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June 22, 2020

Joint Interim Committee on the First Special Session of 2020
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE, Room 453
Salem, OR 97301

**RE: Support of Legislative Concept 39 (2020 1st Special Session)
Rural Telecommunications Investment Act**

Dear Co-Chairs Kotek and Courtney, Co-Vice Chairs Girod and Drazan and
Members of the Joint Interim Committee on the First Special Session of 2020:

In its last report to the Legislative Assembly in 2018, OBAC stated that it believes that Oregon's broadband public policy needs to be focused on the future, be more aggressive, be more financially supportive, be more specific, and have a renewed sense of urgency. The COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis has created that sense of urgency.

In its last report, OBAC recommended that the state provide funding for new grant, loan and loan guarantee programs for broadband in unserved and underserved areas of the state, and for matching funds to leverage federal funding programs in support of new broadband infrastructure, community broadband planning, digital inclusion, cyber-security, education, public safety, agriculture, and network interconnection. The COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis has illustrated the importance of this critical work.

In its last report, OBAC recommended that the state should repurpose and redesign the Oregon Universal Service Fund to be sustainable and to improve and subsidize broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved areas of the state.

Oregon Broadband Advisory Council, c/o Oregon Business Development Department
121 SW Salmon Street, Suite 205
Portland, Oregon 97204

Today, OBAC reaffirms these beliefs and recommendations.

The provisions of LC 39 – Rural Telecommunications Investment Act incorporate OBAC's recommendations and will make much needed resources available for Oregon to address the challenges of the current crisis and for Oregon to address its ongoing need for essential broadband telecommunications in the future.

OBAC supports the introduction and passage of LC 39 – Rural Telecommunications Investment Act.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Pietzold

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Vice-Chair

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