

HOUSE CS FOR CS FOR SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 13(CRA)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Offered: 5/14/21

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** a strong broadband network across the state would provide the robust
7 command and control infrastructure required for routine unmanned aircraft operations, such
8 as cargo and medical supply delivery, to remote communities; and

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

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

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

16 **WHEREAS** quality broadband service is necessary to support the state's research
17 facilities and centers of higher education, which are critical to the advancement of the state;

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

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

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

31 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Governor's

1 administration to create a temporary centralized, technology-neutral broadband and Internet
2 access working group to provide all Alaskans an equal seat at the table; and be it

3 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States
4 Congress to include broadband, the "information highway," in 2021 federal infrastructure
5 legislation, along with roads, bridges, ports, and other projects essential for a functional and
6 vibrant society; and be it

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

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

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

1 the Honorable John MacKinnon, Commissioner, Department of Transportation and Public
2 Facilities; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators,
3 and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in
4 Congress.