

February 1, 2022

Chair John Lively, Vice Chair Jami Cate, Vice Chair Jason Kropf, and Committee members:

I am writing as a member of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Oregon, Ashland Branch, where I serve as a member of the Public Policy Committee. I want to express my strong **Support** for **House Bill 4092**.

Broadband internet service is the key to connect all Oregonians into the future. I live in a small town of 20,000 citizens in a rural area of our state that had the foresight, over twenty years ago, to build its own broadband internet infrastructure, the Ashland Fiber Network (AFN). **I want my fellow Oregonians to have the same fast, reliable internet service that I have.**

It is almost impossible to function, let alone thrive, in our society today without access to high speed and reliable broadband internet service. Broadband infrastructure supports and enables every aspect of work and life. Where you live in Oregon makes a difference in whether you have the needed accessibility of fast, sustainable broadband. This access is critical to families, students, healthcare providers, business owners, police, firefighters and others.

For example, students at colleges and universities throughout Oregon need access to high speed broadband services in order to attend virtual classes and to do their homework. I, myself, as a student taking virtual classes through various institutions such as Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston Athenaeum, Royal Oak Foundation, and others need to have reliable broadband internet available.

With the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) monies and funding from the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA) going to directly to states, Oregon can leverage an expected \$200 million dollars to expand broadband internet service across the state in underserved communities.

I urge you to **vote yes on House Bill 4092**.

Thank you.

Lisa Verner, FAICP
Member, Public Policy Committee
AAUW Oregon, Ashland Branch