

2019-07

A RESOLUTION OF THE FLORIDA LEAGUE OF CITIES INC., URGING CONGRESS TO RECOGNIZE AND WORK TO ACHIEVE BROADBAND ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY; SUPPORTING INCLUSION OF BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE IN FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS; AND AFFIRMING SUPPORT FOR LOCAL CONTROL OF BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE SITING.

WHEREAS, broadband infrastructure has become an economic necessity for Florida cities, driving education, health care, public safety, economic growth and operating efficiency in a 21st century economy; and

WHEREAS, sufficient broadband infrastructure has become increasingly necessary to support all forms of infrastructure, from smart-meter electrical grids and connected traffic management networks to sensor-enabled water and sewer systems; and

WHEREAS, robust broadband is needed to support the deployment of advances in smart city technologies, as well as autonomous vehicles and unmanned aerial systems (drones); and

WHEREAS, a competitive and sustainable broadband industry is driving innovations, community and economic development, educations, health care and government services; and

WHEREAS, access to broadband can increase residential property values, increase commercial business activity and spur viable employment options in isolated communities; and

WHEREAS, universal access to affordable broadband should be considered essential infrastructure that contributes to economic health and survival of communities across Florida; and

WHEREAS, the availability and adoption of quality broadband service can vary dramatically from one neighborhood to another, even in heavily populated urban areas, and a substantial number of individuals in poor and rural communities have limited internet access, and where broadband access is limited, citizens have limited access to information, education and tools for economic independence; and

WHEREAS, historically, local governments have ensured access to essential services not offered by the private sector by banding together to provide those services at a reasonable and competitive cost; and

WHEREAS, attempts continue to be made to limit or stop further local government deployment of municipal broadband services, which has the potential of reducing the ability of local government to provide important information and services to their citizens in a timely, efficient and cost-effective manner; and

WHEREAS, local governments should not be preempted by the federal or state government from being able to offer broadband services, high-speed internet and other communications services that could advance the deployment of broadband throughout our nation; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has enacted regulations that substantially limit the traditionally held authority of local governments over the placement of wireless infrastructure and local governments' ability to assess fair compensation to taxpayers for use of public property, subsidizing wireless carriers' development while undermining local efforts to expand broadband access; and

WHEREAS, the economic health of municipalities depends on public and private investment to connect their communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE FLORIDA LEAGUE OF CITIES, INC.:

Section 1. The Florida League of Cities, Inc., urges the federal government to recognize and work to provide affordable and competitively priced broadband access; provide appropriate standards for broadband speed, reliability, and connectivity that allow Floridians to compete in the global economy and open more opportunities to deliver robust services more economically and universally.

Section 2. The Florida League of Cities, Inc., urges Congress and the FCC to protect traditionally held authority of local governments over the placement of wireless infrastructure.

Section 3. The Florida League of Cities, Inc., urges Congress to support policies that promote municipal broadband, preserve the authority of local governments to act in the interest of their citizens by offering high speed Internet and other communications services, and preempt states from barring local governments from offering such services in their communities.

Section 4. The Florida League of Cities, Inc., urges Congress to include and incorporate federal investment in broadband in any federal infrastructure proposal to strengthen the nation's infrastructure network while promoting economic development in our municipalities.

Section 5. The Florida League of Cities, Inc., calls on the FCC to examine all best practices and potential obstacles to expanded broadband deployment and adoption, including obstacles created by federal or industry practices that stymie local and consumer efforts to expand broadband access.

Section 6. A copy of this resolution be sent to President Donald Trump, the Florida Congressional Delegation, the National League of Cities and the membership of the Florida League of Cities, Inc.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Florida League of Cities, Inc., in conference assembled at the League's 93rd Annual Conference, at the Orlando World Center Marriott, Orlando, Florida, this 17th Day of August 2019.

Leo E. Longworth, President
Florida League of Cities, Inc.
Commissioner, City of Bartow

ATTEST: _____
Michael Sittig, Executive Director
Florida League of Cities, Inc.

Submitted by: FLC Staff