California Broadband Council Meeting

October 23, 2026

9:30 a.m. – 11:39 a.m.

Meeting Recap and Transcript

In accordance with GC 11123.5, the California Broadband Council (CBC) continued to conduct hybrid teleconference meetings and provide a physical meeting location for the public to view and participate in CBC meetings.

The CBC met on Friday, October 23, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. in the Board Chambers at the Sacramento County Administration Center at 700 H St. in Sacramento. Members of the public, presenters, and ex officio members had the option to join in person or via virtual conference.

Housekeeping & Roll Call

A quorum was established for the meeting.

Name	Organization	Member / Designee	Present	Absent
Chair Director Chris Given	**California Department of Technology**	Member	X	
Commissioner Darcie Houck	**California Public Utilities Commission**	Designee	X	
Deputy Director Steve Yarbrough	**California Office of Emergency Services**	Designee	X	
Deputy Superintendent Mary Nicely	**California Department of Education**	Designee	*X*	
Director Jason Kenney	**Department of General Services**	Designee	*Online, X*	
Deputy Secretary Allison Joe	**California State Transportation Agency**	Designee	*X*	

President and CEO Sunne McPeak	**California Emerging Technology Fund**	Member	X	
Deputy Secretary Michael Flores	**Department of Food and Agriculture**	Designee	*Online, X*	
Program Manager Josh Chisom	**California State Library**, **Broadband Opportunities**	Designee		X
Secretary Christina Snider-Ashtari	**Office of Tribal Affairs**	Member		X
Senator Josh Becker/Ms. Sarah Smith	**CA State Senate Energy, Utilities, and Communications Committee**	Member/ Designee		X
Assemblymember Mike A. Gipson or designee	**Assemblymember Mike A. Gipson** **CA State Assembly**	Member/ Designee		X

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome

Chair and Director of the California Department of Technology (CDT), Chris Given, welcomed Council members and attendees to the fourth and final CBC meeting. He thanked the Sacramento County Administration Center and its staff for housing today's meeting and provided an overview of the agenda, emphasizing the 2026 Broadband for All Year in Review.

No CBC members made additional comments.

Agenda Item 2 – Executive Report

Scott Adams, Deputy Director from CDT's Office of Broadband & Digital Literacy, provided high-level updates on statewide Broadband for All coordination, State Digital Equity Plan (SDEP) implementation, and member and community spotlights. He highlighted Digital Inclusion Week activities, partnerships, and developments related to federal digital equity funding.

No CBC members made additional comments.

Agenda Item 3 – Broadband for All Year in Review

Deputy Director Adams briefly went over the historical evolution of Broadband for All and the Broadband for All Action Plan goals, Senate Bill 156, and the strategic leveraging of outside funding through federal sources. He provided updates on major Broadband for All initiatives, including broadband infrastructure deployment, affordability, adoption, and digital equity programs.

Agenda Item 3.1 – Broadband for All Action Plan

Deputy Director Scott Adams provided an overview of the Broadband for All Action Plan and its progress toward expanding broadband availability, affordability, and adoption statewide. He reported that 19 of the 24 action items have been completed, with continued progress on the remaining 5 action items. These action items include #12, 14, 16, 18, and 21.

Mr. Adams also highlighted a Pew Charitable Trust study identifying California as the only state to address all four universal broadband policy areas in statute.

The following CBC members and presenters made additional comments:

- Ms. Sunne McPeak

Agenda Item 3.2 – Middle-Mile Broadband Initiative

Mark Monroe, Deputy Director of CDT's Middle-Mile Broadband Initiative (MMBI), provided an update on statewide network construction, permitting, operational readiness, and partnerships.

Key Updates shared in the meeting included:

- More than 85% of the network is permitted
- Over 4,500 miles of network construction were completed
- 55% of the Network Fiber Constructed
- 79 Huts in Construction
- Approximately 1,300 Miles Ready to Connect
- Master Service Agreements (MSAs) executed to support the first 10 Federal Funding Account (FFA) projects connecting to the network. There are continued discussions to support activation as other FFA projects become ready
- Continued collaboration with tribal governments, including the Karuk Tribe and Hoopa Valley Tribe.
- Introduction of *BridgeFiber*, California's open-access middle-mile network brand.

Mr. Monroe also shared construction and service-readiness targets for the remainder of 2026, shared installation updates, and announced the year's final stakeholder engagement session, which will take place from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Friday, October 30.

The following CBC members made additional comments:

- Ms. Sunne McPeak
- Commissioner Darcie Houck
- Deputy Secretary Allison Jo

Agenda Item 3.3 – Last Mile Program

Commissioner Darcie Houck of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) provided an updated overview of statewide last-mile broadband investments, including the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program, FFA, California Advanced Services Fund (CASF), and Loan Loss Reserve Fund.

Key updates included:

- *BEAD*: California received $1.86 billion in federal funding, with approximately $1.4 billion planned for more than 80 last-mile projects.
- *Last-mile FFA:* Approximately $1.23 billion awarded for broadband deployment projects across all 58 California counties. With 106 Technical Assistance Grants and 122 Projects Across California. Approximately $550 million remaining for appropriation as early as the 2027 Budget Act for additional application rounds
- *CASF Infrastructure Grant Account*: $166 million awarded for 17 projects across 17 counties. There are more than 3,800 locations. The Broadband Availability Map was published on September 23, 2026. An extended application deadline from October 1st to November 2nd to allow applicants to analyze new eligibility data and incorporate BEAD results. Approximately $58 million is available for applicants.
- *CASF Adoption*: More than $11 million awarded for 114 projects across 27 counties. Increased 2026 awardees; a total of 314 applications demonstrate ongoing demand for adoption awards.
- *Tribal Broadband:* Continued funding, technical assistance, and regional coordination supporting tribal broadband development. In Decision 25-11-003, there are 3 new authorized regional tribal consortia (Central,

Southern, Northern). And there have been regional tribal consortia workshops hosted this year as well.

Commissioner Houck also highlighted the San Joaquin Valley BEAD investment, the City of Ukiah's and Mendocino County's broadband project, which benefits over 9,142 people. Lastly, she shared the stakeholder listening sessions intended to inform future CASF program improvements.

The following CBC members made additional comments:

- Ms. Sunne McPeak

Agenda Item 3.4 – Affordability

Robert Osborn, Director of Broadband Consumer Programs and Carrier Oversight at CPUC, provided an update on the California LifeLine Home Broadband Pilot Program.

Mr. Osborn reviewed the program's eligibility and enrollment process, service standards, and monthly subsidies. He reported that the program had enrolled nearly *30,000 participants* as of September 30, 2026.

He also discussed improvements to enrollment verification, application completion rates, provider participation, and customer support. The presentation emphasized ongoing efforts to simplify enrollment and improve access for eligible Californians.

The following CBC members made additional comments:

- Ms. Sunne McPeak

Agenda Item 3.5 – Adoption

Sunne McPeak, President and CEO of the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF), provided updates on digital inclusion investments established through public benefit agreements associated with the Verizon–Frontier and Charter–Cox mergers.

Key highlights included:

- $40 million committed toward digital inclusion through the Verizon–Frontier agreement, along with $1 million for supplier diversity.
- $30 million committed through the Charter–Cox agreement to support broadband adoption and related digital inclusion initiatives.
- Efforts to connect low-income households with affordable internet service and digital literacy resources.

- Development of the *2027 Digital Equity Survey* to measure broadband adoption, identify remaining barriers, and inform statewide digital inclusion efforts.

No CBC members made additional comments.

Agenda Item 3.6 – State Digital Equity Plan

Deputy Director Scott Adams provided updates on the implementation of the SDEP, emphasizing stakeholder engagement, resource development, and digital inclusion partnerships.

The presentation highlighted:
- Continued monthly Digital Equity Community of Practice meetings
- Expansion and improvements to the Digital Equity Resource Finder
- Development of partnerships to support digital inclusion services and resources
- Continued collaboration among state agencies, community organizations, and other stakeholders

Deputy Director Adams also discussed the Office of Broadband and Digital Literacy's efforts to advance SDEP priorities using available resources following changes to federal funding.

No CBC members made additional comments.

Agenda Item 4 – Member Spotlight

Mary Nicely, Deputy Superintendent of the California Department of Education, presented an overview of the California Educators Together (CaET) platform.

Ms. Nicely highlighted the free educational platform's instructional resources, professional learning opportunities, collaboration tools, and artificial intelligence resources that support educators in developing lessons and accessing digital learning materials.

She also discussed opportunities to expand awareness and use of the platform through webinars and partnerships.

The following CBC members made additional comments:
- Director Chris Given
- Ms. Sunne McPeak

Agenda Item 5 – Community Spotlight

Rebecca Kauma, Director of Digital Equity for Los Angeles County, presented an overview of the Los Angeles County Digital Equity Roadmap, a three-year action plan initiated in October 2025 to address the digital divide. Ms. Kauma highlighted the Roadmap's community-centered approach to expanding affordable internet access, technology resources, and digital inclusion services through collaboration with local organizations and stakeholders.

She discussed the Roadmap's development process, including digital equity asset mapping, identifying barriers to connectivity, and engaging residents to develop strategies and solutions. Ms. Kauma also highlighted the Digital Equity Community Ambassadors Program, which engaged six residents to share their lived experiences and help shape the Roadmap's priorities. She concluded by outlining the Roadmap's goals, implementation activities, and continued efforts to strengthen community partnerships and advance digital equity throughout Los Angeles County.

The following CBC members made additional comments:

- Ms. Sunne McPeak
- Deputy Director Steve Yarbrough
- Commissioner Darcie Houck
- Deputy Superintendent Mary Nicely

Agenda Item 6 – 2027 Focus & Meeting Schedule

Deputy Director Scott Adams proposed to Broadband Council members the 2027 Focus and Meeting Schedule. CDT staff proposed that the 2027 CBC meetings continue to prioritize the annual Broadband Action Plan review and revision, Broadband for All initiatives, and member & community Spotlights.

Mr. Adams recommended the following 2027 CBC meeting schedule:

- January 21, 2027
- April 23, 2027
- July 23, 2027
- October 22, 2027

The following CBC members made additional comments:

- Commissioner Darcie Houck

A motion was made by Deputy Director Steve Yarbrough and seconded by Deputy Superintendent Mary Nicely. The motion was passed unanimously by present CBC members, and 4 abstained due to their absence from the meeting.

Agenda Item 6 – Public Comment

Staff proceeded to address public comments, starting with in-person comments, then those with their hands raised on Zoom, and comments sent in via email prior to the meeting.

The following members of the public provided comments via Zoom:

- Patrick Messac, East Bay Broadband Consortium
- Cinthia Medrano, East Bay Broadband Consortium
- Lily McGlothern, Northeastern California Connect and Upstate California Connect Broadband Consortia
- Lindsey Skolnik, California Alliance for Digital Equity (CADE)
- Navreet Hundal, Valley Vision and Connected Capital Area Broadband Consortium
- Rigoberto Hernandez, Nube Educational Foundation
- Ulises Zatarain, TechExchange

Public comments addressed broadband deployment, affordability, enrollment assistance, digital inclusion, and continued support for statewide broadband programs.

No in-person comments or advance email comments were received.

Agenda Item 7 – Closing

Director Chris Given thanked Council members, presenters, and attendees and noted the next meeting is Thursday, January 21, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. at the Sacramento County Administration Center and online. The meeting adjourned at 11:39 a.m.

(The recording and presentation slides from the meeting will be posted on the California Broadband Council's website.)

