, i'm here, there you go.

Hi, Jazmine, she's joining us from the office of planning, and research, would you mind introducing yourself?

Thank you so much. I'm also really excited to be here and share a little bit about our work and our vision for digital equity.

Good morning, everyone. My name is Jazmine Garcia Delgadillo, and i'm the Health and Equity Program manager at the Strategic Growth Council. Before getting started I wanted to share a little bit of an overview of the Strategic Growth Council or SGS. As we call it, as well as the Health and Equity program. And so to start this out, the Strategic Growth Council is a cabinet level body that is comprised of diverse

agencies from across different sectors which include housing, transportation, natural resources, environmental protection, and health and human services among others. And SGC Has a vision of healthy, thriving, and resilient communities for all, and we seek to achieve this through various equity-focused programs and initiatives which comprise investment programs, collaborative policy initiatives, integrated policy and planning, community development and capacity building and technical assistance and as part of the health and Equity program we lead and monitor the implementation of SGC's Racial Equity Action Plan, which touches on all programs, including leadership and administration; and we believe that addressing the systemic and institutional racism is key to advancing health and racial equity through government and transformation, and through all facets of our work, and we seek to value voices and meet the needs of historically under resource populations, including black, indigenous, and people of color. We also convene the Health and all Policies task force in partnership with the California Department of Public Health and Public Health Institute, which is a nonprofit organization. The high up task Force for short involves 30 State agencies and departments, with a focus on addressing identified structural barriers to advancing health and racial equity outcomes. Topics include embedding health and racial equity and state granting, contracting and procurement practices, data collection and information systems, community engagement, community safety and building racial equity competencies, among others. And we have heard from external partners the need to improve the State's data and information assistance to be more equitable. We have learned that digital equity means that communities have equitable access to data, information and opportunities, including those related to State resources. The COVID-19 pandemic has really highlighted how inequitable access to resources and funding and incomplete data can exacerbate health inequities and communities. So we see this as a very important priority and issue. The health and all policy task force is focused on inner agency collaboration across State government. But we also see digital equity, considerations and opportunities being prioritized within SGC's climate and infrastructure investment programs. So, as an example, the affordable housing and sustainable communities' program is an investment program that is focused on integrating affordable housing and sustainable transportation to your jobs and other important destinations as part of a climate and health equity, strategy, and in previous funding cycles. A To C for short, has required the Internet to be hardwired in all housing units, and then this round will be requiring free Internet service for very low income residents for 5 years, 3 0f which A To C will be paying. In addition, digital literacy programs and our community trainings are eligible costs that can be included in project proposals. Considering just that many workforce and educational opportunities now take place via digital media, we understand digital equity, and broadband access as vital strategies to really promote healthy and thriving communities. In addition to these to this program, the community resilience centers program is a new program at the Strategic Growth Council, and it will fund new construction and upgrades of neighborhood level resilience centers to provide shelter and resources during climate and other emergencies. Programs that have heard from stakeholders is that providing Internet at resilience centers would allow people without regular access to Internet to access a reliable connection located within their community. Some communities have also expressed that in the expressed interest, excuse me using funds to build out a computer lab for general access as well as for classes and other programming that require computer use for emergency situations. The program is also highly encouraging a backup broadband or Internet connection, so that community members at the center can stay in communication with people during the emergency, which would also be vital to really remain informed on available resources and accessing available health information and health care. So to conclude, I think COVID-19 has also really shown us that providing hybrid or remote opportunities and translation or interpretation

services for engagement with communities can all also allow for greater participation. Many of SGC's programs found that attendance of events increase when we made them remotely accessible. So at a time when so many State resources require digital access, we understand what digital equity means. Access to information, to resources and opportunities for communities to thrive, including communities that are most at need.

Thank you and thank you so much for wrapping our guest panelists up so well with all the points. I wish we can like pop these, you know captions, as you're saying them. But thank you, Gladys, Melissa, and Jazmine for sharing how your organisations are looking at digital equity as it relates to health, and thank you, Mel, for pulling up the promise and thank you for everyone for a rich discussion in the chat as well. I think we're getting started here next slide, please. So the next portion we're really hoping for a bi-directional engagement and discussion from everyone on this chat. Next slide, please. And so the first question we have for you is, what are the barriers to digital equity in your community members space. How do those barriers affect health outcomes. But if you are able to use the reaction button to raise your hands. That will want me to unmute you. And are you to keep spotlighted and feel free to answer this in the chat as well. Reading access to computer knowledge and how to use it. Technology, and of course, reliable. Internet. Very true. Would you like to come up off mute and and expand on that point? Cool.

Melissa! Yeah, thank you Anh. And i'm actually gonna talk a little bit about number 2. So some of the work that ITUP has been doing. So actually to back up. I have. I mentioned that we started our regional working group it, you know, during Covid, and talking about tele health and the barriers, and and all of that. But that led to really us, and part in the phrase of drinking from the firehose on broadband, and everything broadband, and i'm trying to find out how does healthcare fit into being part of the solution, and so to share a little bit on number 2. So ways in which, you know we can help sort of our health partners be part of the digital equity solution you know. I think there's it's gonna vary by different locations around the state. You know the the the issue. The digital equity barriers in rural communities is different from urban communities, but it's all the same. It's all lack of access, and we can do things like leveraging our our existing health care delivery system, pieces of our health care delivery system by community health workers to train, to be digital navigator, to address digital literacy in that way, or you know, a hospital or a clinic being an anchor institution that that then provides broadband and Internet for community and being a solution in that way. So I think there's a lot of different ways in which we can strategize and and leverage our our systems to advance digital equity. Thank you so much.

And yes, Don't, let me hold you back from going to the next point, and you feel strongly about it. May I believe I see your hand up.

So okay, thank you. Thank you really. Just sort of piggybacking on some of the things that we're said in the chat, and some of the things that Marissa covered as well, so I'm Mel Kwol I'm with the center for connected health policy and we're the national Tele health policy resource center. So while we may not directly provide services to consumers, like most of you probably do, we do look at things on the tele health policy end, and especially during the pandemic, what's really become very apparent and what's being discussed a lot today is the fact that there is inequities on in the digital space, especially when you use something like tele health technology to provide health care services. Some of those obvious things that have already been mentioned, such as broadband, access to equipment to be able to utilize to how

but one of the things that was also mentioned. But I want to lean into a little bit further is the patient education side of things. So when telehealth exploded during COVID-19 and before that, it was kind of a really niche area, and if you talked to like the average person out there, they probably didn't know what you're talking about when you mentioned the word telehealth, I mean from my own personal experience. Right before the pandemic. If you ask my family and friends what I did for a living, they probably could not tell you what I did, because they didn't really understand telehealth. Now, everybody, I think, or most people do have like a concept of it or understanding of it. But the first couple of months, when the health care system pivoted towards telehealth were pretty rocky, I think, for a lot of patients just because they didn't understand it. They weren't used to it, but also there were mechanisms and tools, or enough of them to address the different needs of patients, whether it's like a language issue, or maybe they are seniors, or really kind of a population that I think sometimes gets overlooked when we're talking about digital inequity is the disabled community. If you have some sort of condition that you know, that needs a particular type of way to like, interact with you If you're like death or blind, or if you have some sort of physical impairment that maybe you know does not work as well, or needs to be addressed differently if you're using telehealth. I think those sort of resource and tools have been definitely lacking before COVID-19, but sometimes may not be, may not have been as fully addressed or fully recognized when we talk about digital inequities because sort of the focus, maybe go to like language barriers or geographic locations, or perhaps income or age. So, I just wanted to put that out there, and that's definitely an area that I think could be done better in having like those resources to all these patient population groups to ensure that nobody is left behind on things. Thank you for sharing that. It's a lot of key points.

Leticia Alejandrez, Hi, good morning. But thank you. I wanna echo. I underscore everything that Mel said as well as Marissa has said. I'm Leticia Alejandrez and CETF's mission is to close the digital divide. We're also a catalyst for change as well as we really focus a lot and have focused a lot on telehealth. And let me just talk about what has informed our work which brings us to. And I think I included in the chat around access to Internet again, I can't underscore it enough. You cannot access telehealth If you don't, have access to Internet. They're also with that needs to be digital literacy - telehealth, proficiency, and literacy. That's both for the provider as well as for patients and infrastructure issues. You know, the ability to be able to have good connectivity during telehealth is really important, and I say all this because we were informed, we convened a fact-finding convening back in 2020 in the height of COVID-19, we brought together scenic partners in care, foundation, Cpca, the California primary care association. were all co-sponsors of this work, and we we heard from the different segments of healthcare industry, including, you know, all the all the insurers as well as primary care organizations and others. And in any case we published a summary with a consensus, and this is really the the finer point with the consensus around the framework for action and one has been to make sure that there's payment parity and I think 82, and with a lot of support from May's organization has really made that possible. We also conducted a pilot project which was funded by CETF with a skilled nursing facility and I will share that final report with folks after this, but that really informed us with regard to the need for all of these things that I already been mentioned around digital, or see technical assistance for providers and infrastructure issues. as well as a current project that CETF is leading, with the support of the Federal Communications Commission, and with that we're working with FQHC's, tribal clinics, critical access hospitals, nursing facilities, and so on. And they all continue to to underscore what we've already said with regard to access and literacy and support and technical assistance. What I think is really the most important is that California doesn't have a clear path or a policy for optimizing telehealth to improve patient outcomes in

