

Bering Strait School District



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Chair and Members of the Committee:

First, thank you for all the work you are doing to focus on the needs of schools and the hours you have put in to hear all sides of several issues this session. Your work is appreciated and will impact our future through the students schools serve.

I would like to take this opportunity to write in support of SB140 increasing the eligible internet speed to 100 megabits of download per second at each school. For all students in a digital age internet is essential to learning and job skill development. We must be able to leverage this tool in a learning environment where students can access content, use programs for job related items such as virtual CTE and have the support of their teachers to learn how to stay safe while engaging in this platform. For rural schools, in particular, we cannot visit locations for college and career options often and use virtual tours to help students explore their world and collaborate with others. Our students and teachers deal with frustration of spotty connections, outages, slow speeds and disruptions during learning times and testing times. This increase will help this improve.

While I am in support of increasing the speed allowed for funding, I want to mention that contracts should be allowed language such as bursting as well to assist in maintaining connections. It is also necessary to improve infrastructure as our current infrastructure in many of our schools in Bering Strait School District will not be able to reach 100 mbs and will remain at a disadvantage.