RESOLUTION - ACTION REQUESTED 2016-144

MEETING: April 5, 2016

TO: The Board of Supervisors

FROM: Rosemarie Smallcombe, District I Supervisor

RE: Letter of Support to Assembly Member Stone RE AB 1758

RECOMMENDATION AND JUSTIFICATION:
Approve a Letter of Support to Assembly Member Stone for Assembly Bill 1758 (AB 1758), and Authorize the Board of Supervisors Chair to Sign the Letter.

AB 1758 would extend to December 31, 2023 (from December 31, 2015) the time period for meeting the legislated requirement to prioritize last-mile broadband access projects in unserved and underserved areas, authorize collection of an additional $50 million per year over the next 7 years, and would specify the higher threshold speeds to be met in achieving the goal.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:
The Board has approved support letters on issues they believe involve a worthy cause.

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:
Do not approve the letter. Individual Board members may write their own letters of support, which may not carry the significance of a letter endorsed by the entire Board.

ATTACHMENTS:
AB 1758 Support (DOCX)
AB 1758 Fact Sheet (PDF)

CAO RECOMMENDATION
Requested Action Recommended

Mary Hodson, CAO 3/29/2016
Resolution - Action Requested 2016-144

RESULT: ADOPTED BY CONSENT VOTE [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Marshall Long, District III Supervisor
SECONDER: Merlin Jones, District II Supervisor
AYES: Smallcombe, Jones, Long, Cann, Carrier
April 5, 2016

The Honorable Mark Stone  
Member, California State Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 5155  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 1758 Support

Dear Assembly Member Stone,

The Mariposa County Board of Supervisors supports Assembly Bill 1758 because of Mariposa’s need for increased broadband access. 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.

Under existing law, the Public Utilities Commission is required to administer a program using moneys in the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) under which priority is assigned to projects that provide last-mile broadband access to households that are unserved by an existing facilities-based broadband provider. The goal of the CASF program is, no later than December 31, 2015, to approve funding for infrastructure projects that will provide broadband access to no less than 98% of California households. Current law authorizes the commission to collect a surcharge for deposit into the CASF not to exceed $315,000,000 in total and authorizes the surcharge until 2020.

AB 1758 would extend to December 31, 2023, the time period for meeting the program goal, authorize collection of additional fees to fund the program and would specify the threshold speeds to be met in achieving the goal. This proposed legislation is necessary to bridge the digital divide and is, therefore, critical to our rural community.

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

Sincerely,

John Carrier  
Chairman

Cc:    Frank Bigelow, Assemblyman  
      Tom Berryhill, Senator  
      Ms. Sunne McPeak, California Emerging Technologies Fund

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