population health, I mean that's really can't be underscored enough and I think that I want to also give a big shout out to my colleagues at ITUP because they had a fantastic conference recently. I think it was confirmed again by the participants that most providers and medically disadvantaged residents and communities indicated that their members and patients did not have sufficient Internet connectivity, digital literacy, or adequate devices to take full advantage of telehealth access and to health information resources and specialty care. So again, I just want to underscore many of us in the advocacy world. Although we may not be providing a direct service, we are very much involved and supportive of ensuring that telehealth is optimized. So thank you for allowing me to share that. And thank you for sharing.

I see, Joe, you go on mute, and then, Tina, I know you have a hand raised in the chat, so I just want to confirm, and then we'll go to you next.

Joe Garbanzos, AARP-CA Thank you. It's good to see familiar faces and not too familiar faces. I'm. Joe. So the message that's resonating is definitely there's a need for digital equity and my own personal definition of equity is power sharing. You need to have people and users who are historically disadvantaged to have a seat at the table at this at the start of the design process in developing programs, as well as the infrastructure for digital access, I saw a slide with so many agencies and bodies to help roll this thing out. I'm curious whether there is a presence or a voice for end-users especially the 50 plus population. Older, mature people, people with disabilities, people in rural areas and tribal communities. So I think that should not be an afterthought or nice to do. It is imperative that people who are end users who have a historical experience of being disadvantaged should have a seat at the table from the get-go, so I'm curious, and someone could provide us with some insights in the bodies that you created in rolling this thing out. Aside from well-intentioned people, policy people are there representations for the population I'm referring to? That's a question. Thank you.

Thanks for that question. And I think Scott will go off mute to answer it.

Hi, Joe, really good to see you, and we're so glad that AARP Is here to lend their voice to this process. Thank you for calling out when clarity is needed, wanting to make sure that we're clear that as far as the state developing the digital equity planning process. We are at the very beginning of that process that will occur over the next several months. And so the process we've created, we've got a bit of a challenge in a state like California. that's 163,000 square miles with almost 40 million people. The way that we have designed the process with the 5 different components, so the virtual meetings want to be is going to be as democratic and open as we can to participation from the organizations that are working with the cover of populations and members of the you know individual residents as well. And so this table is open, and it has no limit to who can participate. And understanding that you know we're talking about digital equity, and we've heard that access and service and computers are barriers there. We've built into our planning process these 20 local events that we will be conducting around the State in communities and all economic regions, and that's open to local organizations and residents to have a voice and come to the table and help us develop a plan or co-create a plan, I should say, that takes, you know, into consideration the lived experiences of the individuals, you know. I also want to point out that you know, another part of the process is that digital equity survey process. And so we are going to be conducting that via phone in different languages. But we're also developing an online version of that that will be optimized for mobile phones, and we'll create. You know paper versions of that to specifically get feedback from individual residents within that covered populations and a variety of different languages,

their lived experience, so that the data that we gather can inform the decisions that are made around the plan. And so there'll be a call to action. What we would really ask folks on this call is to, you know, participate, and bring your communities and your partners and their the residents and the constituents user into the process, so that it's inclusive as possible, so that what we ultimately, you know collectively come up with is something that is not just developed from the top down, but it's really, you know, a grass tops and grassroots process.

Thank you for sharing that Scott and Joe in a couple of more slides we can talk through the surveys in more detail as well. And, Tina, would you like to come off mute now.

