

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 13

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE SENATE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Introduced: 4/14/21

Referred: Community & Regional Affairs, Labor & Commerce

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 United States Congress to include broadband in 2021 federal infrastructure**
4 **legislation; and urging the Alaska delegation in Congress to advocate for flexible**
5 **broadband funding parameters.**

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

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

10 **WHEREAS** broadband has been an essential service during the COVID-19 pandemic,
11 connecting families and communities, supporting healthcare, education, remote work, and
12 commerce; and

13 **WHEREAS** the Alaska Broadband Task Force plan, as updated in 2019, identifies
14 expanding broadband infrastructure as critical to meeting the ever-increasing demand for
15 bandwidth needed to support innovations in healthcare, education, remote work, and

1 commerce, among other parts of the economy; and

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

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

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

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

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

18 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Governor's
19 administration to engage with and seek input from broadband providers in the state before
20 making policy changes that affect broadband providers; and be it

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

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

28 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President
29 of the United States; the Honorable Charles Schumer, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the
30 Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Nancy
31 Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Kevin McCarthy,

1 Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Mike Dunleavy,
2 Governor of Alaska; the Honorable Amanda Holland, Acting Commissioner, Department of
3 Administration; the Honorable Julie Anderson, Commissioner, Department of Commerce,
4 Community, and Economic Development; the Honorable Nancy Dahlstrom, Commissioner,
5 Department of Corrections; the Honorable Dr. Michael Johnson, Commissioner, Department
6 of Education and Early Development; the Honorable Jason Brune, Commissioner,
7 Department of Environmental Conservation; the Honorable Doug Vincent-Lang,
8 Commissioner, Department of Fish and Game; the Honorable Adam Crum, Commissioner,
9 Department of Health and Social Services; the Honorable Dr. Tamika Ledbetter,
10 Commissioner, Department of Labor and Workforce Development; the Honorable Treg
11 Taylor, Alaska Attorney General; the Honorable Torrence Saxe, Adjutant General,
12 Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs; the Honorable Corri Feige, Commissioner,
13 Department of Natural Resources; the Honorable Leon Morgan, Commissioner, Department
14 of Public Safety; the Honorable Lucinda Mahoney, Commissioner, Department of Revenue;
15 the Honorable John MacKinnon, Commissioner, Department of Transportation and Public
16 Facilities; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators,
17 and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in
18 Congress.