

August 8, 2020

The Honorable Anthony Portantino, Chair  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
State Capitol, Room 2206  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 570 (Aguiar Curry) – SUPPORT**

Dear Chairman Portantino:

OCHIN is pleased to support AB 570 (Aguiar Curry) which prioritizes the deployment of broadband infrastructure in California's most vulnerable, unserved, and underserved rural and urban communities by extending the ongoing collection of funds deposited into the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) to provide communities with grants necessary to bridge the digital divide.

OCHIN is one of the largest and most successful health information and innovation networks in the United States, committed to improving the integration and delivery of health care services across a wide variety of practices, with an emphasis on safety net clinics and small practices as well as critical access and rural hospitals. In the OCHIN family of companies is the California Telehealth Network, a leading consortium of organizations focused on increasing access to healthcare through telehealth, telemedicine, and health information exchange. OCHIN utilizes critical subsidies to ensure underserved California communities have access to affordable broadband and the associated technology to connect the last mile.

It is through this lens we support AB 570, which recognizes that reliable internet connectivity is a critical necessity to continue health care delivery during the current outbreak, and that this will remain the case even after the COVID-19 pandemic has subsided. This bill equips Internet Service Providers, Local Governments, and Tribal Governments with the opportunity to expedite the connection of their communities to reliable broadband access indefinitely. Further, AB 570 ensures grants administered by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) from the CASF are awarded to applicants who are willing and able to quickly and efficiently connect households, community anchor institutions, small businesses, and employers.

Beyond the scope of health care, as record unemployment rates persist, internet access is vital for economic recovery and resiliency. This is especially important for our most vulnerable Californians who remain disproportionately disconnected, including those who are low-income, living in rural areas, or members of the BIPOC community. AB 570 will serve to expedite the deployment of broadband infrastructure to these communities and throughout California.

For these reasons, OCHIN is pleased to support and ask for your AYE vote on AB 570. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer Stoll". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Jennifer Stoll  
EVP of Government Relations and Public Affairs

CC: The Honorable Aguiar Curry  
Members, Senate Committee on Appropriations