



June 6, 2019

Senator Manning, Chair
Ways and Means Transportation/Economic Development subcommittee
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Subject: City of Eugene Support of HB 2184

Dear Chair Manning:

The City of Eugene has telecommunications policies regarding endorsing and advocating for programs in which residents, businesses, and public institutions can have access to a full range of advanced telecommunications services at reasonable, affordable rates.

The City is supportive of the OPUC program outlined in HB 2184, which is aimed at promoting broadband deployment and use in rural areas of Oregon. Urban areas like Eugene want our rural partners to benefit from enhanced broadband services. This rural/urban collaboration is fully in action as Eugene and Lane County are working together to deliver high speed fiber service from a new improved 'Middle-Mile' peering point included in the Eugene Fiber Project.

- **HB 2184** brings wireless service providers into a fair and equitable OPUC fee structure that will benefit the wireless industry. The new revenue will support a grant program housed in the Oregon Broadband Office to invest in infrastructure needs in communities who are part of the digital divide.
- **HB 2184** will increase revenue for investments in telecommunications including the infrastructure that the wireless industry depends on and has been benefiting from for the last 20 years.
- **HB2184** will ensure that it includes a portion of VOIP and wireless intrastate data in the calculation, and as such the overall fee will be reduced. Currently, the fee is 8.5%. HB2184 reduces the fee to 6%, that's a 30% reduction in existing fees, but more people are paying it.
- **HB2184** will enable Oregon to participate in national rural broadband funding opportunities because it would be able to contribute the 10% match.

Urban jurisdictions such as Eugene endorse the benefits of ensuring that our rural partner agencies and jurisdictions have the tools and services they need to serve their residents and businesses, especially to mitigate rural flight to urban areas. Our rural partners can develop broadband innovation districts to recruit and retain tech businesses to their areas, as well as enhancing their education anchor institutions and library systems. 400,000 residents and businesses are estimated to be without Internet Access service in Oregon. The priority for spending this additional revenue will be on the [52 libraries](#) and [25 school districts](#) without high speed internet.

Thank you for your consideration of our support of HB 2184.

Sincerely,

Pam Berrian
Telecommunications Program Manager - (submitted electronically).