Celestino "Tino" Rayos, TC HHSA Nita Kuya O ye sen, is the prayer of all my relations. It means we're all related. So hello, relatives. I wanted to talk about your populations for 2 reasons. One, I suggested up earlier in the chat that the group consider adding the homeless as a population group and the LGBTQ community as a population group. Likewise answering the question as far as barriers, we'd have to look at each population, and already several people have spoken on a couple of those areas, but each area there may be some overlapping issues, but I think there would be some unique barriers to the various populations, as has been described already. But I mean I'll give an example of when I actually used to teach. I wondered you know, why was it so difficult to get all of the kids off of their phones? And so I just asked point blank, and they're like, well we don't have Wi-fi at home, we only have it here and I'm like, okay, let's get this assignment done, and I'll give you guys, you know, 10 min of free time after each, you know, assignment is completed and it worked, you know. But those are a lot of the things that you know many people wouldn't be aware of until they come are exposed to the various populations and the barriers that they have when our offices got closed during Covid and I got put on the Homeless Alliance team to help house and feed our homeless community. You know I learned to just bring a multi-pronged charger with me so that you know they could charge their phones as we were getting them assessed, and so, and maybe meet at a location like Mcdonald's that has open Wi-fi access to the public you know so I mean some solutions are easier than others. You know the tables that they give out the Obama phones. That's you know something that helps to open up some of that access. But still the Wi-fi might be an issue. But anyhow that's what I wanted to share with the group. That, and being the diversity, equity and inclusion trainer for my organization, I'm very happy that you guys are coming from the equity and inclusion standpoint. I had to bring my other group up to that standard because they were using cultural competence. And as this, while I appreciate that that might, you know, help us to not discriminate it, it would. It lacks equity, you know. It calls for tolerance, but it doesn't call for appreciation of this, you know diverse population that we're dealing with, so I tip my hat to y'all for being ahead of the game and thank you.

Thank you all of you, for what you do. Thank you.

Scott Adams and Tino I want to thank you for calling out and giving voice to the needs of the homeless, and the LGBTQ community. I want to point out that both the State and the administration, and a number of the entities here are committed to you know, advocacy, have to see, for both of those groups. And so this slide that we showed with the 8 covered populations is the slides that the NTIA requires us to, you know consider investments for, but we don't have to stop there, and I want to know that in our earlier discussion with a lot of the state agencies that they've also brought up that as part of this inquiry, we do need to be sensitive to the needs of the homeless communities. We think about digital equity and access to services. And I would also point out that the Public Utilities Commission, who is a partner with the

department technology and developing both the digital Equity Plan and the broadband equity, access and deployment 5 Year Action Plan that the women and the LGBTQ+ community are called out there so definitely those are voices and lenses that we are committed to the bringing into, you know the conversation, and and also, you know looking through the lens of the solutions that we create, or the plan that we develop to consider those communities needs as well. So thank you very much.

(Tina) You are most welcome. I'm going to include my email in the chat and then copy the links. I have an 1130. I wanted to give the group that respect to to let you know and thank you all again for everything that you're doing it.

Thank you. Latifa Mbarak yes, thank you, and and thank you so much for the participation so far as I mentioned, my name is Latifa. I am the graduate student assistant supporting the Health working group. and this is part of my project at the masters of Public Policy here at Berkeley, and we will move on to the second question what are ways that you your organization or your community has succeeded in achieving digital equity. I invite you all to share some effective strategies, examples that you may all have, either in the chat or come off mute.

 To add to progress is welcomed. I think a comment yesterday was that we Haven't achieved it just by equity yet, right? So what can we share? Thank you.

Yes, for the California emerging technology fund, the way we work towards digital equity is always focusing on unconnected and underserved communities. And what we mean by that in particular is that what we know of our 15 years of existence is that if you are in a rural, remote, tribal or or or urban-poor, you are least likely to have access, and until we prioritize this community, we are going to be continuously leaving them off the map, and I just hope that this is a strategy or an approach or priorities that all folks can embrace, because if it does. If we're not successful with the unconnected and under connected folks, we're going to lose an entire generation of people for a very long time. So that's our approach, and that's what that's what our focus is.

Thank you for highlighting that. And then, Jo, I see your hand.

Joe Garbanzos, AARP-CA trying to unmute that my button is so resistant. Oh, thank you. So AARP-CA Is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization and we are invested in the community engagement to implement social agenda projects, you know, so we contribute to the process of that. Those who have digital access to get a meaningful content to help them. So there is AARP Affiliate which was at the ITUP Conference last week or a couple of weeks ago in Sacramento. The older adults, technology services, So yeah, that's footprint nationwide. And they do a good job, not only in terms of training people to be proficient with technology, but truly providing relevant and meaningful content to those who participates in their program. And I think this is an important point, right? The digital highway, if you will, can be created and paved. But if you don't have meaningful content for people to go to that highway that will be a missed opportunity. So I think the 2 have to go hand in hand. and I don't know if the scope of work of the digital technology agency includes kind of the bigger picture you build it and then you hope they come. But not necessarily, you know. So I think it has to have mindfulness when it comes to the content that will be available through the digital highway. Thank you.

