

BB

MOTION

CIVIL RIGHTS, EQUITY, AGING &
DISABILITY

Access to broadband is absolutely critical for full participation in modern society, and the pandemic has laid bare the systemic problem of inequitable access across historically disadvantaged populations. Low-income communities, people of color, immigrants, and seniors are all disproportionately disconnected. Inequitable connectivity rates are often referred to as the “digital divide” and are generally discussed as a consequence of one of three factors: infrastructure, affordability, and digital literacy plus devices.

The California Public Utilities Commission Public Advocate's Office defines digital redlining as: “Practices in which private or public entities limit investments in the installation, expansion, or upgrading of internet service infrastructure within specific geographic areas, including, but not limited to the communities mentioned above.” People who live in low-income communities and communities of color are disproportionately disconnected in urban, suburban, and rural areas alike. Numerous studies have documented that those same communities have been subject to under investment or disinvestment with respect to broadband infrastructure.

There have been multiple studies showing the impact of industry pricing practices that worsen the digital divide by exacerbating the challenge of affordability. Studies demonstrate that providers systematically offer worse service - slower, delivered over older technology - to low-income communities at the same price that they offered fast, reliable service to higher income communities.

In the Federal Communications Commission Report and Order released on November 20, 2023, Digital Discrimination of Access is defined as, “Policies or practices, not justified by genuine issues of technical or economic feasibility, that (1) differentially impact consumers’ access to broadband internet access service based on their income level, race, ethnicity, color, religion, or national origin or (2) are intended to have such differential impact.” The language of digital discrimination has never been codified at the City level.

As one of the largest municipal governments, Los Angeles serves as a role model to other municipalities across the nation. It is essential that our City paves the way to prevent digital discrimination in all forms.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council instruct the Civil, Human Rights and Equity Department (CHRED), in coordination with the City Attorney’s Office and Chief Legislative Analyst, to evaluate and recommend potential amendments to Ordinance No. 187032, which allows for the investigation of complaints against discrimination, to address the prevention of digital discrimination and to review and potentially utilize the definition of Digital

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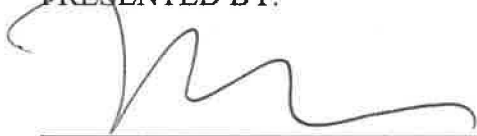
Discrimination of Access adopted by the Federal Communications Commission Report and Order released on November 20, 2023.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Council instructs CHRED to develop a public information program to educate the public that digital discrimination claims may be submitted utilizing its existing complaint system and to create a procedure that would also forward these claims to the Federal Communications Commission for consideration.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Council instructs CHRED to develop a method to analyze prospective digital discrimination complaints that should include demographic information to identify potential trends within the City, and report annually on those trends.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Council instructs the Bureau of Street Lighting to report on actions that the City is taking to address the digital divide and ensure equitable broadband access for all Angelenos.

PRESENTED BY:



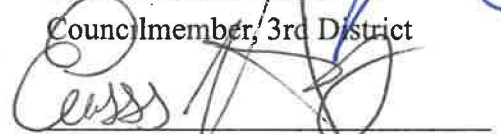
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