Transcript

Good morning, and welcome, everyone, to the fourth California Broadband Council meeting of 2026. Thank you to Council members, presenters, partners, and members of the public joining us today. I'm Chris Given, State CIO and Director of the California Department of Technology, chairing today's California Broadband Council. Today's meeting is the Council's final meeting of the year. As you know, the Broadband for All program consists of several coordinated initiatives and efforts aimed at closing the digital divide and fostering digital equity throughout California. As we've done in previous Q4 CBC meetings, the

focus of today's meeting will be a Year in Review of our collective accomplishments and progress in this past year. Broadband for All acknowledges that access and availability of infrastructure, affordability of internet service and devices. And adoption are critical components of digital equity Broadband for All's goals are that all California residents have access to high-performance broadband, affordable home internet and devices, and digital skills to enable full participation in modern life. Today, you will hear how multiple programs are making progress to achieve Broadband for All. We appreciate everyone taking the time to join us today, and thank you to the Sacramento County Administration Center and their staff for supporting today's meeting. We'll now get started with roll call. Ms. Lee, will you start with roll call and review the meeting housekeeping items?

Good morning, Council members and members of the public. Council members, please announce your presence as your name is called. Director Given from the California Department of Technology.

Present.

Commissioner Houck from the California Public Utilities Commission.

Here.

Deputy Director Yarbrough from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services

Here.

Deputy Superintendent Nicely from the California Department of Education.

Here.

Director Kenney from Department of General Services.

Here.

Deputy Secretary Joe from the California State Transportation Agency.

Here.

Ms. McPeak from California Emerging Technology Fund.

Present.

Deputy Secretary Flores from the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

Here.

Mr. Chisom from the California State Library.

Secretary Snider-Ashtari from the Governor's Office of Tribal Affairs. Senator Becker, or Ms. Sarah Smith? And Assemblymember Gipson, or Ms. Vicencia from the Assembly. Director Given, we have quorum.

Thank you, Amanda.

Now, housekeeping items for Council members and members of the public. This meeting is being recorded. We will post the recording of this meeting, slides, and transcripts to the Broadband for All portal. Attendees, please note there is time allocated at the end of the meeting for public comments, either in person, via Zoom, phone, or read through a public comment sent via email, submitted prior to the meeting. Presenters, please cue Toni to advance your slides. Committee members, please use the raise hand feature on Zoom, or raise your hand in person to notify Director Given to call on you to speak. Select side-by-side speaker view when PowerPoint slides are shared. Closed captioning is available on Zoom. Use the raise hand icon on Zoom or star 9 if you're calling in by phone. Director Given, we can begin.

Fantastic. Thank you, Amanda. Broadband Council meetings provide an opportunity to highlight how coordinated statewide initiatives and efforts are working together to achieve Broadband for all. Today's agenda will include some exciting implementation milestones that have occurred in 2026, so we'll start with an executive report from Deputy Director Scott Adams. Next, the Broadband for All Year in Review will include multiple sub-agenda items. You'll hear about the Broadband for All Action Plan, the Middle Mile Broadband Initiative. CPUC last mile programs, Adoption, Affordability, and the State Digital Equity Plan. Today's member spotlight will feature Deputy Superintendent Mary Nicely of the California Department of Education, who will present on the California Educators Together platform. For today's Community Spotlight, Director of Digital Equity Rebecca Kauma of Los Angeles County will share LA's work on the Los Angeles County Digital Equity Roadmap. Then you'll hear a staff recommendation on next year's work focus and meeting schedule. Finally, as Ms. Lee alluded to earlier, there will be an opportunity for public comments prior to closing. Would any of the Council members like to make brief opening comments? Seeing none, first order of business, let's go to the Executive Report with Deputy Director of the Office of Broadband and Digital Literacy, Scott Adams.

Thank you, Chair Givens. Good morning, Chair, Councilmembers, and members of the public. Scott Adams, Deputy Director of Broadband and Digital Literacy. It's my pleasure to give you a brief update on our office's work since the last meeting. Next slide, please. So, primarily, we continue to work and coordinate the various Broadband for All programs with the appropriate agencies and staff, conducting monthly working sessions to ensure that there is alignment and that these efforts are connected. We've done significant work on the digital equity plan that you'll hear about later on, but as you know, minus federal funding, we had to narrow our focus some. Still, we've made great progress on the three main priorities that we were focusing on this year in terms of partner and stakeholder engagement, tool and resource development for the ecosystem, and develop some really exciting new partnerships there. On an exciting note, on partners' engagement, This, earlier this month was Digital Inclusion Week. So myself and staff were able to get out. Aracely Hernandez, our Digital Inclusion Manager, and I were down in LA County at the beginning of the month for their Digital Equity Roadmap Action Summit, which is real exciting. We're glad Rebecca's gonna be here to talk about that today. And then yesterday, I had the privilege of being in San Francisco with about 120 digital inclusion stakeholders at their Tech Access Summit. So, really important to get out in the community and interact with folks that are really driving this work home. We've worked hard this year. Also, you know, when we added the member and community spotlight, the goal was to uplift the work of the Broadband Council members, not just around infrastructure deployment and broadband adoption, but the things that really focus on other parts of the Broadband for All Action Plan. So, if we move this slide here to the next one, please. We just wanted to, you know, recap that on the member spotlight, we, you know, we're able to focus on the libraries and the work that they're doing. Twice, we focus on CETF because of the enormous amount of funding that is coming through to them through the public benefit merger agreements, and then today we're really excited to hear from Deputy Superintendent Nicely on their California Educators Together platform. And then what we're also very proud of is the community spotlights. I mean, the work of, you know, the suggestion of staff to the council was, let's bring in outside voices, those people whose partnerships we are dependent on to get the work done. So, just wanted to highlight these were, you know, Dev Mission from San Francisco. Cal Privacy, the North State Planning Collaborative, and again, you know, Rebecca Kauma from LA County. I think I want to close the executive report on a note about federal funding. As you know, we had to come to the Council and let you know that the Digital Equity Act program funding was terminated. Some relatively good news in the funding development is because the National Digital Inclusion Alliance submitted a legal challenge. We know that NTIA is gonna come back out with the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program, and so we don't know the details and the, which will be outlined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, but we anticipate that's going to be a great opportunity for folks here in California to apply directly

to that program to help fund action items that are aligned with Broadband for All on the State Digital Equity Plan. And just to give you a sense, before that program stopped, there were, I believe, over 15 California-serving coalitions that were recommended to receive up to $125 million, which is quite significant. So, it's on that note, I'm going to conclude, and I'm happy to answer any questions.

Thank you so much, Scott, and thank you to all the members and community groups who have shared their work with us here. Do any of the council members have any questions about Mr. Adams' update? Seeing none, we're gonna turn things back over to Scott to begin the Broadband for All Year in Review, starting with the Broadband for All Action Plan.

Thank you, Chair. If we could go to…the next slide. So, I know that there are some new members and designees to the Council here, so if you could go to the next slide, please. As Director Givens noted in his opening comments, Broadband for All has really been an evolution here in the state of California of a number of steps that began in, in 2010 with the establishment of this body, but then the governor's executive order, the development of the Broadband for All Action Plan, Senate Bill 156, and then, really the strategic leveraging of outside funding through federal sources. So, when we say it is a large initiative of complementary programs. That's what we mean to address deployment, affordability, and adoption. Next slide. Please. And again, as Director Given reiterated, the goals of Broadband for All, which were outlined in the Action Plan, carried over in the Digital Equity Plan, really that all Californians have high-performance broadband available at home, schools, businesses, and libraries, that all Californians have access to affordable broadband and necessary devices, and that they can access the training and support to enable digital inclusion. That's the broad umbrella that we all come together here to work on, to report on, you know, the progress we're making towards this. what's… Really exciting is, if we can go to the next slide. So, the Broadband for All Action Plan, which this body developed in 2020, during the height of the pandemic, included 24 very specific actions that, you know, were prescribed to be followed. Either policy, funding, you know, coalition efforts, promotion of low-cost offers, etc. And as we've reported in the past, 19 of those 24 action items have been completed. We still work on them, because it's, you know, it's a dynamic and fluid state where we've always got to refresh and update the work that's being done here. Insignificant work is being done on the open items, but some of the highlights we wanted to continue to show is the PUC's excellent work continuing to look to refine the Lifeline program with their standalone home broadband pilot. Action item 14 around contracting and procurement, CDT, DGS working together have been able to leverage procurement for the operations TPA for the MMBI, digital inclusion partnerships that we entered into this year. Can we please bring the slide back up? It seems to have dropped. I'll consume my notes. The other item is tracking enrollment and providing

enrollment assistance in low-cost service offers. We're doing that collectively. Many members of this group are on the Lifeline pilot and on low-cost offers themselves; CETF is really a leader in that effort. Building our digital inclusion stakeholder network, it continues to grow. It's over 13,000. And then, lastly is action item 21, which is continue to expand the Broadband for All portal. While we're dealing with some tech issues on the, on the slides, my last slide, members that you will see, and members of the public will see once it's posted, is that, And a testament to the, I guess, the prescience and foresight of this body in developing the Broadband for All Action Plan, and, the very significant partnership and leadership that was shown by the governor and the legislature. California is really ahead of the game when it comes to universal broadband, and one of the things we wanted to point out is a recent study by the Pew Charitable Trust that was focusing on the four cornerstone policies for universal broadband, which are dedicated deployment funding, affordability requirements, minimum speed standards, network scalability really significant. When they surveyed all of the states, California's the only state in the nation to have addressed all four of those policies in statute. So you're gonna hear a lot about the differences of, you know, the state of broadband in different states, but in a state as large as ours, as populous as ours, to, you know, be this far ahead of the game from a policy perspective is really a testament to you all. The snapshot you see there is a dashboard that Pew put up, which is pretty cool, and there's a link here on the slides. So, without further ado, I'm done with my update on the action plan, and just thanks to all of the various departments and entities that are continuing to move this forward.

Thank you so much, Scott. Do any Council members have questions regarding the Broadband for All Action Plan? I think, Sunne?

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the report. I have two questions. One is so, in terms of where we are, the remaining actions, a lot of progress has been made. Is there timeframes now that you're projecting to complete the rest or continue to update? So, the timeframe question. The second question is, so out of all of the efforts that are pretty substantial to braid and integrate several revenue streams, what is the most helpful thing this Council can do to optimize that kind of integration of effort and collaboration?

Got it. Thank you for the questions. On the first question of timeframes, later on today, when we submit the Council focus and schedule for next year, part of that is going to be the annual review and revision process for the Broadband for All Action Plan. And part of that, Ms. McPeak. We'll be to really try to see if we can get hard dates on when the completion of the next, you know, the last 5 remaining ones. There's…As we've noted before, there's some policy dependencies that are required, but do take the, the desire to have us focus on a potential end date for those open items second; your question was… How

can the Council help? Well, I think that the Council has continued to help in a very tremendous way. There are two areas where I think the Council can help the most, particularly given the unique nature of the body, which is coordination at the statewide level between, you know, various departments and agencies. And infrastructure is… fairly well taken care of with the middle- mile and the last mile programs on PUC. There's always permitting issues that need to be worked on, and that's really a group effort. But I think two pieces related to the action plan are on broadband adoption, you know, we know that cost is the number one barrier to people getting connected, and that lack of awareness of low-cost offers, and even this great, you know, subsidy that we have here in Lifeline is low. So. Broadband Council member entities, I think, to look and see, you know, what are the communications channels to… directly to residents, and how can they support and assist in doing direct notifications on, and potentially, you know, work with other entities in the administration to do that. I think that's gonna go a long ways to helping us on the adoption side, and particularly with promoting the availability of the Lifeline pilot. And then, secondly, devices are a huge barrier for a relatively small portion of the population, 3% of the unconnected and under-connected. aren't, or unconnected, aren't so because they don't have devices, and a new device is very expensive. And so, what we are doing is partnering with CDT is partnering with, CETF on the Green Technology Initiative, and that is finding a way, there's already a state statute that was passed to allow state departments to disposition their surplus equipment to non-profit entities, in rural and other areas to help close the digital divide. So there's a potential huge opportunity for us, given CDT, DGS, CETF, and the role that we play, PUC and others, that we could collectively, you know, demonstrate for the state of California our, you know, shared commitment to closing the digital divide by, you know, increasing the digital device ownership ecosystem.

