



Alaska Telecom Association
201 E 56th Avenue, Suite 114
Anchorage, AK 99518
(907) 563-4000
www.alaskatel.org

March 23, 2022

The Honorable Mia Costello
Alaska State Capitol
Room 119
Juneau AK, 99801

RE: SB234 Broadband: Office, Grants, Parity

Dear Senator Costello,

Thank you for scheduling SB234, "An Act establishing the office of broadband; creating the broadband adjustment parity fund; establishing the Statewide Advisory Board; and providing for an effective date," for a hearing in the Labor and Commerce Committee.

Alaska Telecom Association (ATA) is the statewide association of telecommunications companies. Our members provide Alaskans with advanced telecommunications services including broadband, landline, and wireless services. Since 2017 ATA's members have invested over \$1 billion building Alaska's networks and continue working to connect all Alaskans.

We support SB234. The bill adopts the recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Broadband to support access to improved broadband services for Alaskans. Establishing the Office of Broadband in the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development will enable the State of Alaska to participate in the programs created by the Infrastructure, Investment, and Jobs Act of 2021 and access an unprecedented level of funding dedicated to extending broadband service throughout Alaska. Establishing the broadband parity adjustment will help support expanded access to broadband for Alaskans. And the new Statewide Broadband Advisory Board will provide the Office of Broadband with important input from a diverse stakeholder group, helping the Office to achieve its goal to expand broadband access for Alaskans.

ATA's members continue to invest in Alaska's broadband infrastructure and are eager to accelerate that work through the new infrastructure programs being implemented. SB234 provides important tools to support implementation of these programs and will result in increased access to broadband and all its benefits for Alaskans.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to advancing broadband services for Alaskans. We look forward to supporting the committee and SB234.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christine O'Connor".

Christine O'Connor
Executive Director