



May 4, 2023

Dear Senators Hoffman and Bishop,

Quintillion's mission is to connect more Alaskans to each other and the rest of the world—which is why we are eager to support Senate Bill 140. You have written legislation critical to advancing efforts that bridge the digital divide between rural and urban Alaska. We applaud you for focusing those efforts within what is the heart of our communities, —our schools.

Over the last few years, it is evident a high-speed internet connection is not a luxury, but a necessity. Yet, too many Alaskans lag behind the rest of the world in being able to log on for work, health care services, and education.

Quintillion is the underlying broadband carrier to students and teachers in Kotzebue, Nome, Point Hope, Utqiagvik, and Wainwright. Our middle-mile fiber serves the Northwest Arctic Borough School District, Nome Public Schools, Kogoyah Kozga Library, and North Slope Borough School District.

In our partnership with Ilisagvik College in Utqiagvik (who does not qualify for E-Rate subsidies), we saw the immediate difference provided by higher download speeds, as President Justina Wilhelm explains in this [thank you video](#): *"In our rural communities, internet access and bandwidth have been a huge area of concern for us. You can't imagine the weight lifted when Ilisagvik College partnered with Quintillion, and they began donating bandwidth in 2019, continued their support in 2020, and then increased their support in 2021."*

Increasing State of Alaska Broadband Assistance Grant (BAG) speeds for schools, from 25 megabits to 100 megabits, is the difference between being able to attend tutoring sessions via Zoom or falling behind in schoolwork. Increasing BAG-eligible speeds from 25mb to 100mb is the difference between listening and watching Inupiaq words correctly pronounced to simply guessing at the sounds.

We thank you for this bill, and the important work you are doing to achieve parity and digital equity across the state. Quintillion stands ready to support you in this critical endeavor.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Michael (Mac) McHale  
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