



April 19, 2022

Alice Reynolds
President, California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

RE: Proposed Decision Adopting Federal Funding Account Program Rules

Dear President Reynolds,

On behalf of the South Orange County Economic Coalition (SOCEC), the leading voice for business advocacy in South Orange County, appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Commission's proposed rules for new federal broadband funding. Many California communities are eagerly awaiting this funding so that families and small businesses without high-speed internet can finally experience the numerous healthcare, economic and social benefits of broadband connectivity.

As the Commission receives input from stakeholders, the SOCEC would like to emphasize two key criteria that are especially important when creating Federal Funding Account (FFA) program rules. First, rules should be established that garner substantial interest from dependable broadband providers with solid track records in delivering internet for communities across the state. Second, inconsistencies with existing federal and state rules should be limited; these inconsistencies would create unnecessary red tape and ultimately slow the construction and deployment of complex network infrastructure. These criteria are crucial as small businesses and families across the state await connection to affordable, quality high-speed internet.

Currently, the Commission's proposed pricing requirements conflict with the criteria mentioned above. SOCEC is concerned with the proposed plan for a "low cost" broadband plan with a set \$40 price ceiling and the proposal for a 10-year monthly service price hold. These will produce outcomes that reduce interest from internet providers with unparalleled experience in broadband delivery, in turn significantly slowing down progress to expand broadband networks.

SOCEC acknowledges the complexity of this process and applauds the Commission's efforts to protect consumers. However, the \$40 price ceiling and 10-year pricing proposals will hurt businesses and communities in need of quality broadband. **SOCEC respectfully urges the Commission to remove these pricing proposals and help advance broadband infrastructure for California.**

If you have any questions or need additional information regarding our support of this project, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at Victoria@economiccoalition.com or via telephone at 949.440.1027.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victoria Hernandez", written in a cursive style.

Victoria Hernandez

Executive Director, South Orange County Economic Coalition