Thank you, and Joe, again, Excellent comments, and I did want to kind of pull back a little bit and respond back. I know that we cover so much information, and there's a lot of different complementary

initiatives with broadband for all, and you know it at the top. What we wanted to really demonstrate is the States comprehensive approach is, how do we leverage the funding to address the access needs which I think the comments in the chat have been just so demonstrative of where access is a is a barrier to digital equity. And so both the you know the States, you know 3.8 billion dollar Now open access, Middle Mile network is specifically targeting those underserved communities, that Leticia from CETF spoke about, and similarly the Public Utilities Commission, acknowledging that the existence of this robust Middle Mile network might not offset the cost for incumbent ISPs to extend their networks out to those areas that the State is allocated another, you know, upwards of 2 billion dollars to provide grants to ISPs and other eligible entities, including cities, county schools, libraries to extend network solutions out. So we very much hear you that the access piece is critical, and also you know, as others have stated, the affordability and the adoption pieces too. And that's really one of the focuses of this digital equity plan is, how can we collectively align and take shared responsibility for overcoming some of the barriers to adoption, and Sacramento centered State agencies, but trusted partners that are already working with communities and the most vulnerable among us to help overcome those barriers around. You know the cost of service or the cost of devices, or providing digital literacy training, or even making folks aware of that training. So you know, the State is to the extent that we have the capacity and bandwidth to allocate resources and bring folks together, really focusing on all those components that are necessary is part of the digital equity conversation. And again, this, planning process is to really say, like, how can we acknowledge the work that's already being done out there? How can we align and coordinate and complement each other's efforts. And then how can we identify where those additional gaps are needed in our solutions, the gaps that are needed in the digital equity planning process, where we can support and divert some additional digital equity capacity donors to support this. Thank you, Scott.

Thanks. I think I see 3 more hands. Just make sure to read the third question. Really, open it up for any anyone else. If you share any reflections you might have about our discussion today, 1 2 or otherwise topics we have not mentioned, or digital equity in general. And with that I think, Larry, I think I saw your hand. Larry, please go ahead.

Okay. So good morning, everyone. I'm Larry Zarin with clinical informatics. We support health care entities, government agencies, and startup companies with a holistic approach to strategy, policy, and innovation. I wanted to continue where Scott left off in regards to the middle mile effort. My primary concern with the broadband plan is that I asked the middle mile program of goals they had, and they said no goals were defined, and as of today, I still don't see any goals on their website. But how we implement coverage and the agreements that we make with for-profit entities will impact what we achieve. And considering that we're spending billions of dollars to ensure access, even a simple goal like everyone has access to 100 Megabit Internet, or better, at no more than $10 per month, would be a useful, direct, directional goal. So I guess as a question, I would say, how do we get the middle Mile program to make a goal similar to that to ensure that the components of the implementation actually ensure that we can achieve some of those things.

Thank you Dr. Oziran, really would encourage you on the middle mile side we will make sure that we work with the team to respond to your question. I would say that on the middle mile the targets and the public comments and the route considerations took into consideration that guidance from statute that you know the route develop open access, middle mile in, on an unserved communities, and support

connectivity to anchor institutions and the unserved communities. The need was to find is, you know. 25 megabits down, 3 megabits up, and the unserved communities. The availability of broadband services, a 100 megabits down in 20 megabits, and so part of the complimentary process is the middle mile is to enable connections to provide service to those provide the last month solutions developed to provide service to those areas, and then the CPUC's Grant programs are supporting those, and they have, you know statutory requirements and targets that are set on the that are defined by statute and the funding pool that you know is funding those efforts. So we're happy to have an additional conversation with you and answer any further questions.

Thank you, Scott, and thank you, Larry, for bringing that up. And. Sarah, I know you have had your hand for a bit.

I just wanted to quickly touch on kind of what our organization is doing. We're a organization made up of 40 counties. and we have a JPA called the Golden State Connect Authority, and we're trying to utilize all these funds coming in to do a couple of really important things a lot of our communities have been rolling. They simply don't have access, or have inadequate access, and have been left behind, and often it doesn't pencil out for private companies to do business in our communities. So we're really looking to support our counties to do a strategic plan, so that we can reach our communities, do a lot of that project and engineering so we're ready to go and also explore open access municipal models. So, no matter what we can get service, even if it's Government owned to make sure that we can bring these to our communities, and just briefly touch on a lot of things that people said, especially in terms of telehealth. Our communities have often been underserved with access to health care, and we've seen a big trend with COVID-19, but also in a way to address the workforce issues of really pushing telehealth and a lot of our communities. They just they can't do it. They don't have access. Maybe they have by telephone, but still a lot of communities aren't even served for that. So it's a really important piece in terms of the healthcare, but also all these components talked about making sure these communities are served. So we're happy to be here, and we're looking forward to hopefully deploying broadband and seeing a lot of these areas actually have access.

