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**CALIFORNIA EMERGING TECHNOLOGY FUND**

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April 11, 2023

Assembly Communications and Conveyance Committee  
1020 N Street, Room 169  
Sacramento, California 95814

**Support AB1588 (Wilson): Affordable Internet and Net Equality Act of 2023**

Dear Chair Tasha Boerner Horvath, Vice Chair Jim Patterson, and Committee Members Mia Bonta, Laurie Davies, Eduardo Garcia, Chris Holden, Josh Hoover, Evan Low, Brian Maienschein, Diane Papan, Luz Rivas, Freddie Rodriguez, and Akilah Weber:

We are writing to urge your support for the **Affordable Internet and Net Equality Act of 2023** (AB1588 Wilson). The California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) has been deeply involved in helping digitally-disadvantaged communities and residents throughout California. CETF knows it is vital to ensure that all low-income households have affordable high-speed Internet service at home and that the most vulnerable residents are yet to be connected. **AB1588 is essential State law to achieve Digital Equity.**

The Legislature and Governor already have taken bold steps to allocate funds to deploy high-speed Internet infrastructure throughout the state. Now it is essential for bold leadership to ensure affordable quality Internet service for all Californians. AB1588 employs the same approach used by the Legislature to enact “Net Neutrality” and applies it to “Net Equality” by requiring Internet Service Providers (ISPs) who are vendors to the State of California and public agencies funded by the State to promote the federal Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) and offer their own affordable and quality Internet subscription. It also sets standardized eligibility and service standards for the ISP affordable offers.

AB1588 is needed because research shows that far less than half of 5.8M ACP-eligible households in California are aware of the program or any other affordable offer. While the California Broadband Council has led the charge to get more than 2M households enrolled in ACP, the most of any state in the nation, California residents are still not receiving \$1.4B annually that could assist them if all ACP-eligible households were enrolled. AB1588 directs State Agencies and ISPs to work together to inform these residents. Further, AB1588 will ensure that ISPs work with the State to secure renewal of a federal affordable Internet program when ACP funds have been expended.

We are grateful to Assemblymember Lori Wilson for stepping forward to lead this effort to ensure quality affordable Internet service for all Californians. We underscore the need to amend AB1588 to align with ACP such that ISPs must offer their affordable subscription today at no more than \$30 per month with a minimum of 100/20 Mbps. We are working with the author and Administration to make those changes and clarify that this bill does not apply to contracting for Internet service in the case of an emergency.

**We urge your YES vote for AB1588** to ensure that all Californians will have access to quality affordable Internet service. It is time for the California Legislature to once again show the path forward for the nation to achieve Digital Equity for all residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sunne Wright McPeak". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sunne Wright McPeak  
President and CEO