



COUNTY OF LAKE

Board of Supervisors

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September 20, 2024

Honorable Gina M. Raimondo, Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Raimondo,

As a member of Golden State Connect Authority, Lake County appreciates and supports Golden State Connect Authority's (GSCA) application to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program on behalf of its forty-member rural counties.

The goal of the NTIA Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program is to fund initiatives that ensure communities have the access and skills to fully participate in the digital world, regardless of their background or circumstances. Included in GSCA's application would be funding for each of GSCA's member counties to execute their digital equity plan throughout their respective communities with the purchase and placement of computer hardware and software necessary to establish access to digital tools and learning for NTIA's identified covered populations, individuals who are: 60+ years of age; state incarcerated; veterans; disabled; racial or ethnic minorities; rural; ESL; low-income households. This application will build upon and complement a Golden State Connect Authority application to the California Capacity Grant Program, later this year.

GSCA represents 40 of California's 58 counties, those that comprise rural California. This part of California has experienced historical disinvestment of broadband infrastructure that is now being addressed through public and private investment at record levels. With connectivity comes the need for addressing digital access and digital literacy needs for rural communities. Access to quality broadband, when paired with access to equipment that connects to the internet and the knowledge associated with its use, will open the door to increased economic development opportunities, access to enhanced learning, employment, health care, and financial services opportunities, as well as the ability to improve public health and safety. This grant is a big step in the direction of addressing these needs in Lake County and all GSCA member rural counties.

On behalf of Lake County, please give GSCA's application your highest level of consideration. We look forward to being a partner in closing the digital divide in rural California.

Sincerely,

Bruno Sabatier, Chair, Lake County Board of Supervisors