Mr. Chair, just a follow-up comment. Thank you, Deputy Director Adams. So, first I want to clarify, you referenced Lifeline pilot for home broadband that I know Mr. Osborn will be talking about, perhaps Commissioner Houck will be coming on. And the word low, I just want to make sure we're talking about awareness. It's actually a very good subsidy. I don't want that to be confused. It's a very good program. It's… it's a cat… it's…It… I want to say, it is the best… it's the appropriate level, and it is the best…It's actually the only in the nation, so maybe that would make it the best, but it truly is very good.

I would agree. I hope I didn't say anything.

No, no, it was the word low, and maybe I just am being… I want to make sure the public understands it's the awareness issue that we're talking about.

And the comment that I made was really from the Broadband for All Action Plan, which is the promotion and tracking of enrollment in low-cost offers and subsidies, which Lifeline would have been, so…

Action 16, I… It's emblazoned in my head. Yeah. The second comment I would make is. I wanted to commend the Department of Technology on the California Green Technology Initiative, focusing on that, the device issue, and one of the steps that you're doing that I think is quite helpful. You, James Spencer, Shawn Daugherty- every two weeks, we had to cancel today because we're all here, are meeting with the refurbishers that have I've never been in the room together. I mean, they sort of know of each other, but it is huge when you put, you know, really well-dedicated and bright, experienced people together. And I cite that as an example, because I think that's what gets traction. And I asked the question originally about what can we do to help, because I think the spotlights you're doing on departments and on partners, such as what Rebecca will do later, and that Dev Mission and others have done this year, are really, really important. And I want to just suggest, as you're doing the year-end review, talking about what might be the agenda for next year that you consider the power of convening and reporting in public as well, and bringing various stakeholders who are… have to be accountable. And then I will personally take responsibility to join Director Given to go get legislators to actually show up.

Thank you, Ms. McPeak.

I love them all, but they need to be here.

Are there further questions from members? Seeing none, we're gonna turn things over to Mark Monroe, Deputy Director of the Middle-Mile Broadband Initiative, who will highlight significant progress the MMBI team and the broader partners have made in implementing this historic project. Mark?

Thank you, and good morning, Director Given and members. Mark Monroe with CDT, the Deputy Director for the Middle-Mile Broadband Initiative. I'm happy to be able to provide an update for how we've… the progress we've made in this next year, if you want to jump to the next slide. First, in terms of, kind of our project goals for the year, can we jump to the next slide? There we go. More than 87% of the network is now permitted, with almost 2,000 miles permitted so far this year. Similarly, more than half of the statewide fiber has now been constructed, with 1,130 miles constructed so far in 2026. And we also continue to make progress on the other key infrastructure components component needed to operate the network. The 134 repeater huts, with 79 of those in construction now and 74 of those started since January. In addition to the continued progress on deploying the infrastructure, we continue to increasingly move towards service provision. Almost 1,300 miles are ready to connect. And by the end of

the year, we expect total construction to reach approximately 5,300 miles, sufficient to reach all of the FFA awardees planning to connect to our network. And as testing and activation are completed, additional constructed segments will continue to become available to provide services to customers and last-mile partners. We've also been, we've also seen increases in our progress towards, on the customer side, and our first, master service agreements, having been executed to support the FFA-funded projects that plan to use the network. Next slide. This year, our MMBI customer solutions team has continued engaging and coordinating with the 65 FFA project sponsors that intend to connect to the network. As part of the coordination, we've been working closely with these awardees to understand when and how they want to connect, in order to align these projects with the Middle Mile. To date, agreements have been executed to support the first 10 of these FFA projects, and we've started routing and executing service orders for these FFA projects as they are becoming ready for service. These milestones really reflect the continued commitment and coordination between CDT, FFA awardees, and the CPUC in aligning the middle mile and last mile in reaching unserved and underserved communities. As the work advances, we are looking forward to activating these regions and bringing high-speed internet to these communities. Next slide. CDT is also continuing its outreach to potential customers at all levels, looking towards our expanded operations moving forward. In addition to FFA awardees, we are also working with municipal governments. As well as we offer a variety of solutions that can assist with public safety, regional collaboration, and disaster recovery, in addition to internet access. As part of this outreach, we're attending trade shows and conferences, to discuss potential service to municipal governments and increasing awareness in communities… with communities that may not have received any last-mile grants and educating them on how MMBN can still be, leveraged to support them. We are also working closely with the private sector and in the process of negotiating multiple sales agreements with private sector customers, including our first dark fiber IRU agreement that was executed just last week. And we're beginning to market the network as bridge fiber. California's open access network. In addition to the MMBN's pivotal role in bridging the digital divide. This branding is helpful to serve as an indicator to the private sector more broadly that California's open access network is, in fact, open to all customers, not just FFA awardees and government entities. Our goal remains to bring high-speed internet to unserved and underserved communities to close the digital divide, and our network will serve as that bridge. We encourage anyone interested in exploring our services to scan the QR code on the slide, which will take you to our website. There you can submit a sales inquiry so that someone from our customer solutions team can reach out to discuss our services and next steps for connecting. Next slide. Again, by the end of 2026, we expect to have at least 5,300 miles constructed, with 4,300 miles ready to connect. This is reflected by the orange and green lines on the slide. While it's a little hard to see here, this statewide map on the statewide map, each of the

dark clusters on the slide represent one of the 65 FFA recipients that will be able to secure MMBI services as we meet our targets. Next slide. Again, 7,179 miles of the network have been permitted to date. Of this, 6,000 miles, 6,000 of the networks, miles of the network have gone to construction. And of this, 4,519 miles have been completed. So, CDT and its partners continue to move at pace. Next slide. Lastly, I wanted to briefly focus on a little… focus a little more on some of our partners. This last month, we celebrated the Karuk tribe's readiness to break ground on a project that it began working on with the CPUC 13 years ago. The tribe has partnered with CDT to construct several segments of the MMBN as part of constructing its own last mile project. Next slide. Similarly, CDT was able to visit the Hoopa Valley Tribe, which is also building a segment of the MMBN as part of its Last Mile project, and we got to see the new data center they've built that will leverage the Middle-Mile Network to support a number of municipal services on the reservation. It's been an exciting part of this project to see the initiative and leadership in these communities. And then lastly, we want to remind our stakeholders that we will hold this year's final stakeholder engagement session next week. That wraps up my update, and I'm happy to answer any questions.

Thank you so much, Mark. I mean, fantastic progress, not only on construction, but also on really reaching viability for this network and reaching operations. Do any members have questions? I see Ms. McPeak's hand first.

I do. Thank you very much, Deputy Director Monroe for the update, and it is significant progress. Kudos to the department and the agency, and to the transportation agency and Caltrans for the progress you've made. I mentioned at the last meeting, maybe even the meeting before, that as I anticipate what's going to happen with last mile projects and permitting for actually state rights-of-way. I'm bracing for what that means in terms of the amount of permits coming through. Do we have an estimate of that? Maybe you, maybe Commissioner Houck would be the person to answer, but I am… I'm… I think that's a… that's a data point that we actually might want to be focusing on. Deputy Secretary Joe is… is leading on that and knows what we have with now 12 direct… 12 districts that are going to be getting these permits, and I just want to know, what do we do? To make sure they get handled, and that those projects aren't hung up. I was involved with the Karuk project 12 years ago, and their joint venture with the Yurok and the CASF grants, and it's embarrassing for California that it took 12 years to get here. Okay, so I've made my point. I think we need projections on what that means in terms of encroachment permits and just getting a handle on it. It's going to be a tsunami compared to, in my estimation, what we experienced with MMBI.

Thank you, Ms. McPeak.

Thank you.

Next hand I see, is Commissioner Houck.

Thank you, Chair. And I'll say that I know we have had awardees for different grants express concerns about timing on permitting. I think we're doing a pretty good job. I think we've seen a lot of things going through, but there is a lot of work to do, and there's a lot of challenges when we're looking at multiple state and federal agencies and local governments, but I think we're… we're trying to coordinate the best we can, and I don't know if Rob has any additional information. That was not my question, though, but I did want to be responsive that we are very much aware of the issues and working very hard and coordinating. I just wanted to thank you for all the work on the Middle Mile and the report. You've been an amazing partner for the PUC with our last mile efforts, and I think together we're seeing the great results that you're showing here, and that I'm going to be talking about in a minute. So just wanted to thank you for that partnership and all the work that you, Mark, are doing, and Scott and your team.

Thank you, Darcie. Okay, any further questions from members?

Turn on my mic. Hi, Allison Jo with the California State Transportation Agency. I just really wanted to show and convey my appreciation to the Department of Technology and not just the team that we see working at the headquarters level, but really in the field and in the thick of it with our partners on the ground. I think that, to Sunne's point, it is incredibly hard to look at one series in one particular area, let alone a statewide network, right? And as we start thinking about the complexities of what's required in what jurisdiction, at what time, that is, those are not unknown things. We know what permits need to be done; we know what needs to be done for those permits, for those requirements, and it does take a heck of a lot of coordination and communication, really clear communication, to make sure that we actually have the right pieces in the right places at the right time. That being said, really, really appreciative of all of the work that the team has done on Middle-Mile Broadband. And, you know, speaking on behalf of Caltrans, this is a definite, a win for us in terms of the ability to show that we can do this, and I think there's a lot to be said for that. So, congratulations on the accomplishments to date; looking forward to more and more. I think always asking us to aim higher and try harder and do more and do better and do faster. Also, a really great thing to look into in the next year. So, thank you.

I only do that because I know you can accomplish it, Allison, and my Caltrans. I'm highly responsive to that kind of directive. That's okay.

But yeah, no, I appreciate that. We need it.

And thank you, Allison. I mean, what the team has accomplished this year is nothing short of extraordinary. So, you know, I think we've learned a lot, and we can apply these lessons going forward. Are there any further questions or comments? Seeing none, thank you, Mark. And we are going to turn things over to the Last Mile program Year in Review from Commissioner Houck of the California Public Utilities Commission. CPUC has many Last Mile grant programs that support last-mile connectivity to homes and broadband adoption. She will share recent wins and the significant progress CPUC has made this year, Darcie.

Thank you. And I've got a lot of information, but I will try and make it as concise and efficient as possible, because I know we've got limited time. I'm going to be providing updates on our last mile programs associated with multi-year broadband investments in Senate Bill 156 and other related efforts, and I'm going to be, again, focusing on our last mile programs, and you'll have another presentation from Director Osborn. Later. Next slide, please.

Apologies for those folks watching, the slide… the computer that is projecting the slides is a little slow, and so the slides will be lagging, and we apologize.

