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**DIGITAL EQUITY BILL OF RIGHTS SIGNED BY GOVERNOR NEWSOM
California Leads the Nation As A Champion for Digitally-Disadvantaged**

Sacramento, California – October 9, 2023 – A momentous milestone has been reached in the journey towards a more inclusive and equitable digital society with the passing of the Digital Equity Bill of Rights, which was recently signed into law by Governor Newsom. Today, California takes a bold step forward in ensuring that every individual, regardless of their background, circumstances or zip code, has fair and equal access to the benefits and opportunities offered by the Digital Age. California is the first state in the nation to make Digital Equity a legal right.

The Digital Equity Bill of Rights (AB414), championed and authored by Assembly Majority Leader Eloise Gómez Reyes, 50th Assembly District in San Bernardino County and Inland Empire, and sponsored by the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF), sets forth a framework of commitment that makes it the policy of the State of California to ensure that broadband is sufficient, equitable, accessible, affordable, reliable and ubiquitous for all Californians.

“Internet access is an essential service that everyone needs to have every opportunity to thrive. The Digital Divide today is a Digital Chasm: limited or no access to affordable high-speed Internet is leaving behind far too many Californians. This bill is an important milestone paving the way for Digital Equity,” said Assemblymember Reyes.

Key provisions of the Digital Equity Bill of Rights include universal access, digital literacy, affordable devices, inclusive content and services, and data privacy and security.

“The Legislature and Governor have demonstrated historical leadership on closing the Digital Divide by taking bold action to invest in broadband Internet deployment and adoption. The Digital Equity Bill of Rights memorializes this leadership and legacy for future generations of Legislators and Governors to continue the work they started,” said (Ret.) State Senator Richard Polanco, founding Chair of the California Latino Legislative Caucus. “As a former Legislator, I know how important this policy is for all Californians, and especially for the digitally-disadvantaged communities among us,” Polanco stated.

The California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) sponsored the Digital Equity Bill of Rights. The mission of CETF is to close the Digital Divide, promote Digital Inclusion, and achieve Digital Equity by accelerating Deployment and Adoption. For 15 years CETF has been in the forefront of closing the Digital Divide by being deeply in the trenches as a partner with community organizations throughout the state to get digitally-disadvantaged low-income households connected to the Internet.

“We are honored that Assemblymember Reyes championed the Digital Equity Bill of Rights at this pivotal point in the quest for Digital Equity. The Digital Divide is simply another manifestation of the Economic Divide. This landmark legislation assures all Californians that the vision and intent of the bill is fulfilled so

everyone can have digital access that provides educational, economic, public safety and democratic benefits for all California Residents,” said Sunne Wright McPeak, CETF President and CEO. McPeak added, “The Digital Divide is simply another manifestation of the Economic Divide. Access to the Internet is the Civil Rights issues of the 21st Century.”

The passing of the Digital Equity Bill of Rights is a testament to California's duty to building an inclusive and equitable state for all its residents. It sets an example for other states across the nation, inspiring them to take similar actions to close the Digital Divide and create a future where no one is left behind.

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About California Emerging Technology Fund

CETF is a statewide non-profit foundation with the mission to close the Digital Divide in California. CETF provides grants to non-profit community-based organizations (CBOs) to assist low-income households adopt broadband and become digitally proficient, and leads and manages School2Home to successfully integrate technology into teaching and learning with deep parent engagement to close the Achievement Gap in middle schools in low-income neighborhoods, and promotes Digital Inclusion in public policy to achieve Digital Equity. Through collaborative efforts with government, industry, and community partners, CETF works to create inclusive digital ecosystems that empower individuals and communities to thrive in the Digital Age. For more information, please visit www.cetfund.org.