Thanks so much. And May. Hi there, actually more just of a general question. Digital equity really overlaps and kind of umbrellas a lot of different areas, and I was just wondering how the connection is of what we discuss and what feedback we provide may to like. The other groups are working in different areas as well, too. And we're how is that information loop or feedback loop roped in with like the other groups as well, because. you know, obviously for organizational purposes it works well for us to have this discussion here, but there's so much about what we talked about as Dr. Ozra, brought up that really feeds back to different projects or different groups who are working on these as well. How is that all being ensured that, like that information is translated over to the work that they're doing? And if you know, how can we, as advocates, perhaps help in that process?

I think that that's a great question, May. And so one of the primary reasons that we went out and got graduate student assistance from Goldman School of policy, public policy and other institutions was to

really help, summarize a lot of what we learn from these working group sessions, and call them together and report some recommendations that would inform the draft of the digital equity plan. I do want to point out that through all of the various components of the planning process it will be gathering inputs to form a draft plan, and there will be a formal public comment process. I think we'll show a timeline at the end of this presentation on when that is gonna be. So I think there's a couple of different touch points in the next state wide digital like we planning group, you'll hear, report out from some of the co-chairs of the working groups on what the findings are that you know both the commonalities and the differences of each of the different 6 outcome area working groups, and then it's just going to be an iterative process with a formal written report, you know, from each of the different outcome area working groups. And then like I said, make your way to the, to the to the draft plan, which will then be put out for public comment. So I think there's a number of ways for folks to provide inputs, and we also welcome informal conf comments, you know, at any point throughout the process over the next several months.

Thank you, Scott, for clarifying. Gracie and then Katherine.

Hi, yeah, my name, like I said. My name is Gracie, and I work for I'm, the Ministry of Assistant for the Monterey County Rate Crisis Center. We are focused more in Monterey County, and something that we do have like added on to a perspective is the Monterey County is very heavy with migrant workers. So, in a sense, we are thinking of the idea of like at one moment they can leave so portability with access to the Internet that could be a big perspective that I know is very important for us, and one that also encapsulate number like Question number 2 is, how can they have access to hotspots? So they aren't, having to still just deal with plans, since they are having to like 3 months out of the year, and move here 3 months out of the year, and move to another location. And how are we going to be able to give them that ability for the hotspots and to help them with that area.

Thank you. Thank you for your comment. Katherine, and then we'll wrap up this discussion.

Hello! Thank you so much for giving us this opportunity and really appreciate CDT and all of the partners here on launching this conversation for the outcome areas. So I work for a large nonprofit organization called Mitre. But I'm a health informatics researcher, and we've been collaborating with Uc. Berkeley, and UC Davis to demonstrate ways to address digital equity. But in service of health, equity. So I wanted to just let you know about 2 projects that we have conducted, one bringing connectivity into senior affordable housing and the other working with community health centers to enable a remote, patient monitoring and tele health for patients with diabetes and hypertension, and this has been in rural parts of California and agricultural parts of California, as well as some urban settings; and I think it is possible, if we really work with the communities, to design these interventions and get sort of on the ground expertise to do this in the right way. You can actually address these all the barriers and achieve really positive health outcomes which we have seen in our projects. So I'd love an opportunity for us to share what we have done, but also to find out, You know directly from other projects that have achieved digital equity for health, equity, outcomes, and learning from all these programs. The second thing that I wanted to share with you is that we've been conducting a research project. We've been interviewing affordable housing developers, community health centers and other community health organizations as well as digital equity leaders on what are the elements and components that are important to make sure that we actually design these programs so they reach the people that that need them the most. And we're continuing that research we've done the first phase, which is interviews. We're on the second

phase, which is going into surveying our organizations nationally, and we'd be really happy to share any of the information that we have learned with this group, and with the State to make sure that we're bringing all of the information coming out of research into the programming that's going to be happening over the next years. So I just wanted to offer our information and our collaboration with this effort.

Thank you. Thank you, Katherine. We love, we love that. I know our interns are, our GSAs are meeting folks gathering this information, and there will be opportunity to share this more. This is our first of 4 meetings, right? So we have March, May and June, so let's connect to make sure these materials are shared. With that, I would like to wrap up this discussion. Dr. Larry, I see your hand, but just to make sure we're on time, and making sure that we have the ability to share the next action items, we'll definitely circle back, and if there's time towards the end, if you don't mind. And next slide, please. So with all that has been shared for us to capture the granular detail of both barriers to health equity, digital equity, as well as programs like Katherine mentioned earlier. We have tools that would help all of us, our organizations, as well as our community members to tell us their experience and the programs that are working. So I would like to hand the mic over to Rachna Vas, from Broadband Equity Partnership to lead us through the next few slides.