No, no, thank you. So, the Commission has been charged with delivery of programs that fund the deployment of safe, reliable, and affordable broadband services across California. These programs are critical to meeting the state's goals to bring the essential services to all Californians. And the table on the slide in front of you provides a snapshot of the broadband-related programs that the Commission oversees, including the multi-year last mile SB156 programs. These programs include the first one is the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment, or BEAD program, which is a $42 billion federal program from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and it's being implemented by the Federal National Telecommunications and Information Administration or NTIA. California was awarded $1.86 billion in BEAD funding, and I'll be talking more about the BEAD program just a little bit later in the presentation. The next slide is our California Advanced Services Fund suite of Broadband Grant Programs, or CASF. CASF is one of the public purpose programs supported… oh, if we go back, thank you. Supported by the CPUC-approved surcharges on communications access lines. It consists of 6 programs or accounts which support a range of community Broadband needs, from technical assistance to infrastructure consortia and broadband adoption. And later in the presentation, I'm going to be reviewing the 2026 CASF Awards. The next column is our Loan Loss Reserve Fund program which supports public entity bond financing for broadband projects. It's a $50 million broadband loan loss reserve fund, and it expands the ability of local nonprofit and tribal governments to finance broadband projects with an emphasis on public broadband awards. And in

July, the program was updated to include a direct loan option, making available the $50 million in funds as both direct loans and credit enhancements to eligible tribal governments, government agencies, joint powers authorities, and non-profits. And then finally, the last column is the federal funding account, which supports reliable last-mile broadband infrastructure in every county of the state. It's a multi-year funding of approximately $2 billion, and it represents comprehensive one-time investments, implementing the vision of Broadband for all. We had two rounds of applications and awarded $1.23 billion of grants under this program so far, and in the future there could be another application round with grant awards, of approximately $550 million available for statewide funding, if appropriated in the 2027-2026 fiscal year. And that would be the overall total $2 billion for the program, and I'll be talking about the FFA program, and there's a spotlight on a grantee later in the presentation. Next slide, please. So I'll go ahead and start as we're waiting for the delay. The next slide it will be regarding the BEAD program, and as I mentioned a few minutes ago, Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment, or BEAD, is a $42 billion federal program from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act that's being implemented by the Federal National Telecommunications and Information Administration. California was awarded $1.86 billion of federal funding through BEAD. The Commission approved Resolution T17920 on September 17, 2026. And that resolution, ratified the BEAD final proposal as revised by the Commission staff in response to curing requests by NTIA. In total, Commission staff completed 8 rounds of curing requests from NTIA following our original submission of the final proposal in December of 2025, and thanks to all of the great work of our staff, in partnership with the applicants and other critical stakeholders in the process, and the staff that they were working with at NTIA, were looking to implement the state's proposal to serve nearly 270,000 locations using 76% of the total BEAD funding. There we go. There is the slide showing all of the numbers. So, we're looking at 70%, 6% of the total BEAD funding allocated to California. As we were able to bring in with the curing request, we reduced the 1.86 to the numbers shown here on this slide. I want to note that the most significant savings in this process came from negotiations with low Earth orbit satellite providers. Either because their initial bids were too high, or because we determined with NTIA that a satellite location from our original final proposal should not count as a broadband serviceable location after all. And the other significant source of savings came from roughly 4,000 broadband serviceable locations that do not need to be served through BEAD, primarily because we have enforceable commitments to serve them through our CASF and FFA programs, which shows just the tremendous amount of work that the state of California has done through both CASF and FFA, and I really want to commend everyone who's worked on those programs. There is $1.4 billion in BEAD last-mile broadband funding for more than 80 projects, and that's what's shown here on the slide. The table breaks down our BEAD deployment plans by technology type. The first column on the far left lists the five technology types, starting with fiber. Then, it

moves across the table to the right, are columns that show investment dollars and locations served by technology. The first technology listed, again, is fiber, which is the technology planned for over half of the total locations. The investment plan for fiber in the far right column is nearly $1.3 billion for almost 150,000 locations. We anticipate this will be a transformative investment in future-proof broadband infrastructure serving communities that have faced substantial challenges deploying reliable broadband. I also want to highlight one particular award that I'll talk about a little bit later also which consists of $252 million. It is the largest award and will serve over 34,000 locations in 5 counties in the San Joaquin Valley, primarily with cable and fiber infrastructure, and I'll, again, share more information about that specific award a little bit later in the presentation. So, after fiber, the next row down is Earth Orbit Satellite, which is planned to serve about a quarter of the total locations for nearly $77 million. And then, we have the unlicensed fixed wireless. Licensed fixed wireless and licensed by Rule Fixed Wireless, and the numbers are here on the chart. The unlicensed fixed wireless is 1.92%, licensed fixed wireless is 0.21%, and the licensed by Rule Fixed Wireless is 18.12%. So, it's important to note that the adjustments to these numbers that there is going to be adjustments to these numbers in all likelihood. There's going to be policy updates that may also continue, and on the next slide, I'll discuss some of the upcoming next steps that may result in minor changes to the projects and ask you to stay tuned and informed as the BEAD program moves forward. We still need to finalize, agreements with NTIA and, with sub-grantees, so there, there may be changes, but this is, what was approved and where we are. So, next slide, I think. So, I'm gonna now talk about the final proposal that was approved by both NTIA and the Commission. I want to describe some of the next steps before funding can flow to the subgrantees, and then begin connecting folks. The Commission formally accepted its notice of award from the National Institute of Standards and Technology, or NIST, a federal agency, so the deadline to accept that is November 2nd, 2026, which is coming up very quickly. Commission staff are preparing guidance for subgrantees about the upcoming process, including written guidance, and this upcoming process, there's going to be a kickoff. For implementation, that'll include finalizing a subgrantee monitoring plan, finalizing the subgrantee agreements between California and the subgrantees themselves, and remaining work for the subgrantees planning to deploy infrastructure on tribal lands to obtain that tribal consent. So, there's still a lot of work that needs to be done in ensuring that those agreements have the right language in them, and so that work is being done. Now. And once those agreements, we have the right language in there, and they can be finalized. The subgrantee agreements, the deadline for those to be entered into is March 2nd, and subgrantees will be working with NTIA and the Commission to secure necessary permits, which we were just talking about the need for the permits. And if necessary, adjust the project scope to accommodate permitting requirements. Once all the necessary agreements, plans, and permits are

finalized and approved, then deployment can begin. And I'd also like to note that NTIA issued a supplemental BEAD policy notice on September 3rd, which authorized a pathway for funding locations that remain unserved using the remaining BEAD funds, based on savings from the bargaining process with subgrantees. And states, including California, are still seeking more information from NTIA on how that process is going to work, so stay tuned for that as we look to get more information. Okay. Next slide, please. So before moving on from the bead program, I'd just like to highlight, again, one of the investments in our final proposal. So, on October 2nd, I had the privilege of joining officials from the counties of Fresno, Kings, Tulare, Merced, and Madera, as well as Congressman Jim Costa and Assemblymember David Tangipa, to celebrate an award of over $252 million to expand high-speed internet access in the San Joaquin Valley. The grants are going to provide significant economic and community benefits for residents, businesses, students, and local economies. And this event showcased the ongoing public partnerships and collaboration between federal, state, and local governments, with community members and the internet service providers who deploy this critical infrastructure. We know that internet access is much needed in the Central Valley. We saw during COVID the lack of ability for students to be able to adequately participate in education, and as we're looking at the agricultural industry, advances being made that are also really critical to having internet access. So this is a tremendous award that's going to really make a big difference in the San Joaquin Valley, and just want to highlight that for these communities that really came together to present a cohesive project, as opposed to doing separate small ones. They really came together to try and maximize the efforts. So, next slide, please. So, next I'm going to review the ongoing work taking place in the Commission's Last Mile Federal Funding Account, or FFA program. The FFA program has funded 106 technical assistance grants and 122 deployment projects across California. In Round 1, we approved awards in 52 counties, followed by an additional 6 counties in Round 2. Together, this means FFA is funding broadband deployment in every single county of California. Approximately $1.23 billion has been awarded so far, with 2.1 million Californians expected to benefit from these investments, along with 4,000 community anchor institutions such as schools, libraries, community centers, and healthcare facilities. FFA is funding approximately 7,500 miles of fiber deployment, and almost every single project will offer a plan with pricing specifically geared towards affordability. While implementing is, implementation is continuing for these projects, we are continuing to also work with awardees to draw down funds and connect Californians. I'll also highlight that there's still approximately $550 million in the account that is available for appropriation by the legislature. If those funds are appropriated, the Commission could conduct additional application rounds to serve even more communities in California. Next slide, please. So, I want to now discuss our 2026 awards for the California Advanced Services Suite of Programs, or CASF. As I mentioned earlier, CASF consists of 6 programs that support a range of community broadband needs,

from technical assistance to infrastructure to broadband adoption. In 2026, this has been a big year for CASF. The map on the left side of the slide shows counties, color-coded by the number of CASF accounts making awards in that county. Yellow counties received an award from 1 CAIC account, green counties from 2 accounts, and blue counties from 3 accounts. And that's 3 different accounts, 2 different accounts. Summary of the awards in 2026 on four of the CASF programs is shown on the right side of the slide, starting with the CASF Infrastructure Grant on the top right. The CASF Infrastructure Account awarded $166 million for 17 infrastructure projects serving over 3,800 locations in 17 counties. The Broadband account awarded over $11 million… the adoption account awarded over $11 million. This…So far this year, for 114 projects in 27 counties, and that's as of July of this year. The public housing account awarded $2.4 million to 17 projects, with another 18 projects requesting $3.7 million that are pending approval. And the CASF consortia grants. For approximately $3.4 million of awards were issued to… for 6 consortia serving 15 counties in California. Next slide, please. So, the infrastructure account funds deployment of high-speed broadband infrastructure to serve unserved locations in California. As mentioned previously, the program awarded more than $166 million for 17 projects, serving 3,800 locations across 17 counties in California, for 2026. The map of the counties with projects that received infrastructure grant awards in 2026 is on the left side, so the areas in green received infrastructure grants. And I want to note that the application window for approximately $58 million for 2026-2027 budget for the infrastructure account is anticipated to open, on November 2nd, and we delayed the opening of the… that account because of the… we wanted to make sure that we were aware of where the BEAD process was, and to make sure that we were as efficient as possible in coordinating across those programs. So that will open on November 2nd. Next slide. We're gonna talk about the Adoption Account, and this program funds projects to expand adoption of broadband, such as digital literacy and skills training programs. In 2026, the adoption account awarded more than $11 million for 114 projects, serving 27 counties. In addition to these awards, I want to note that the adoption account received 154 applications in the January 2026 application round, and that's the highest number in the program's history. And then, in the next round, for the July round of 2026, we received 160 applications, surpassing that earlier round, so we've had more applications, than any other year twice this year. So, with that, the adoption account is gonna provide many individuals with digital tools, training, and other adoption opportunities that develop into long-standing benefits to these communities, and it's really critical that we invest in adoption so that folks that haven't been able to access the internet are able to get the skills that they need to be able to utilize it and take advantage of the opportunities to ensure that they're able to participate in all of the things that the internet provides in the areas that are moving strictly to the internet. So, this program is very important. Next slide, please. So our public housing account funds projects expanding availability of broadband in low-income communities

