



# Senator Anna M. Caballero

## REPRESENTING THE 12TH DISTRICT

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Rural Broadband and DIVCA Reform Act of 2021**

*Senator Anna M. Caballero (SD 12) Announces legislation to bridge the digital divide in rural and underserved communities throughout the state.*

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to center stage what those who have been living in rural or underserved communities have known for a long time. Because internet service providers are private companies delivering services for profit, they face pressures from investors who expect returns on their investments. This pressure leads to lack of services in rural, low-density or low-income areas.

The Rural Broadband and Digital Infrastructure Video Competition Reform Act of 2021 helps rural, unserved, and underserved communities build broadband networks that reach all Californians lacking access to a high-speed internet connection and service. SB 28, requires the Department of General Services, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Education, and the Department of Technology to identify all state real properties, rights of way, and other resources suitable for a public /private partnership for broadband network development. Agencies will develop a template agreement that enables any broadband network developer to utilize the identified state assets in its network development planning and deployment plans. Without any new taxes or fees, this simple step makes it feasible to close the Digital Divide in these select locations.

“The COVID-19 pandemic placed a spotlight on the inequality caused by California’s persistent Digital Divide. Students, residents and business owners are placed at a huge disadvantage and are struggling to participate in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century way of life. Now more than ever, we must ensure equal broadband network development across all of California, and eliminate the Digital Divide.” said Senator Caballero.

*Senator Anna M. Caballero represents the 12<sup>th</sup> Senate District, composed of the Salinas Valley, Merced and San Benito Counties, and portions of Fresno, Madera and Stanislaus Counties.*

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