

CS FOR SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 13(CRA)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE SENATE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Offered: 4/23/21

Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): SENATE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

A RESOLUTION

1 **Supporting broadband deployment in the state; recognizing the benefits of broadband;**
2 **urging facilitation of broadband deployment; urging engagement with stakeholders;**
3 **urging the development of a temporary centralized, technology-neutral broadband and**
4 **Internet access working group in the state; urging the United States Congress to include**
5 **broadband in 2021 federal infrastructure legislation; urging broadband providers to use**
6 **savings from federal infrastructure legislation to provide broadband service at a**
7 **reduced rate to the state and its political subdivisions; and urging the Alaska delegation**
8 **in Congress to advocate for flexible broadband funding parameters.**

9 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

10 **WHEREAS** improving transportation, energy, and technological foundations in the
11 state is a key goal of, and is critical to, the state's comprehensive economic development
12 strategy; and

13 **WHEREAS** broadband has been an essential service during the COVID-19 pandemic,
14 connecting families and communities, supporting healthcare, education, remote work, and

1 commerce; and

2 **WHEREAS** the Alaska Broadband Task Force plan, as updated in 2019, identifies
3 expanding broadband infrastructure as critical to meeting the ever-increasing demand for
4 bandwidth needed to support innovations in healthcare, education, remote work, and
5 commerce, among other parts of the economy; and

6 **WHEREAS** broadband will play a critical role in connecting and supporting Alaskans
7 through future challenges and crises, such as earthquakes and other natural disasters; and

8 **WHEREAS** broadband providers made more than \$1,000,000,000 in capital
9 investments from 2017 to 2020 and continue to make capital investments to expand and
10 improve broadband in the state; and

11 **WHEREAS** the need for improved and expanded broadband far outpaces the state
12 government's ability to directly fund deployment;

13 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports widespread broadband
14 deployment in the state and urges the Governor's administration to support broadband
15 deployment through right-of-way access and by streamlining, consistent with state law, the
16 authorization and environmental permitting and review processes required for the
17 construction of broadband facilities; and be it

18 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Governor's
19 administration to ensure that no unnecessary or burdensome fees, such as increased permit or
20 right-of-way fees, consistent with state law, become barriers or roadblocks to broadband
21 deployment; and be it

22 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Governor's
23 administration to engage with and seek input from all stakeholders, including broadband
24 providers and consumers, in the state before making policy changes that affect broadband
25 providers or consumers; and be it

26 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Governor's
27 administration to create a temporary centralized, technology-neutral broadband and Internet
28 access working group to provide all Alaskans an equal seat at the table; and be it

29 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States
30 Congress to include broadband, the "information highway," in 2021 federal infrastructure
31 legislation, along with roads, bridges, ports, and other projects essential for a functional and

1 vibrant society; and be it

2 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges broadband providers
3 to use savings from federal infrastructure legislation that appropriates public funds for the
4 installation or improvement of privately owned broadband infrastructure to provide
5 broadband service at a reduced rate to the state and its political subdivisions; and be it

6 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Alaska
7 delegation in Congress to advocate for flexible broadband funding parameters given the
8 unique challenges in the state.

9 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President
10 of the United States; the Honorable Charles Schumer, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the
11 Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Nancy
12 Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Kevin McCarthy,
13 Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Mike Dunleavy,
14 Governor of Alaska; the Honorable Amanda Holland, Acting Commissioner, Department of
15 Administration; the Honorable Julie Anderson, Commissioner, Department of Commerce,
16 Community, and Economic Development; the Honorable Nancy Dahlstrom, Commissioner,
17 Department of Corrections; the Honorable Dr. Michael Johnson, Commissioner, Department
18 of Education and Early Development; the Honorable Jason Brune, Commissioner,
19 Department of Environmental Conservation; the Honorable Doug Vincent-Lang,
20 Commissioner, Department of Fish and Game; the Honorable Adam Crum, Commissioner,
21 Department of Health and Social Services; the Honorable Dr. Tamika Ledbetter,
22 Commissioner, Department of Labor and Workforce Development; the Honorable Treg
23 Taylor, Alaska Attorney General; the Honorable Torrence Saxe, Adjutant General,
24 Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs; the Honorable Corri Feige, Commissioner,
25 Department of Natural Resources; the Honorable Leon Morgan, Commissioner, Department
26 of Public Safety; the Honorable Lucinda Mahoney, Commissioner, Department of Revenue;
27 the Honorable John MacKinnon, Commissioner, Department of Transportation and Public
28 Facilities; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators,
29 and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in
30 Congress.