and public housing. We have awarded $2.4 million to 17 projects so far in 2026, with again, another 3.7 pending approval that would cover 18 projects, and these were submitted in the July 1 application round. Application… awards and applications are in progress that would cover 10 counties across California, and 4 projects that exceeded the limits for ministerial approval in the January application cycle were approved by the Commission in Resolution T-17928 in August, and those included funding of nearly $600,000 for communities in Santa Barbara, Madera, Merced, and Contra Costa counties. Next slide, please. So, I want to highlight the significance of the awards made in the CASF Regional Broadband Consortia account. This account provides funding for regional organizations to conduct coordination, planning, and technical assistance for broadband infrastructure deployment in California, and I want to note that we found that entities that participated in the local technical assistance program were 67% more likely to get a successful infrastructure grant whether through FFA or CASF. So, this program, the consortia offer, really necessary services to local entities that are seeking to apply for infrastructure and other awards with the Commission. In Decision 25-11-003, we made several changes to the program. This decision authorized three new regional tribal consortia. It expanded the consortia account scope to include BEAD program activities and streamlined administrative requirements. In addition, Resolution T-17919 was approved by the Commission on June 11th, 2026, and that resolution approved 6 regional consortia account awards for up to $3.4 million in 16 counties. Notably, these include grants to 2 consortia serving Silicon Valley and the East Bay areas that were previously unserved by the consortia. And the table on this slide shows the awards to the different areas. And then, on the next slide, I will describe the tribal consortia work. Thank you. This slide highlights the critical work…Thank you, and I know I've got… I'm gonna try and go through this really quickly. I just want to highlight that this is really critical. We received a lot of input from tribes that technical assistance, grants have been very helpful, but having access to consortia is also going to help further the work of tribes, and so we've held 3 workshops, one hosted by Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria. It's Rancheria at CSU Chico, one by Morongo Band of Mission Indians in Southern California, and one by the Hoopa Valley Tribe in Northern California, and our staff are working to get out information and ensure that we are able to get the applications for these consortia out as quickly as possible. So next slide. So, I'd also like to highlight the significant amount of broadband work the CASF and FFA have provided to serve tribal communities. We've awarded $60.1 million for 3 awards to projects affiliated with tribal entities. Awarded $1 million to 4 separate… in 4 separate applications, and another 6 applications are pending for $1.1 million for tribal technical assistance, and the federal funding account. We have awarded funds for 9 projects, totaling $171.7 million. Next slide. So, federal funding account, I just want to highlight this. The City of Ukiah gigabit fiber project in Mendocino County. It's gonna benefit 9,142 individuals, and the county had received a LATA grant as well, and it's going to put in 20 miles of

fiber, again, benefiting 9,140 people, so I wanted to highlight and congratulate Ukiah for this project. And then, just, I think that is the last slide. In closing, I just want to mention that my office held four listening sessions, two in Los Angeles, hosted by the Los Angeles Digital Equity Action League, Unite LA, LAEDC, County of Los Angeles Internal Services Department, and two in Sacramento, hosted by Valley Vision, Connected Capital Area Broadband Consortia, and California Emerging Technology Fund. These listening sessions were to meet with CASF awardees, local government representatives, and Housing Authority representatives, and other stakeholders to hear how programs are working, get recommendations from them. I want to thank CETF for helping to summarize all of the listening sessions and all of the great work they did in helping to coordinate folks to be there. My office will be working to issue the reports of the summaries of these listening sessions and provide some recommendations for issues that could be scoped in the next CASF rulemaking, and I want to also recognize all of our CASF staff for the great work they're doing, and, the discussions we're having internally at the PUC. So, with that, this last slide, just issues some of the other, non-last-mile issues that we're dealing with it, the Commission, including disaster relief protection for lifeline participants, modernization of specific support amounts, and minimum service standards. We approved the Verizon-Frontier merger this last year, and upcoming decision in wireless service quality, that we're hoping to get done this year, and our ongoing rulemaking on carrier of last resort. And so that is the work that we're doing, and I know I went over time, but appreciate everyone listening. I want to thank all of our staff at the Commission. Again, it's a tremendous amount of work, and I…Really appreciate it; it's been an honor to be able to do this work for the people of California.

Fantastic. Thank you so much, Darcie. Do any Council members have questions about Commissioner Houck's presentation?

Of course, I do, Mr. Chair. So, thank you, Commissioner Houck, for your initiative and leadership in convening all the listening sessions on the California Advanced Services Fund. Only California has such a state-only fund. There's no other state. This is such a valuable resource to implement the Broadband for All and Digital Equity Plan, the BEAD plan, all of the deployments. So, I just appreciate very much you always been willing to listen to everyone, and I think it was probably 200 different stakeholders you actually met with. Having said that. I also was listening when you said the $550 million that still needs to be approved for expenditure of FFA, and then there's almost $400 million surplus in CASF. Is that going to be proposed by the Commission for this coming budget? You probably already submitted it at this point, so what do we need to do with the legislature or with somebody approving the appropriation?

So, as far as I'm aware, the money is there; it just needs to be included in the approved budget, so the governor and the legislature are gonna be charged with that. I think we've seen what great work we've been able to do with the funds that we've had. We've got a significant number of projects that are moving forward, and I think that prioritizing broadband is something that is very important to the state, and I know we've got a lot of good, smart people in the legislature, and we'll be in the future governor's office, so… This is an important issue, and I'm sure it will be top of mind for everyone.

Very good. Both of those amounts have been approved by the legislature. So, I mean, it's not as if it's a legislative decision on whether or not to approve the money; it's now to approve the budget for it, if I'm understanding correctly.

Yes, they need to appropriate the funding; they… yes.

Any further questions? Alright, for our next update, we're going to turn things over to CPUC Communications Director Robert Osborne to talk about affordability, and specifically the CPUC Lifeline Home Broadband Pilot Program. Mr. Osborn.

Thank you, and good morning, Chair Given and Broadband Council members. I'm Rob Osborn, Director of Broadband Consumer Programs and Carrier Oversight at the California Public Utilities Commission. I'm going to provide an update on the California Lifeline Home Broadband Pilot. Looks like we're already on the next slide. So, the Broadband Pilot was designed to fill the gap following the end of the Affordable Connectivity Program. In August of last year, the CPUC approved a 3-year, voluntary, technology-neutral home broadband pilot program. The pilot began taking enrollments in March of this year. And unlike the ACP, the Affordable Connectivity Program. The California pilot has minimum service standards to ensure that public monies are spent well. There are two specific support amounts. There's a $20 subsidy for standalone broadband service, and that can be applied to any number of plans that are approved in the pilot. And up to $30 a month for broadband service bundled with either a wireline or wireless service, through the same provider. There's also a connection charge of $39 that's supported per household, per year, per provider. And providers are encouraged to provide routers, modems, and computers free of charge, but they're not required to do that. And as shown in the table here, the pilot at the end of September was up to almost 30,000 participants, shown at the bottom right corner, with the majority, over 19,000, on a broadband-only plan, and over 9,000 on a bundled plan. As this is a pilot, we, along with the service providers and the third-party administrator, are constantly learning and finding ways to optimize the program. One example is the email registration window, which was initially a 3-business-day registration window. And, in August, we expanded that window to 7 business days. Since that change,

approximately 95% of the successful applicants completed verification within the first 3 business days. The extended time frame enabled an additional 372 applicants to complete enrollment who would likely otherwise have been denied. So, staff are working with the third-party administrator to analyze enrollment data and found that while email verification creates friction for some applicants, it is not preventing most of the eligible consumers from completing enrollment. Recent procedural and service provider-led improvements have produced measurable gains in enrollment completion rates while reducing application failures. And what we found is the main reason for application denial has to do with applicants not completing the enrollment process, rather than eligibility-related determinations. Reminder notifications continue to drive consumer completion activity, particularly after the initial enrollment attempt. And this is an area where community and trusted partners can help. Messaging significantly influences outcomes as well, and following provider updates to customer instructions, we noticed a substantial improvement in applicant completion rates. For one of the providers, we saw an increase of completion rate from 50% to 69%. The average completion times improved, and the applicant cancellations decreased. The next two slides show the 15 approved providers and when they began accepting enrollments. There are currently 15 approved providers in the pilot. With 3 small local exchange carriers in the City of Ontario still in the preparing to onboard. The application process is through an advice letter, and that requires a 30-day protest period. Following that protest period, the staff may begin processing. Next slide, please. And next slide, please. So, this shows the breakdown by provider of the number of participants as of September 30th. Comcast became the first home broadband service provider to begin utilizing the service provider intake application, what we call SPIA, which is a system interface that automates aspects of the enrollment. Since then, other providers have adopted SPIA. Verizon has applied for a SPIA via advice letter and is awaiting approval to move forward with their onboarding. Next slide, please. Okay, there are two tables here. The top one is called Pending Enrollment Applications, and as of the end of September. There were just over 11,000 applications pending. Most of these were pending completion of the application by the applicant, which I mentioned earlier as being one of the biggest barriers. Along with identity verification with LexisNexis, which is shown as IDV. And independent economic household verification, which is a mandatory form when the address is duplicative. The second table, Enrollment Application by Received Channel. As we saw in a previous slide, there were nearly 30,000 participants enrolled in the pilot as of the end of September. And while most enrollees have come directly from the providers, this table shows the other ways that participants have been able to initiate applications, the largest being the customer portal, followed by mail, and then system-based renewal applications, totaling over 4,000. Next slide, please. So, this last table summarizes how third-party administrator, our third-party administrator, has supported customer inquiries for enrollment, transfers, general

questions, and technical support. The top three contact reasons are, first, how to apply, second, questions about email verification, and third, program eligibility. As shown here, most of the interactions have been over the telephone, over 3,500 phone calls received. So, in conclusion, the current data suggests that email verification represents a manageable enrollment hurdle, rather than a systemic barrier to participation. But we do know, so far, that the combination of a longer verification period, reminder notifications, and improved provider messaging have increased enrollment outcomes and reduced consumer attrition. So, the takeaways really are: first, stakeholder feedback provides valuable insight into participant experience and potential operational improvements. Service provider feedback, including concerns regarding email verification, can help identify opportunities to streamline enrollment, reduce customer friction, and improve program performance. So really, the lessons learned can inform future enhancements in supporting the CBC's ongoing evaluation of enrollment process. This concludes my presentation.

Thank you, Rob. I mean, so important for us to be continually reducing the friction associated with these enrollment processes and getting more people to the finish line, so I really appreciate the update. Do any Council members have questions for Director Osborn?

Do you feel left out if I don't ask you a question, Director? So… so I will. I don't want you to feel neglected. Thank you very much for the report and also the changes. What I'm actually interested in going forward is, of course, through our call center, we are all for… we are always informing the caller about the Lifeline pilot, but then we turn around and do the three-way call with the ISP, the qualified ISP, who then does the enrollment. And the question is whether or not you're thinking of, in the future, any other direct way, such as you have with the portal, that we can do something that accelerates that process?

I think it's something that has to be coordinated with the providers. I think the marketing materials we pre-approve, so that's all information that we are aware of. As I said earlier, the challenge we're seeing is not so much getting people to the table; it's getting through the completing the application. And it isn't necessarily email verification; it's getting people to finish the application.

Any further questions? Thank you, Rob. For our next update, we're going to move from affordability to adoption, and we'll hear from Sunne McPeak, President and CEO of the California Emerging Technology Fund. Ms. McPeak?

