



## HEATHER BUCH

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Lane County Commissioner  
East Lane District  
Heather.Buch@co.lane.or.us

DATE: April 2, 2019  
TO: House Committee on Revenue  
RE: HB 2184A, relating to the universal service fund

Dear Representative Nathanson and Members of the Committee:

Lane County offers its support for HB 2184A. We find this measure is necessary to adjust to changes with how people are communicating in today's world, and from an economic development perspective our focus is on bolstering rural economic development. For that to be successful it is imperative that rural areas have high speed connectivity to the internet. The Oregon Universal Service Fund is where we look to assist better rural connectivity but the fund will only continue to shrink without HB 2184A.

Lane County is moving forward with a regional broadband plan to identify broadband gaps, measure accurate data, and identify opportunities for state and federal assistance. Lane County is a microcosm of the national broadband ecosystem in that we have a variety of providers and resources available, but no cohesive plan to focus efforts or measure gaps (and gains). Lane County will continue to support small broadband projects throughout rural communities, but these projects are limited in impact and scope by resource issues. HB 2184A will serve to improve that environment.

Lane County recognizes that broadband connectivity in rural communities is essential to long-term prosperity. Broadband has the opportunity to bring jobs, education, healthcare, and other crucial quality of life factors that are often taken for granted in urban areas. We support HB 2184A because it will focus funding opportunities for areas with limited or no current broadband access.

We ask that the House Revenue Committee schedule a work session for this measure.

Respectfully,

Heather Buch  
Lane County Commissioner, East Lane District

SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY