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**Resolution of the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)  
Setting Forth Support to Increase Broadband Access to Bridge the Digital Divide  
Throughout the San Diego Region**

WHEREAS, SANDAG is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the San Diego Region;

WHEREAS, SANDAG is committed to bringing the region's diverse residents and local partners together with unifying regional plans, policies, and programs that result in more healthy, sustainable, and economically resilient communities;

WHEREAS, SANDAG recognizes that closing the digital divide is critical to providing long-term community benefits; including, the ability to fully engage in the digital economy, access to existing and emerging services, and the expansion of economic opportunities, thereby bridging the economic divide;

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the need for available, reliable, and affordable broadband services in all communities;

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused schools to shift to distance learning;

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has made the digital divide within underserved communities and/or areas (which include people of color, low-income households, residents in rural areas, and seniors) more apparent;

WHEREAS, SANDAG recognizes that lack of infrastructure, cost, and household income are key barriers to broadband access;

WHEREAS, all residents, businesses, and institutions need high-speed broadband services where they work, live, learn, and play;

WHEREAS, high-speed broadband enables Work from Home and remote workers, enhances business efficiencies, drives job creation throughout the region, and connects customers and partners worldwide to goods and services;

WHEREAS, high-speed broadband is a "green technology" that reduces our impact on the environment and shrinks our regional carbon footprint, offsetting vehicle trips and use of resources and saving energy;

WHEREAS, high-speed broadband greatly expands the ability of residents throughout the region to access medical, behavioral, and other health services and the capacity of public health officials to monitor and respond to health threats such as COVID-19 and other diseases;

WHEREAS, high-speed broadband enables greater civic participation and brings communities together, helps improve public safety, and makes our transportation systems more resilient and efficient;

WHEREAS, effective emergency services require using high-speed broadband to integrate data in real time from all available sources, so decision makers have access to the information necessary for the protection of lives and property;

WHEREAS, evaluating and/or developing strategies to bridge the digital divide supports SANDAG's commitment to address equity issues throughout the San Diego region;

WHEREAS, developing strategies to bridge the digital divide would assist in implementing the Regional Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategies and the development of future Regional Plans and Sustainable Communities Strategies.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the SANDAG Board of Directors:

1. Declares that bridging the digital divide is integral to developing a healthy, resilient, and economically competitive region;
2. Supports rules, regulations, programs, and funding opportunities by the United States Federal Communications Commission and California Public Utilities Commission to support broadband deployment opportunities to bridge the digital divide;
3. Supports Executive Order N-73-20 signed August 14, 2020 that seeks to accelerate work towards closing gaps in access to reliable broadband networks throughout California;
4. Supports collaboration with local jurisdictions within the region, broadband providers, school districts (K-12), community college districts, universities, community-based organizations and business stakeholders, Regional Broadband Consortiums, California Emerging Technology Fund, MPOs, the State of California and other federal, state, and regional organizations that have similar goals to increase broadband access;
5. Hereby directs staff to develop a Digital Equity Strategy and Action Plan, based on a broadband gap analysis and needs assessment, that brings regional stakeholders together to identify model policies, tools, and implementation strategies to close the Digital Divide in the San Diego region.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 22nd of January 2021.



Chair

Attest:



Secretary

**Member Agencies:** Cities of Carlsbad, Chula Vista, Coronado, Del Mar, El Cajon, Encinitas, Escondido, Imperial Beach, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, National City, Oceanside, Poway, San Diego, San Marcos, Santee, Solana Beach, Vista, and County of San Diego.

**Advisory Members:** California Department of Transportation, Metropolitan Transit System, North County Transit District, Imperial County, U.S. Department of Defense, Port of San Diego, San Diego County Water Authority, Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association, and Mexico.