RESOLUTION - ACTION REQUESTED 2015-148

MEETING: April 7, 2015

TO: The Board of Supervisors

FROM: Rosemarie Smallcombe, District I Supervisor

RE: Approve a Letter of Support for AB1262 Rural Broadband Consortia Grant Funding

RECOMMENDATION AND JUSTIFICATION:
Approve a Letter of Support for AB1262 Which Would Authorize a Transfer of $5 Million from an Underutilized Account in the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) to the Rural and Urban Regional Broadband Consortia Grant Account and Authorize the Board of Supervisors Chair to Sign the Letter.

Mariposa County’s topography varies widely as does internet access, from good high speed access to dial up. Some areas are well served with broadband access; others are un-served. It is imperative to Mariposa’s economy that access to basic telecommunication services, especially broadband, be universally available. If passed, AB 1262 will permit rural consortia, such as Central Sierra Connect which serves Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa, Tuloumne and the western side of Alpine County, to continue their efforts to educate their communities and assist in preparing grant applications to support broadband deployment.

Please see the attached documents for further information.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:
The Board has routinely approved letters of support for issues that they believe will benefit the citizens of Mariposa County.

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:
Do not approve the letter. Individual Board members may write their own letters of support for the legislation which may not carry the weight of a letter from the entire Board.

ATTACHMENTS:
AB1262 Letter of Support Mariposa R1 (DOCX)
AB 1262 Fact Sheet (PDF)

CAO RECOMMENDATION
Requested Action Recommended
RESULT:  ADOPTED BY CONSENT VOTE [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:  Marshall Long, District III Supervisor
SECONDER: Rosemarie Smallcombe, District I Supervisor
AYES: Smallcombe, Jones, Long, Cann, Carrier
April 7, 2015

The Honorable Jim Wood
Assembly Member, Assembly District 2
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1262 (Wood) – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Wood:

The Mariposa County Board of Supervisors supports Assembly Bill 1262, which authorizes an internal transfer of moneys collected for the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) to fund the Rural and Urban Regional Broadband Consortia Grant Account.

Mariposa County is located at the southern end of the California’s Mother Lode Region. It has a population of approximately 18,000 and the topography varies from steep, rugged mountains and drainages to rolling hills of grass and oak woodlands. Internet access also varies considerably, from good high speed internet access to dial up. Some areas are well served with broadband access; others are unserved. It is imperative to Mariposa’s economy and to its children that access to basic telecommunication services, especially broadband, is universally available.

Our regional broadband consortium, Central Sierra Connect (CSC) is a project managed by Amador Tuolumne Community Action Agency for the counties of Mariposa, Tuolumne, Calaveras, Amador and the west side of Alpine. Their mission is to support the region’s residents, businesses, visitors and organizations through the promotion, coordination and enhancement of broadband access, adoption and technology education.

Key CSC accomplishments over the past three years:

- Held numerous face-to-face broadband training sessions for a large cross-section of new users including the disadvantaged and senior populations to increase education, access and adoption.
- Developed and launched the innovative “Broadband Improvement Project” which netted over 700 responses to help correct errors on the State broadband map.
- Successfully encouraged and assisted an Internet Service Provider (ISP) to apply for CASF grant funding in all five of its counties.
- Held two regional broadband summits to update community leaders on broadband issues facing our region.
Critical work that CSC would like to finish over the next two years:

- Once the CVIN fiber project has been completed in our area, CSC expects to conduct extensive outreach to promote and build out numerous last mile projects.
- The above-mentioned ISP will need CSC’s continued support for projects just submitted to the CASF for funding consideration.
- Assisting local jurisdictions in the development and deployment of robust broadband policies and inclusion of broadband in their respective General Plans.

For the past three years, Mariposa’s rural consortium and other regional consortia have been working to promote universal broadband deployment and to advance broadband adoption in unserved and underserved areas throughout the State. If passed, AB 1262 would allow consortia to continue working with telecommunication providers and key community stakeholders to promote CASF and regional goals for the next two years.

The Mariposa County Board of Supervisors appreciates this important legislation and we commend your commitment to bridging the digital divide in California.

Respectfully,

MERLIN JONES
Board Chair

cc: Regional County Representatives of California
    California State Association of Counties
    Mary Hodson, Mariposa County Administrative Officer