Thank you, Chair Given. If we'll go to the next slide, I'm going to provide an overview of the resource that has been brought to the table through public benefits agreements. All of which have been approved by the California Public Utilities Commission, so the credit goes to the CPUC and the Commission. For

actually, 20 years ago, coming to the conclusion that negotiation of public benefits in the context of corporate consolidations would add a significant resource into the effort to close the digital divide. And so, all of the efforts through the public benefits agreements also are aligned to the Broadband for All and the digital equity plans adopted by the California Department of Technology and our official state policy. The Commission approved, in January, digital inclusion benefits, public benefit agreements in the order of $40 million directly into digital inclusion, plus another $1 million to work with Verizon and small business and diverse supplier organizations to increase the participation as suppliers that match the California demographic population. So, that's a very important piece of work. Charter Cox was approved by the Commission in August. It adds $30 million. Let me just elaborate a little bit. So, there are very specific obligations that run with the public benefits commitments from the ISPs. The first under Verizon Frontier Acquisition is 100,000 low-income households getting online. These are unconnected households. That is a fifth of who's left to be reached. It is a big lift. And then every one of those households who is enrolled is screened for participating in digital literacy training one way or another. We really encourage the synchronous with all the other CBOs that have received CASP grants from the PUC, and then if they really don't want to do that, they are also informed at that point around the online asynchronous resource. In the case of Charter Cox, there is a, if you will, tiered… well, it's a dedicated amount for the $30 million. 20.5 million go directly to community work organizations to get 100,000 low-income households online. In that case, it splits 70,000 unconnected and 30,000 under-connected. 7,000 will be used for direct notification, outreach, ethnic media, to promote the Lifeline program and other affordable offers, and the Regional Broadband Consortia; the allocation within that is to be worked out in the process by the California Emerging Technology Fund. And then, referencing back to Deputy Director Adams' discussion around the California Green Technology Initiative, that's $2.5 million, and CETF has said at least half of that will go into grants to the community. Out of the $30 million, then the net-net here is, at most, $1.25 million will be actually used for CETF operations. So, we are actually using the funding out of Verizon, and I've actually reduced operating budget in order to get the most money into the community. Not particularly enthusiastic, by my team, I might say, but we're really trying there. So, going to the next slide, the public benefits agreements I've just gone through, but I want to say the process that we have always used now for 20 years is we start with listening sessions when there is a huge new revenue stream coming in. Originally, and then each time there was a tranche from public benefits agreements, and so, in the spring, in March and April. One went into May. There were 19 listening sessions. I do want to commend the Department of Technology for participating in every one of those. Commissioner Houck assigned staff to attend most of those, and Cal Advocates had a participation in all of them. That resulted in two action plans. They're posted publicly, including links from the CDT website, and we have now… since,

February is when we started counting more than 12,000 enrollments, towards 100,000. We have 18 call center grantees who are doing that work. We have trained 31 digital navigators that are certified through CSU Chico; 58 are currently in training, and we've upped that. Our own board said at the beginning of the fiscal year to 100 digital navigators, and in order to, be a partner with CDT on the RFI squared, we're actually targeting 300 for this year. So, there are 68 digital navigator customer service representatives. These are the people who are staffing that call center in person. Well, it's answering live, a telephone and assisting everybody through the process and doing the digital literacy screening that's also certified through CSU Chico. And then 48 new grant agreements with community-based organizations, a total of, well, a total of 48, 30 in digital literacy, and then the 18 I mentioned in call centers. So that all stemmed from the listing sessions. And then we have 12 grantees in the Business Network Collaborative, an example being the California African American Chamber of Commerce, the California Hispanics Chamber of Commerce, Cal Asian Chamber of Commerce, LBGTQ Chamber of Commerce of California, or they go by Rainbow Chamber of Commerce, the Small Business Utility Association, National Disability Institute, Black Business Association of Los Angeles, all working as a collaborative in a way that is focused on meeting the general order 156 commitments for supplier diversity before the PUC that's existed for 40 years since Glenn Moore actually pushed on that. And then, we are planning for, as I mentioned, the one point, it's actually two five grants and million in the California Green Technology Initiative, the funding from Charter does not flow until the end of this year, but we are planning now, and we'll use the listening sessions, to… before we did for Verizon to inform that. And then, let's go to the next one. I think what we want to talk about is the digital equity survey that, once again, the California Emerging Technology Fund is doing in partnership with the California Department of Technology. This will be the first one since 2023 that will be an update to baselines. California has collectively has made so much progress over the years that it takes a longer interval between surveys to see actual movement that is informative for strategies on finishing the job, because every time we have a success, that means it's harder to have the next one. It's just a mathematical equation. And so, we will be in the field in the middle of January, get past the holidays, and we'll do a very expensive methodology, but we've done this now since 2008, and we really want the same methodology to do this next calibration at 2027. That will be 1,650 households interviewed that are random digit dialing. That is the way you reach all Californians. There's no list anywhere of Californians, you know, that we really want to talk to, particularly those who are the lowest income and digitally disadvantaged, and so this information should be already. Hopefully, I'm pushing them, our partners, independent research partners, the University of Southern California. And they did their Equity Research Institute. And we need that report for the April meeting of the California Broadband Council. I think that finishes this report.

Thank you so much, Sunne. Yes, I'm very much looking forward to having real high-quality data to inform our next where we go from here. Do any Council members have questions for Ms. McPeak? Ms. McPeak, do you have a question for Ms. McPeak?

Okay. That is really cute.

We're gonna circle back over to Scott Adams to close us out for the Broadband for All Year in Review updates. So, Scott, tell us about the State Digital Equity Plan.

Thank you, Chair. So, as I said at the top, we had to kind of pivot a little bit when we lost the federal funding, and so our focus this year was to implement as much of the digital equity plan as we could with existing staff and resources and really leveraging and promoting other state funding programs. So, the three main things I'm gonna highlight are stakeholder and partner engagement, tool development and partnerships. So just in terms of stakeholder and partner engagement, we've hosted nine monthly communities of practice, and the focus there is to ensure that from the state to the local level, that folks are aligning, they're coordinating, and they're collaborating in a way that saves and shares resources and tries to be more efficient with our efforts. So, of those 9 meetings, 2,100 folks have registered for those. We've had over a thousand attendees. Some of those, many of them, are repeats, but it just demonstrates how big this network is and why it's important to do this. On the next slide. Quickly, one of the things that we were focusing on doing with the Digital Equity Plan is from, to develop tools and resources to support partners in the ecosystem to conduct and do their work. One of the significant tools we worked on this year, which was went part and parcel with the Digital Equity Resource Survey, which helped us reassessed the state's asset map in terms of who's currently doing the work. We developed or enhanced our digital equity resource finder, basically increased the functionality to make it more useful to both end users. This is a tool on the Broadband for All portal. We increased the number of organizations that have self-identified as. Supporting digital inclusion in the number of place-based locations in the community. So that's one of the real highlights we wanted to tell you that we brought in terms of digital equity plan implementation. If we can go to the next slide, really, focused on partners. It was a directive from our directorate and our team that, you know, we need to keep moving forward with implementing the digital equity plan, and so, you know, under the auspices of implementing as much as we could with our existing staff and resources, we did a request for innovative ideas, established 7 partnerships, 4 significant ones that were to provide direct services to local organizations. This slide here just shows you the level of interest. We've had 79 organizations in the first 3 months that we've established these partnerships with: CETF, DigitalLift,

Human-I-T, Northstar Digital Literacy. Of that, we've, referred 170… made 178 referrals. And our vendors have followed up with 100% of those folks. Now, you may say, why do you have more referrals than sign-ups? It's because some folks sign up for access to a digital literacy platform for digital navigation training for basic AI content or devices, and so that may require a referral to 3 of our partners. We did want to do some analysis, of those that our partners have reached out to. About 54% have gotten back to them. So, we still note capacity is a bit of an issue, and about 8% of folks have declined services. If you go to the next slide, and this is, a slide that, we're actually quite proud of. Our digital inclusion partners submitted their first quarterly reports won't go through all of this, but just some of the highlights of what these collective actions have been able to do. 6,806 folks connected to low-cost offers or Lifeline through CETF and our partnership with them. Direct notifications to almost, well, over 9.5 million folks through 7 partner entities. 61 organizations are accessing one of the two digital literacy training platforms that are being provided. 706 assessments have been taken, and you've got 365 active residents in those platforms. On the digital navigation side, the whole focus of AB 2750 was really to focus on digital navigation, and so the thing we'd like to call out is between CETF and DigitalLift, they've trained 35 digital navigators over the last 3 months, but that is gonna ramp up significantly by the end of this year. Something that's also really cool is, virtual digital navigation and tech support the big numbers you'll see is 47,000 digital navigation sessions performed through the CETF call center and our partnership with them, and another 6,900 virtual digital navigation sessions through Human-I-T. So, really excited about that. Lastly, Human-I-T's working with us on the devices. We were talking earlier about how the Council could support through Human IT. 61 organizations are participating with them on the device program or were actually signed up to be a part of the Green Tech Initiative, but through Human IT, 21,000 devices were donated to them, and of those, 1,500 distributed to deserving families. So, if we go to the next slide, Always like to share with you some testimonials won't read them all, but folks are, you know, excited and interested about these. Some of the observations from our digital inclusion partners is that the libraries seem to be really taking advantage of the free AI courses, that programs who have staff and capacity are excited to start. One location with a very small budget was that, through this partnership, that license was paid for a year. But the other thing that we learned, and it just kind of validated what we already knew, is that even though we've got these great resources, there's some organizations that are just short-staffed, lack the capacity, and that's where, you know, we're going to get them to where they can either apply for funding through the CPUC adoption account, or the competitive grant, or partner with PUC, but capacity on that, on the final, final stage of adoption and in the community is needed. And so, I believe that's my last slide. Yeah, just one final notice. Our next Community of Practice meeting is Thursday, October 29th.

Thank you so much, Scott. Do any members have questions for Deputy Director Adams? Seeing none, I am aware that we're running a little behind schedule, so I want to thank the Spotlight presenters for their patience, but we're very excited to hear from you, so next on our agenda is the Member Spotlight. I would like to welcome California Department of Education's Deputy Superintendent Mary Nicely, to share information on the California Educators Together program.

Thanks, Chris. And so, yeah, due to time, we will not be able to demonstrate my baby, but we will show some slides and talk about it, and as a resource for all of you to be able to look at for digital literacy and for AI. So, next slide. So, it's an interesting, silver lining that came from, the from COVID, much like our, push towards broadband adoption. And so, really excited that we were able to realized that our students were connected, but so were our educators. And so, we are talking about that today because we're all educators. And this is a platform that is open and free to the public, and is being used, actually, across the nation. Right now, we have over 225,000 registered users, hundreds of thousands of resources, over 100,000 lesson plans, groups. I hope you all get a chance to go in and look at this when you get a chance to see because we have nationally, we are our first partners with the Smithsonian. And the TED Talks and PBS. And then from there, it grew to a commitment by the state to become an open education resource. So, we're really excited about this. We've never marketed this. Because this is the first year we actually have ongoing funding, so we're very excited about that as well. For the first time in the state's history, we have this open education resource, as well as the leading resource in the country. So next slide. And so what you'll see is we have a variety of collections that are up on the website that can be used by educators to create their own lesson plans, but anyone can go in. Families can go in the, and on the next slide, we'll talk about the, the most used resources on there, but you can also have a collaboration communications tool that is used, so we have some social built into it as well. You can create lesson plans, download lesson plans. We have an AI studio that is part of it that will help people put together these hundreds of thousands of resources, and being able to not have to hunt for them, and that's where our AI comes in, and you can connect to Canvas or be downloaded into Google Classroom or any of the other types of tools that you're using in a classroom or that a family would want to use at home. We know a lot of our staff use this platform to find things for their kids, because it is like a one-stop shop for every different kind of area that you could even imagine that there might be some interest in. So, next slide. And so, we have a number of initiatives on the platform, and as you can see, we have many communities of practice that are in here, and one of our… the most popular is actually our Universal Pre-K program information. So parents can find resources; individuals that are running pre-K programs can find resources there. We have a variety of digital literacy courses on here, again, that are completely free and open to the public, and that can be used at any point in time, 24 hours a day. We are really fortunate to

have one learning community as our developers, because they are educators themselves, and so they understand what we would need to have to go forward. So, but yeah, learning management system, completely safe and secure, which we know is something that is really important right now, in the news, and no personal information is stored in here, just the lesson plans, and they can be downloaded and customized, at any point. And our last slide is: please take a look at our AI literacy as well. We have, we work with ISTE, and we have gotten another, we work with the California Association of State Chiefs to also have a Ballmer grant to go and do in-person, training as well. But yeah, if you want to go up, you know, we as the state in education are leading the country in our AI guidance, our model policies as well. So, yep, when you get a chance, go up, take a look, poke around in the system, and for, you know, and have fun, because I think we all need a little bit of fun in our days. So, thanks for the time. Really, really great.