Thank you so much, Anh. And Hi Everyone. Next slide, please. Next slide. So you heard Scott Adams mentioned earlier that there is a statewide digital equity planning process that we are all currently engaged in delivering and part of this Statewide digital equity planning process includes a needs assessment. We need to understand the current state of digital equity across California. To do that, we've developed what's called a DEEM tool. It's a digital equity, ecosystem mapping tool that will help us conduct an asset inventory of programs, plans, and services across the State. So this tool will help us to identify and gather information about what programs are being offered, where they're being offered, and to whom they're being offered. So we are thrilled to read about what we're seeing in the in the chat about the AI4 mobile app for individuals with schizophrenia. I think it's the tech support pop ups. These are the types of programs we want to know about, and I think we just heard Katherine Kim talking about the remote monitoring for diabetes. Again, these are the types of programs and services that the State needs to understand and to know about in order to be able to effectively map out what's being offered throughout the State. So when we release this tool in the coming weeks, we would really appreciate it if your organizations, your health centers, your clinics can complete this tool effectively to help us understand what's going on across the digital equity ecosystem in California. So please share this with the channel partners share this with physicians, nurses, people, administrative people who are engaged in digital equity in any way, shape or form. Next slide. So who should participate? If you leverage technology to provide any program or any service. We need you to fill out this tool. We need to hear from you about the work that you're doing about the programs and services that you're offering. So events like this are great, but we also need a formal way to capture this information from you. So I think part of the incentive of completing this is that if the State knows about your programs and services, it also positions your organization for possible allocation of future funding. So just keep that in the back of your mind as you complete the DEEM tool. Next slide. As we're concurrently assessing what's happening with organizations, coalitions, and practitioners in the field. We also need to understand what's happening in the California household, in terms of barriers to digital equity. So we're intending to release a digital equity public survey that targets California households. Next slide. So this survey will assess things like Internet accessibility, Internet affordability, access to skills training programs, access to

publicly available online resources. So you know, I heard folks talking about hotspots and what we can do about that. We want to understand from California residents what they're experiencing in terms of barriers to accessing these types of services. So this public survey will be released in the coming weeks in 12 languages. As Scott mentioned, we're trying to be as inclusive as possible. We also haven't made sure that we are making this accessible to all population. So we've done a lot of pre-testing, and we've engaged state agencies and nonprofits in the pre-testing process. So this has been a pretty inclusive and comprehensive approach to develop in these tools. We did not develop them in a vacuum. We included many of you actually, who are on this call in the testing process and the feedback process when we first put this together, so that will be released very soon, and we'd really appreciate it if you would share this public survey with your constituents anybody that you serve, and just push it out to people, so that we have a good representative sample from the responses that we receive. Next slide. This survey will be conducted via an online survey in 12 languages and via a phone survey in 4 languages, so we do hope to have a good oversampling of the covered populations in all 58 counties. Next slide. and with this I'm going to turn it over back to Anh. Thank you so much.

Thank you, Rachna. And yes, other ways to get involved and stay connected. If not already, Tish will drop our email within the chat as well as other links for you to go towards our broadband for all portal, which include a description on our digital digital equity planning process. We also invite you to join our local regional in-person events which will be announced on the events page as well as what Rachna said earlier to help us distribute both the DEEM tool as well the surveys to community members that you serve your friends and family within your network. Next slide, please. Great. Next slide. And as for this working group, just so you know what our goals are within the next few months. We hope to develop strategies to align with SDEP priorities, what Mei said earlier, making sure that all 6 of our outcomes take a closer look at overlapping priorities, and we can really leverage, conduct gap analysis. So that's what working group and our GSAs will be supporting. And lastly, connect research, evaluate assets and develop recommendations that are coming from the team as well as the public phone and online surveys to our particular outcome area working group for inclusion in the SDEP. Next slide, please. And then high overview of what the next 3 meetings could look like, and how you may be a part of it. Please let us know. In March we're hoping to dive deeper into How is digital inequity create disparities when it comes to health, many of which you have shared just now. We would love to look at number of reports you found. In May, we're looking at what digital equity programs are currently working well in your community and what's missing. In June, and when we have our data, we would love to share that with you, using you know, from the DEEM, as well as the public online phone surveys and able to share that with the group. And just a few to look forward to. Next slide, please. And then, as Scott mentioned earlier, this is our high-level overview of our timeline. So, as you can see, we're right now in mid-February, with our Health outcome working group along with the other 5 we're in the process of you know, launching, developing surveys, ecosystem mapping, and then our next few meetings, like I said earlier, is in March, May, and June. And with our State planning group meeting kind of in between our outcome area working group meetings in April, July, and October. Want to bring your attention to when we are hoping to get our first draft in places around July, with a month of public comment period in August. That gives us 3 months to refine our plan, to incorporate feedback, and essentially submit the final plan to NTIA sometimes in mid to late November. So that's our timeline, and we welcome your support in getting this as inclusive, as equitable, as it can be to represent all of California. And next slide,

