



June 21, 2020

Joint Interim Committee on the First Special Session 2020

Oregon State Legislature

Dear Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Association of Education Service Districts is asking for your support of LC 39 which allocates monies to the Connecting Oregon Schools Fund to provide grants or loans to school districts for the purpose of providing broadband access to schools.

These funds will provide the 10% match required to access federal funds through the USAC E-Rate Special Construction State Match program. This program provides a unique opportunity for small, rural school districts to secure funding for high-speed broadband projects that are both scalable and affordable.

One-third (64) of Oregon's 197 school Districts have fewer than 500 students. The challenges faced by these small and often remote, rural Oregon schools include geography, distance, lack of connectivity and lack of resources to provide the matching funds required to access the USAC's E-Rate Program.

Sincerely,

Gary Peterson

Executive Director