Thank you, Mary. Do any Council members have questions for Deputy Superintendent Nicely?

Deputy Superintendent Nicely, I just want to personally say I do think you have the best AI tools, and you've done such a great job on that in that area. I also am excited about this opportunity. I would encourage you to start marketing or holding a series of briefings, webinars, and I also want to work with you to arrange a special briefing of our School to Home leadership teams.

I'm just gonna put a plug in that we do have, a new… we're working with Santa Cruz County Office of Education. They will be our county office that we're working on, and we already are scheduling webinars to finally get the word out.

Let us know. Yes. Thank you.

And I see Deputy Secretary Flores. You came on camera. Did you have a question? Okay, okay. Any further questions?

I actually would like to make a comment, Chair, and that's just, I want to apologize to Deputy Superintendent for the technical difficulties today, and also, pay the Department of Education a compliment. We do monthly working sessions with members of her staff to coordinate on Broadband for All, and when they told us about this platform and did a demonstration for us. It absolutely just blew our mind how quickly the resources could be used to empower teachers to do, you know, lesson plans on digital literacy, etc. So, really thank you and your staff for coming here, and we'd love to have you come to our community and practice and demonstrate that for the school districts that are there, and the libraries and other folks, so thank you.

Really appreciate it.

Alright, next we're going to turn to our community spotlight, and so I would like to welcome Director of Digital Equity, Rebecca Kauma from Los Angeles County, to share the Los Angeles County Digital Equity Roadmap. Welcome, Ms. Kauma.

Thank you so much, and I'm happy to be here, and thank you so much for hosting me today. We can turn to the next slide, please. Alright, so just to give you guys a little bit of context and background, again, my name is Rebecca Kauma. I'm the inaugural Director of Digital Equity for the County of Los Angeles, and I'm here to talk a little bit more about our inaugural digital equity roadmap. So back in October of 2025, our Board of Supervisors approved a board motion for us to be able to create the first ever digital equity roadmap, and our main purpose of that roadmap was to be very intentional with where we were In terms of the political climate, and also how we could still have collective impact and ensure that we're serving the residents that are most in need. So, as part of that board motion, we embarked on a year-long journey to create this roadmap, and ultimately, it is a three-year action plan that will allow us to address the digital divide by truly focusing on providing and connecting residents with the internet, computers, digital skills, AI literacy, and digital support. With the goal and understanding that we want to uplift the existing efforts that our organizations within our ecosystem are already doing so that included us leveraging their digital inclusion services that they're already providing within our ecosystem and also leveraging their funding resources as well. And there is a copy of our roadmap, so feel free to scan at your own leisure. Next slide, please. So, part of our journey was ensuring that we were also able to co-create a vision statement. So, this is the vision statement that you'll see here. I will not read it, but you can just see there that there's some very inclusive language to ensure that we're able to reach all residents throughout Los Angeles County, and ensuring that our ecosystem is inclusive and resilient in the current digital age, excuse me, and our key elements that we wanted to prioritize throughout this process, as I mentioned, was making sure we were assets and strength-based. Community-centered with being able to engage with residents, also looking at existing data sources, making sure that an equity lens is included throughout the entire process, and also uplifting the work from a multi-sector and issue area standpoint. So, making sure this touches education, healthcare, workforce development. Next slide. And so, in terms of our co-creation process, we had 3 primary phases. So, our first phase back in January of this year was ultimately convening our stakeholder team, which included diverse stakeholders. And ensuring that we were able to come together and create a shared vision for what digital equity should look like, and that's the vision statement I just presented. In addition to that, that team also co-prioritized guiding principles to help shape and guide how the decisions will be made, and

also making sure we are identifying whether those key barriers, challenges, gaps, and needs that our residents are facing. In addition to that, I also want to uplift our partnership with the California Department of Technology, so working closely with Scott and his team. To leverage their survey that they were administering to stakeholders and taking the data from that survey and incorporating it into our roadmap strategies. In addition to that, we also wanted to make sure that we were being very intentional with responding to what other funding sources are available, so we also engaged in having conversations about funding sustainability and other strategies as well. Next slide, please. So, I wanted to go ahead and just quickly spotlight in terms of our efforts. So, my amazing colleague, Eric Sasaki. He did some great work around resident engagement, so as part of the roadmap co-creation process, we were able to leverage data from our Digital Needs Community Survey, and that included more than 8,000…100 responses from residents all across the county. In addition to that, under Eric's leadership as well, we were also able to leverage the lived experiences and insights from more than 600 digital equity community conversations, which were hosted in collaboration with many of our stakeholders within the ecosystem. And just to spotlight what we heard from residents, and I'll highlight some of the key aspects as well, is many residents uplifted the fact that, you know, broadband internet services are unaffordable. Many of them are unaware of what digital inclusion resources and services exist within their ecosystem. There are safety concerns with how to navigate, you know, accessing the internet online, and many residents, in terms of their solutions, were trying to see How we could also, first and foremost, promote free resources, whether it's with internet connectivity or computers. Making sure that we're providing trusted messengers in community-friendly spaces, making sure that resources are available in the languages that they speak at home. So those are some of the ideas that resonated with us as we were engaging with residents. And we wanted to ensure all of those key elements were included as part of the final roadmap plan. Next slide, please. And just to spotlight some of the key, insights that we heard from residents as part of this process, and I have 3 quotes here, but just for the sake of time, I will go ahead and just read one of them. So, one of our residents shared, and this is a resident that resides within the city of Rosemead, which is in the San Gabriel Valley. They shared that before today; I had no idea that there were programs that help you get internet or computers. Nobody tells you about that. So that just underscores the importance that there are so many great programs available, and many of our partners are doing that great work, but how do we have a coordinated effort to ensure that we're connecting residents to those resources and ensuring that they have what they need to participate in daily life activities. Next slide, please. And one of the other key elements of our digital equity roadmap co-creation process, and this is one of my favorite aspects as well, because this is a program that I designed from scratch, was our Digital Equity Community Ambassadors program. So typically, when you think about government-led initiatives.

Residents are not included front and center, and they're not included in the governance structure, and they're oftentimes not included within the decision-making of elements as well. So my main goal in terms of launching this program was to ensure that we were able to build transformative relationships with residents, ensuring that they were able to participate and county-led initiatives, and making sure that we're also fostering civic and community leadership across this roadmap co-creation process. So we had an inaugural six residents who are pictured here. One of them wasn't able to attend our last meeting, but we were able to include them in ensuring that their ideas, lived experiences, and thoughts helped shape the roadmap co-creation process, and to ensure that we were being equitable and intentional. We honored their time and lived experiences by providing them with a $50 gift card for each roadmap-related meeting they participated in. Next slide, please. And when it comes to our outcome goals, we wanted to make sure that we were also being very responsive over the next 3 years, and just to provide additional context. This is an action plan. It is not a strategic plan, so if you look at the roadmap, you'll be able to see that there are tangible commitments that we're getting from our partners in terms of how many residents they're able to connect to internet over the next 3 years, how many residents are able to connect to a device over the next 3 years. So, you'll see here, when it comes to our primary focus areas, we are focused, when it comes to our goals, excuse me, we want to ensure that we're able to connect residents to broadband internet services, internet-enabled computers digital skills training, with a high emphasis on AI literacy as well. In addition to that, digital navigation, support services, and, obviously, in alignment with the state's digital equity plan, ensuring that we're also touching across workforce development. And ensuring that there are those career readiness training programs that help residents get equitable access to full-time job employment opportunities within the technology sector. Next slide, please. And so, when it comes to implementation, I'll just quickly highlight what we plan on doing, and a lot of this work is also rooted in my role as backbone convener, and also just convening the partners that are engaged. First and foremost is to ensure that we have alignment and partnership, so making sure that we're able to get those commitments, stakeholders understand what their roles and responsibilities are, and how they can help participate in that engagement process over the next 3 years. In addition to that, we will also be establishing a shared measurement system, so the purpose of this is to ensure that we're measuring impact the same way and really elevating what are those resident outcomes and impacts. And also underscoring that we also want to distinguish between outputs, which is the number of devices distributed, number of people trained, but also what are those outcomes. So, as a result of residents receiving those resources and services, how has their life changed? How have their behaviors changed? And so we will be establishing a shared measurement system with a data dashboard, which is super exciting, and we were able to receive initial investment to support that data dashboard from Supervisor Holly

Mitchell's office, so we're very grateful for the supervisor's and her team's collaboration and partnership. In addition to that, also creating a digital accessibility and equity tool for us to ensure that we're integrating accessibility, equity, and inclusion into the work that we're doing with the next slide, please. And then also making sure that our resources, the other slide before the thank you slide, thank you so much. And also making sure that we are providing capacity building. Many residents, and this is something that was identified also within the state's digital equity plan, many of the partners that we're working with have disclosed that they do have challenges with, you know, capacity, just because there's a lot of work that they're having to do and not enough resources. So, we're also stepping in to provide coaching, technical assistance, and support. In addition to that, I also want to mention that we do have a robust digital equity team within Los Angeles County, so our team. We'll also be administering LearnBasic Tech Digital Skills Training, and that is a grant provided by the CPUC as part of CAIC, Continuing Laptop Distributions, career readiness for our interns, and then also, we recently launched our Community Broadband Network, Networks Initiative, which is providing low-cost internet through a public-private partnership with WeLink Communications and East and South LA communities, so that is something else that we're also doing as well. So all of those key aspects that the county is focusing on in collaboration with our partners will be implemented as part of roadmap implementation activities. And that's all that I have, so if we proceed to the next slide, I'm happy to answer any questions, and if anyone would like to connect with me following this meeting, here is my contact information, and I'm happy to touch base. Thank you so much.

Really fantastic. Thank you, Ms. Kauma. And, you know, it was really wonderful to hear about how you're using community ambassadors as part of this broader engagement effort, so thank you so much for sharing. Do any council members have questions for Ms. Kauma?

Yeah.

Yeah, thank you for the presentation. This is, Commissioner Houck, you were just doing a lot of amazing work, and I appreciated you participating in the discussions down in Los Angeles, and, just really impressed to see this work occurring, and I think it's important for, for. Us as decision makers when we're designing our programs and allocating things to understand this information, so look forward to continuing to follow and see the work that you're doing.

Yeah, thank you so much, Commissioner.

Any other questions or comments?

Yeah, Steve. Yeah, I wanted to echo the sentiment about the ambassador program being a, I would say, brilliant way of approaching this, you know, in terms of, you know, hearing from a trusted friend, or giving information to a trusted friend. I think that channel is really gonna be an effective one, because I myself am less likely to act on anything that a stranger tells me, but I think this is an excellent way to approach that, so good job on that. Thank you.

Yeah, thank you so much.

And any final comments? Well, thank you so much for joining us, Ms. Kauma. That was a fantastic presentation.

Thank you so much.

The last item on the agenda is a staff recommendation on the 2026 focus and meeting mchedule. Adoption of the work plan will require a vote of the Council, so Deputy Director Adams?

