

The Digital Divide and Telehealth

October 5, 2021



California
Telehealth
Policy
Coalition

Today's webinar
supported by



Welcome and Introduction to the Webinar

Mei Wa Kwong, JD
Executive Director
Center for Connected Health Policy



**Center for Connected
Health Policy**

THE NATIONAL
TELEHEALTH POLICY
RESOURCE CENTER

About the California Telehealth Policy Coalition



CCHP Projects

CALIFORNIA TELEHEALTH POLICY COALITION



CALIFORNIA
Legislation and
Regulation Tracking

[SEE FULL DETAILS](#)

In 2011 when AB 415, the Telehealth Advancement Act, was winding its way through the legislative process, an ad hoc group of statewide organizations supporting the bill formed. Including such groups as the California Primary Care Association, the California Hospital Association and the California Rural Health Association, these groups met in meetings convened by CCHP in order to be apprised of any developments around AB 415 and share information with each other.

With the successful passage of AB 415, the group continued to meet and eventually formed into the California Telehealth Policy Coalition. From a handful of organizations, the membership has grown to include over eighty-five entities that include consumer groups, medical systems, payers, providers, technology representatives and others. CCHP continues to act as the convener of the Coalition and hosts monthly conference calls with continued support from the California Health Care Foundation in this work.



COVID-19 STATE ACTIONS	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE REPORT
 ALL 50 STATES View Full List	 Friday Aug 21 MORE INFO: ARIAJ@CCHPCA.ORG	 LATEST UPDATE: JUNE 2020

Please visit our website for more information or if you are interested in joining.

<https://www.cchpca.org/about/projects/california-telehealth-policy-coalition>

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Purpose and key objectives of today's webinar

Discuss importance of broadband in terms of access to telehealth services and state broadband investments and impacts on the digital divide and telehealth.



- **Provide an overview of broadband legislation**, including the budget trailer bill and additional legislative activity.
- **Discuss stakeholder perspectives and the impact on patients** and what investments mean for future of broadband and telehealth.
- **Panelist discussion** on legislation, ongoing considerations, and next steps.
- **Answer key questions** about the bills and the future outlook for the digital divide and telehealth in California.

Agenda and preliminary announcements

Welcome

- Mei Wa Kwong, Executive Director, Center for Connected Health Policy

Broadband Legislation Overview

- Amy Durbin, Policy Advisor, Center for Connected Health Policy

Panelist Session – Opening remarks followed by discussion

- Moderated by Fabiola Carrion, Interim Director, Reproductive and Sexual Health, National Health Law Program

Speakers

- Marissa Kraynak, Director of Health Policy Research, Insure the Uninsured Project
- Vinhcent Le, Legal Counsel & Policy Manager, Greenlining Institute
- Geoff Neill, Legislative Representative, California State Association of Counties
- Jorge Pacheco, Digital Equity Research & Advocacy Specialist, Community Health Partnerships

Q&A



Attendees will remain muted during the webinar.



Please submit any questions you have during the webinar in the Q&A box, not the chat box.

Overview of Broadband Basics and CA Legislation

Amy Durbin, MPPA
Policy Advisor
Center for Connected Health Policy



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Broadband Basics

COVID-19 Highlighted Necessity of Internet Access

- Health care services
 - Many telehealth modalities and connected devices require high-speed internet access
- Other services impacted including education, government services, employment

Digital Divide – Many Communities Lack Sufficient Internet Access

- Affordability
 - Internet & connected devices
- Accessibility
 - Lack of broadband infrastructure (fiber, cable, DSL)
 - Low bandwidth, speed
- Digital Literacy
 - Familiarity with internet and connected devices

SB 156 – Broadband Budget Trailer Bill

This bill implements the first year of a three-year \$6 billion investment in the broadband. Funding appropriated in SB 129 (Skinner) as amended by AB/SB 164 provides \$4.372 billion (\$3.25 billion General Fund) in 2021-22 to begin this project. This includes:

Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure: \$3.25 billion federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for the construction of a state-owned open-access broadband middle mile, appropriated in 2021-22.

- Prioritizes build out in areas underserved by internet service providers (ISPs)
- Requires the middle-mile network to be leased for less than fair market value
- Establishes the position of Deputy Director for Broadband and the Office of Broadband and Digital Literacy to oversee project

Broadband Last Mile Support: \$2 billion (\$928 million General Fund and \$1.072 billion federal ARPA) for last mile funding, of which \$1.072 billion is available in 2021-22, \$125 million is available in 2022-23, and \$803 million is available in 2022-24.

- Funds CASF through the Broadband Infrastructure Grant Account Program and requires \$1 billion to be spent in rural counties and \$1 billion to be spent in urban counties
- Redefines “unserved area” as not receiving 25/2 mbps
- Updates speed requirements for infrastructure projects to be at least 100/20 mbps or must current speed set by FCC

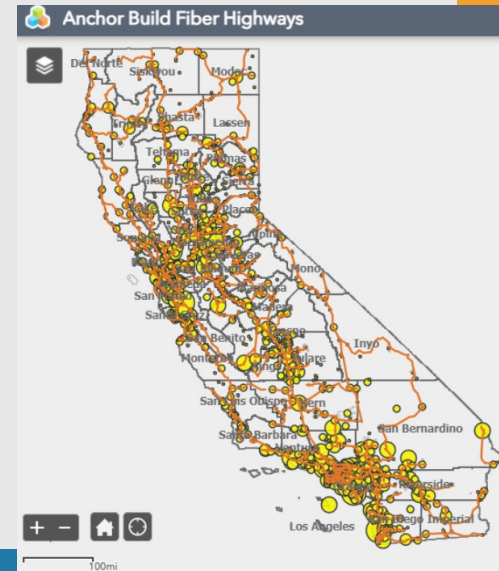
Loan Loss Reserve: \$750 million General Fund for the loan-loss reserve, of which \$50 million is appropriated in 2021-22, \$125 million is appropriated in 2022-23 and the balance of \$575 million is included in 2023-24.

