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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF VENTURA

GOVERNMENT CENTER, HALL OF ADMINISTRATION  
800 SOUTH VICTORIA AVENUE, VENTURA, CALIFORNIA 93009

May 7, 2013

Board of Supervisors  
800 S. Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, CA 93009

**SUBJECT:** Direction to the CEO to Pursue Formation of a Ventura County or Multi-County Broadband Consortium and Take Other Steps to Support Broadband Development and Present any Associated Funding Request in the 2013-14 Proposed Budget

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Direct the CEO to pursue formation of a Ventura County or multi-county broadband consortium and take other steps to support broadband development and present any associated funding request in the 2013-14 Proposed Budget

**DISCUSSION:**

As Ventura County residents, businesses, schools, and government agencies increase their use of the internet, the availability of high capacity internet connectivity is of increasing importance, if not a pressing necessity. While the many factors driving the need for ever-higher capacity internet connectivity are too voluminous to discuss in this letter (and would likely be out of date by the time of "print"), in order to address Ventura County's need for broadband service, it is appropriate that County government pursue the enhancement of broadband internet connectivity in Ventura County.

Commonly referred to as "broadband," high capacity/high bandwidth/high bit rate internet connectivity can take many forms, but is primarily delivered via a backbone of fiber optic lines, then to homes and businesses via telecommunications lines, cable TV, or wireless services. While businesses rely on broadband connectivity to carry out their business-to-business communications and the availability of broadband is becoming increasingly important in business location decisions, broadband availability is also of great concern to residents seeking to work from home or simply enjoy movies, to schools and universities, hospitals and health care providers, public safety agencies, and state and local governments. In addition to the need for broadband for major users within cities, there are also the issues of extending broadband to underserved outlying areas and to underserved populations.



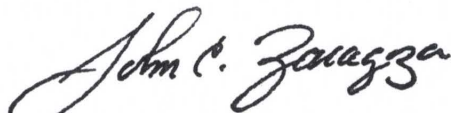
The California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has created a funding program to aid in the expansion of broadband services in California. The PUC's Advanced Services Fund provides funding via locally-formed public-private consortia. Many such consortia have been created across the state. The creation of a broadband consortium for Ventura County would both increase competitiveness for state and federal funding, and, assist in identifying tangible actions to improve broadband access. Many consortia across the state encompass multiple counties, and it may prove advantageous to create a multi-county consortium with counties to our north. It is important to note that with federal and state deregulation of the telecommunications industry, local government's role will be more facilitative than prescriptive.

The County CEO and Chief Information Officer are familiar with the PUC and consortium processes and support moving forward with creation of a broadband consortium for Ventura County. At this point it is not possible to determine the cost of consortium creation or operation, but the recommended action is to direct the CEO to return to our Board during the budget process with any recommended budgetary proposal for our Board's consideration. It is expected that consortium creation will advance with the active participation of the private sector and other local governments. The CEO is further encouraged to identify other steps or measures to facilitate expansion of broadband.

Cordially,



Steve Bennett  
Supervisor, First District



John C. Zaragoza  
Supervisor, Fifth District