Thank you, Chair, and if you go to the next slide, staff has a recommendation for the 2027 focus and Meeting Schedule, that we continue to, do, or, or we ask your permission to do the annual action plan review and revision process, including getting some time certainty on the last five action items that we continue to track the Broadband for All initiatives, that we continue to agendize the member and community spotlights, that we conduct quarterly meetings, and that the dates be January 21, April 23, July 23, October 22. And please note that the 21st of January is a Thursday; all the others are Fridays.

Thank you. Any other Council members have questions or comments before we do a motion to support? Yes, Commissioner Houck.

Yes, I just wanted to note that January 21st, the PUC holds their voting meetings on Thursdays. I'm not sure of the schedule for 2027, if the 21st is a voting Meeting Day, but just a note that may not be. So, the PUC representative may not be available that day.

Understood. Any other questions or comments? Alright, do we have a motion to support the staff recommendation?

I'll make the motion.

Deputy Director, thank you. Is there a second?

I'll second.

Thank you kindly.

Ms. Lee, please call for a voice vote for all members.

Thank you so much. We will do a collective vote here, so all in favor, please say aye.

Aye.

Nice.

Thank you so much. The motion passes unanimously.

Thank you for that. In 2027, the CBC will continue to focus on the annual action plan review and revision, and various Broadband for All initiatives meetings will take place on January 21st, April 23rd, July 23rd, and October 22nd. Now we will move on to public comment. Ms. Lee, would you please provide the public comment guidelines and begin the public comment?

Thank you. To ensure everyone who wishes to make public comment can do so, we respectfully request one person per entity and two minutes per person. The order of public comments will be in-person comments. Zoom, phone-in comments, and emailed comments at the very end, submitted from prior to the meeting. For in-person comments, please form a line at the podium. We do not see anyone here at the podium today. For Zoom, please raise your hand if you would like permission to speak. Our first, Patrick Messac.

Good morning, Patrick Messac, co-director of the East Bay Broadband Consortium, serving Alameda, Contra Costa, and Solano counties. As California moves from BEAD awards into grant agreements and implementation, I want to highlight a risk that could determine whether this once-in-a-generation investment delivers on its promise. Building broadband past a home it's not the same as building broadband that actually connects a home. A provider can install fiber down a street, technically making broadband available, without the ISP ever actually connecting broadband infrastructure to the home. Getting families connected requires ISP's additional work. Reaching out to residents, explaining their options, and completing installations that can cost thousands of dollars. Unfortunately, BEAD funding is tied to making service available, not whether the connection actually reaches the home. This is creating a troubling incentive. Providers can fulfill their grant obligations, even if households never sign up, without incurring the additional costs of connecting those homes. The result is that California could count a broadband project as complete, while the families it was intended to serve remained just as disconnected as before. The PUC must ensure the program's incentives align with the outcomes we're trying

to achieve. As grant agreements are finalized, we're asking the PUC to establish clear, enforceable household outreach requirements so that each ISP, at a minimum, 1. Makes at least 3 documented contact attempts, including door-to-door outreach. 2. Provides clear multilingual information about service and installation costs. And 3. Reports on how many households actually get connected versus just passed. By the Council's first meeting in 2027, we'd be grateful if the PUC could report back on how these requirements have been incorporated into grant agreements, and how actual household connections will be tracked. Thank you.

Thank you so much. Next, Cinthia Medrano?

Good morning, my name is Cinthia Medrano. I'm the Co-Director of the East Bay Broadband Consortium. We want to help ensure that residents are aware of the Lifeline Broadband Pilot and that they can successfully enroll to receive this subsidy. Director Osborn shared that many denials are associated with applicants not completing the enrollment process, so I'm curious if the CPUC has been able to identify where applicants are dropping off in that process? And if it would be possible to potentially develop a tutorial video walking applicants through the application step-by-step, or if there are also any changes that could be made to the application or enrollment process to make it easier to navigate and complete. Again, we really want to make sure that this valuable benefit reaches residents who need it most, and would like to see the CPUC maybe taking a few additional steps to making sure that residents can do so. Thank you.

Thank you for your comment. Next, we have Lily McGlothern.

Good afternoon, Council members. My name is Lily, and I'm here representing the Northeastern California Connect and Upstate California Connect Broadband Consortia. I want to thank Commissioner Houck and the Commission for taking the time this summer to meet with Regional Broadband Consortia and other stakeholders and sincerely listen to our experiences with CASF. I participated in the July session and really appreciated the opportunity for an open conversation about what is working and where there are opportunities for improvement. As the Commission considers potential reforms, I want to emphasize how important CASF continues to be to California's broadband efforts. Significant investments have been made in broadband infrastructure, but funding infrastructure alone does not ensure that communities get connected. There still needs to be capacity on the ground to identify needs, develop projects, engage providers, and coordinate with local governments, tribes, and other partners. Regional consortia help provide that capacity, particularly in rural areas where the remaining broadband challenges can be significantly difficult. Especially difficult. I commend the Commission for looking

at ways to improve CASF while maintaining accountability and making the programs more flexible, efficient, and focused on outcomes. Thank you for listening and continuing this conversation.

Thank you for your comment. Next, we have Lindsey Skolnik.

Good morning, members of the Council. Lindsey Skolnik here, representing California Alliance for Digital Equity. I'd like to first thank you all for hosting these quarterly meetings this year, and for the Council's leadership in helping to drive numerous projects forward that aim to bring broadband to all California residents. CBC meetings play an incredibly important role in allowing community stakeholders and the broader public to stay engaged on state broadband programs and initiatives. One of the programs that was discussed today was BEAD, which has faced a number of delays and complications at the federal level since it was originally launched back in 2021. While our organization recognized that there are benefits of finally receiving BEAD dollars from the NTIA, we are deeply concerned about what it means to accept these dollars when they're tied to Condition 50. Under BEAD's Condition 50, the state must agree to not enforce nation-leading laws and regulations on net neutrality, broadband affordability, and reliability, which would undo decades of progress California has made to close the digital divide. Notably, the scope of this prohibition is very broad. Under Condition 50, California would be at risk of losing regulatory authority over not just BEAD project areas, but BEAD subgrantees' entire service territories. As a result, we feel the harms could outweigh the benefits of accepting dollars when they are tied to this condition and are calling on the state to challenge Condition 50 before the November 2nd deadline. Separately, I'd like to briefly touch on the Lifeline Home Broadband Pilot Program. We know communities across the state are really eager to see this program be a success and would like to work in partnership with the PUC to boost enrollment. Paid welcomes the opportunity to have follow-up conversations about how to strengthen cooperation with community-based organizations and offer local stakeholders more tools and resources to promote the program in 2027. Thank you so much for your consideration of my comments. We look forward to continuing our shared work to close the digital divide throughout the rest of the year and in 2027.

Thank you.

Next, we have Navreet Hundal.

Good morning, Navreet Hundal with Valley Vision and the Connected Capital Area Broadband Consortium. Thank you to Commissioner Houck for highlighting the CASF listening sessions, which Valley Vision received the opportunity to host in partnership with the California Emerging Technology Fund. CASF continues to

be an essential opportunity for our stakeholders in delivering broadband connectivity across infrastructure and digital inclusion services, aligning our region with the state's Broadband for All goals. We thank you for your leadership in exploring CASF reforms and look forward to the issued recommendations shaped by the direct input and experiences of our local stakeholders. Thank you.

Thank you. Next, we have Rigoberto Hernandez.

Good morning, members of the Council. Rigoberto Hernandez, Executive Director Nube Educational Foundation. First, on behalf of our foundation, I would like to sincerely thank you for taking the time to meet with us, listen to our experiences, and better understand the challenges facing the communities we serve. Our mission is to close the digital divide by empowering low-income families, seniors, mixed tech-speaking families, and other underserved communities through digital literacy education, affordable internet access, and essential technology resources through the California Advanced Services Fund CASF, in our partnership with the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF). We have been able to expand our efforts by offering digital literacy classes and connecting families with much-needed technology devices. However, one of the challenges we experience as a community-based organization is reaching families who need these services the most. Complex eligibility and documentation requirements, limited flexibility in program implementation, and the timing of grant funding and reimbursement creates barriers for smaller organizations working directly with underserved communities, like our Foundation. We believe that simplifying administrative requirements, improving the timeline. Timelines of funding and allowing greater flexibility in community outreach and program delivery will help organizations like Nube Education Foundation serve more families efficiently, while maintaining accountability for public resources. So, we firmly believe that digital inclusion is about more than connecting households to the internet; it's about providing families with knowledge, tools, opportunities to improve their lives and become active participants in today's digital world. Thank you, Commissioner, for your leadership, your willingness to listen, and your continued commitment to closing the digital divide throughout California.

Thank you. Our next is Ulises Zatarain.

Yes, hello. Huh, good morning. My name is Ulises Zatarain, and I'm the Executive Director of TechExchange. We are a digital equity organization working to bridge the digital divide for the last 30 years. Like my colleagues mentioned before, I wanted to just extend deep gratitude to Commissioner Hawk. CETF and all the partners for having engaged us this past summer. To provide public comment about our experiences with the California Advanced Services Fund,

and I wanted to really echo the comments that Sunne McPeak shared in regards to how that program is indeed one-of-a-kind, innovative, nationwide. Providing these resources to bridge the divide. And one's really encouraged that we continue to support that program. And really address some of the challenges that myself and other colleagues put forward during those listening sessions, and particularly the administrative procedures of the fund. And of the grant. I don't think it's any secret that there is quite a few challenges when it comes to receiving payment and reimbursement for those resources, and that particularly hinders nonprofit organizations like Tech Exchange and others across the state that are doing the great work to bridge the digital divide. In partnership with many institutions, like CETF, to do this work, we do require, you know, more streamlined processes, particularly when it comes to payments. And when we shared our commentary in regards to those challenges, you know, it was with the intent to really highlight that we could have a lot more impact and really even be more cutting-edge as a state when it comes to building and providing digital equity if we were to just streamline those procedures. It wasn't at all intended to disparage the great work that the CPUC does to provide this resource, but rather to really enhance it to have even greater impact. Similarly, you know, we're also computer refurbishers, and are working with the California Green Technology Initiative as well. And I do feel that there's a lot of great impact that can be done to further incentivize, particularly public agencies and private sector organizations, to support nonprofit refurbishers like TechExchange, and that will definitely fuel the collective impact that all of the CASF programs can have. So again, I just wanted to really thank the Commissioner for her time and her team's time to listen to our concerns and our comments in regards to the fund. And really emphasizing that CASF is a great program; it really does support the work that all of us do together, and I want to encourage that we just take these recommendations into account and just make that program even better than it already is. Thank you very much.

Thank you for your comment. We did not receive any comments emailed prior to the meeting. Director Given, that ends our public comment section.

Thank you, Amanda. Are there any Council members who would like to make additional comments before we close the meeting? Seeing none, I want to thank the council members and presenters for their contributions today, and of course the members of the public for your thoughtful comments, Mr. Messac, Ms. Medrano, Ms. McGlothern, Ms. Skolnik, Ms. Hundal, Mr. Hernandez, and Mr. Zatarain. I also want to express my gratitude for those working so diligently to move Broadband for All forward, including the staff at CDT and the Sacramento County Administration Center working behind the scenes here. Our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 21st, 2027, starting at 9.30 a.m. here in the Board Chambers and online. We look forward to seeing everyone in the

new year. With that, we will conclude the October 23rd, 2026, California Broadband Council Meeting. Thank you, everyone, for joining us.

Congratulations.