please, unless there's a comment. This is our email address that you can send to. And if you would like to reach me, that's my email. And Melanie Downing and Latifa are both members of our health outcome area working group staff support team. I know Amelia is as well, but I know she's leaving her herself out of this for now. But with that I know we have a little bit like 5 minutes left. If anyone has last minute questions that we can address, or any slides that you would like to take a look at, feel free to raise your hand so I can unmute you. Thank you.

Thank you. I'm glad we had a couple of seconds I'll be very quick. I wanted to talk about how digital equity impacts health from a historical context, and I think that the current state is very similar to the 1980s when we underwent a major healthcare transition with the introduction of managed care. And during that transition we saw a marked increase in the rate of perforated appendicitis, because primary care providers were incentivized to delay referral to surgeons, and we're now in a telehealth transition which is a similar magnitude. My concern today is that we're going to see similar patient harms based on the digital divide specifically. We know that the difference in communication, effectiveness by communication modality is real, and i'll put a link to the chat momentarily. But the idea that a synchronous visit will always provide the same clinical support as an asynchronous text is going to be demonstrably wrong, and I think people are going to be harmed. The move toward the highest available service is a good thing, but at least in some cases means that some people are going to suffer a complication or bad outcome, because they don't have access to that higher available service. And for me this is the reason why we need to close the digital gap, ensure that every Californian has access to 100 megabit per second broadband. So the mode of telehealth chosen is based on what is most effective for the patient in their circumstance, and not limited by what's available.

Thank you for sharing that comment. Anyone else? I think there's a question in the chat. Rachna, do you mind taking a look at that? And then I'll have Greg come off mute real quick. Go ahead, Greg. Let me know if you're able to unmute.

Absolutely thank you so much. I put a comment in the chat, and I just wanted to reiterate it. It is only an anecdote, and it is my personal experience with family who is developed cognitive decline. And my concern that I'm expressing is the complication of a telehealth. I've been able to assist this family member, and so that has worked out well. But my concern is if there are other community members out there that may have difficulty with technology. You know, anywhere from updating their computer to logging into the service. You know, when you have cognitive challenges this could certainly is aspirate you know some of the problems that Dr. Larry had mentioned. People may not even be able to connect at all with their doctors. So I just wanted to highlight the need to maybe assess that you know more in the community. And then also to consider simplifying the technology even more. You know, one idea is possibly to have iPads that automatically update patients only need to click one button, and it connects them to their doctor or their staff. So, things along that nature.

So. Thank you so much for listening to me. I appreciate it. And happy to answer the question about DEEM. So I would recommend that the different departments offering the different programs complete their program specific information because the DEEM tool allows you to actually list your programs. So, I can imagine that some agencies have scores of programs. So, whoever filling that out. Fill out your programs, fill out the detail, and you always have the option to send your additional information via email to us. We will collect that information. So, if you have an exhaustive number of programs and want to send us detail about it, we will not refuse. We will gladly take that information and incorporate it into

a very comprehensive list of what's being offered out there. So please don't hold back. Share as much information as you can. The more programs we know about, I think the better off we'll all be.

Thank you for addressing that Rachna and thank you, Greg, for your comment as well.

Marissa. Thanks, Anh. One final sort of comment of you know, Sort of not letting the perfect be the enemy of good. And there's so many different. There's so many different digital equity problems that we can, that the digital equity and health equity problems that we can work towards solving right now, you know we have a huge workforce crisis. Telehealth is a possible solution. We have, you know, we have the ability to meet folks where they are and use telehealth and virtual care, and we can use our community health workers. And there's a lot of good work going on around the State that's been highlighted in the chat, and I've really enjoyed reading all of the anecdotes in the chat. And so, you know, there's Oh, yeah, I said. I have where this has been me. We have actually say that this broadband is a gift that keeps on giving, because every single conversation is just so actionable and moved us, moves the equity needle forward. And so, if anyone wants to continue to connect with us, and we're excited to continue to engage in this work.

Thank you. Thank you, Marissa. And with that we are at time. So, thank you. Everyone speakers and attendees and operation team from CDT. Thank you for being a part of our first outcome area working group. We'll see you in March and let's stay connected via email and our broadband portal. Thank you. Have a great day. Thanks, Anh. Thanks, Gladys. Thank you, everyone.