



League of United Latin American Citizens

RESOLUTION In support of municipal, state-wide and federal policies that will ensure the provision of affordable, quality, high-speed broadband internet service as a utility, helping to ensure access to low-income families as a way of addressing the nation's digital divide, which disproportionately affects children of color, children living in poverty and children receiving special education services..

WHEREAS, the League of United Latin American Citizens is this nation's oldest and largest Latino organization, founded in Corpus Christi, Texas on February 17, 1929; and

WHEREAS, LULAC throughout its history has committed itself to the principles that Latinos have equal access to opportunities in employment, education, housing and healthcare; and

WHEREAS, the term "digital divide" refers to the inequality in access to technology that exists between communities in the United States due to regional and demographic differences,

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic, along with the subsequent move in the spring of 2020 to widespread use of the internet for K-12 education, brought into high relief the educational opportunities lost, or "homework gap," disproportionately suffered by young learners of color, learners with disabilities and learners living in poverty,

WHEREAS, the pandemic notwithstanding, the internet ceased to be considered supplemental or an "extra" of education at least teen years ago, and is considered integral to PK-12 as well as post-secondary learning,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the League of United Latin American Citizens hereby:

Recommends municipal, state-wide and federal policies that will ensure the provision of affordable, quality, high-speed broadband internet service as a utility, helping to ensure access to low-income families. We further recommend:

- Any COVID-19 economic recovery program should include universal internet access, including to rural areas and low-income families,
- Establishment of government grant program(s) to provide funds to build and/or modernize internet connectivity, conditionally granted to protect the American public from price gouging, unfair company policies which promote internet exclusivity, and sub-par internet connectivity quality,
- Establishment of government funding assistance providing support to municipalities to build publicly-owned, democratically controlled broadband,
- Creation of policies protecting any public grant funding for broadband expansion that is based on assurances of universal service, with minimum speeds, standards to protect privacy and affordability. Broadband should be considered the "new electricity," a public utility that is a basic human

necessity, not a luxury. All internet service providers should offer a Basic internet Plan to provide quality broadband speeds at low- or no-cost to people with disabilities, the elderly, and those living in poverty (i.e., broad categorical eligibility).

- Protection and expansion the Lifeline program to connect low-income households to the internet via more than just smartphones (to include other internet devices such as tablets and laptops,)
- Assurances that low-income communities, including public housing, are offered internet free of charge,
- Assurances that people with disabilities have full access to the internet, including full Section 508 compliance, including the assurance that government agencies can receive ASL video calls from people who have hearing loss, are hard of hearing or deaf.
- Assurances all schools, libraries, hospitals and other essential community facilities are connected with equity and affordability.

Voted & approved by the Council on September 2, 2020.

Hugo J. Mojica

President

LULAC Education Council 402