- Allows counties to acquire funding for the acquisition, construction and improvement of broadband infrastructure and operate a broadband service




Signed by Governor Newsom on July 20, SB 156 Bill Language: https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220SB156

Other State Policy Updates

- **California Broadband Council**
 - Published the [Broadband Action Plan 2020: California Broadband for All](#)
- **California Public Utilities Commission**
 - Soliciting input on [Proceeding R2009001](#) for middle mile network build-out and how to prioritize projects including healthcare facilities
- **Middle Mile Broadband Advisory Committee**
 - Recently established to monitor the development and construction of the state-owned middle-mile fiber optic cable network
 - Published initial proposal for middle mile network funded under SB 156 and adopted guiding principles
- **California Office of Broadband and Digital Literacy**
 - Recently created within the California Department of Technology to promote broadband deployment in un/under-served areas, encourage digital literacy



Additional California Broadband Bills

Bill No.	Coalition Support?	Recent Developments	Brief Description
AB 14 (Aguiar-Curry et al.)		At Governor's Desk	Extends the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) program to encourage deployment of broadband service to unserved Californians. Also revises the surcharge collection methodology for interconnected Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) service and the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program (DDTP).
SB 4 (Gonzalez)		At Governor's Desk	Extends the operation of the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) through 2032, increases the annual funding cap for the CASF, and expands projects eligible for CASF grants to include fund broadband deployment at unserved locations used for emergency response.
SB 28 (Caballero)		At Governor's Desk	Expands the authority of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to collect data to enforce requirements for cable franchises and authorizes the CPUC to set customer service requirements for cable providers.
AB 537 (Quirk)		Signed by Governor 10/4	Requires that the time period for city/county approval of collocation or siting applications for wireless telecommunications facilities be deemed approved if the city/county fails to approve within the standard set by the FCC
SB 378 (Gonzalez)		At Governor's Desk	Requires local governments to allow fiber installers to use microtrenching as a method for installing fiber unless the local government makes a specified finding that permitting microtrenching would adversely impact public health and safety.
SB 556 (Dodd)		Vetoed by Governor 10/4	Establishes permitting requirements for the placement of small wireless facilities on street light and traffic signal poles owned by local governments, including specified timelines for approving and attaching infrastructure, limitations on fees for attachments, and restrictions on local governments' ability to prohibit small wireless facility attachments.

Additional Resources

ITUP Resources

[Telehealth and COVID-19](#)

[Broadband for Health Basics](#)

Greenlining Resources

[Digital Inclusion Program; Reasons for Digital Divide](#)

[COVID-19 Report](#)

CA Telehealth Policy Coalition

[Resources website](#)

California Research Bureau

https://www.library.ca.gov/Content/pdf/crb/reports/Broadband_in_California_May_%202021.pdf

Community Networks Fact Sheets and Other Resources

<https://muninetworks.org/content/resources>

Electronic Frontier Foundation Key Terms

<https://www.eff.org/wp/case-fiber-home-today-why-fiber-superior-medium-21st-century-broadband>

PANEL SESSION

Moderated by Fabiola Carrion
Interim Director, Reproductive and Sexual Health
National Health Law Program

PANELISTS

Marissa Kraynak, Director of Health Policy Research
Insure the Uninsured Project

Vinhcent Le, Legal Counsel & Policy Manager
Greenlining Institute

Geoff Neill, Legislative Representative
California State Association of Counties

Jorge Pacheco, Digital Equity Research & Advocacy Specialist
Community Health Partnerships

PANELIST OPENING REMARKS

Marissa Kraynak

Director of Health Policy Research

Insure the Uninsured Project

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Vinhcent Le

Legal Counsel & Policy Manager

Greenlining Institute

PANELIST OPENING REMARKS

Geoff Neill

Legislative Representative

*California State Association of
Counties*

PANELIST OPENING REMARKS

Jorge Pacheco

Digital Equity Research & Advocacy

Specialist

Community Health Partnerships

PANEL DISCUSSION

Moderator:

- Fabiola Carrion, Interim Director, Reproductive and Sexual Health, *National Health Law Program*

Panelists:

- Marissa Kraynak, Director of Health Policy Research, *Insure the Uninsured Project*
- Vinhcent Le, Legal Counsel & Policy Manager, *Greenlining Institute*
- Geoff Neill, Legislative Representative, *California State Association of Counties*
- Jorge Pacheco, Digital Equity Research & Advocacy Specialist, *Community Health Partnerships*

Facilitated question and answer



Please submit your questions in the Q&A box.

Upcoming California Telehealth Policy Coalition Events

Save the Dates

Policy Briefing and Annual Meeting

Policy Briefing

October 15, 11am-12:30pm

2021 Annual Meeting ***“Bridge to a Stronger Health System”***



- Tuesday, November 2, 2021
- 9am-2pm
- Virtual event
- Event information and registration forthcoming

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Contact staff with any questions:

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