

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 531

Commending the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission and its localities.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 7, 2018

Agreed to by the Senate, March 9, 2018

WHEREAS, the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC) region is an innovative area where many strategies are being implemented to help deploy broadband, which has been deemed an essential infrastructure by each of the local governments in the region; and

WHEREAS, the Commission's region is composed of the Counties of Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, and Nelson and the City of Charlottesville; and

WHEREAS, the TJPDC has supported local and regional broadband efforts and initiatives for a number of years, to include working with a private provider to seek broadband infrastructure funding through the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act; and

WHEREAS, the TJPDC has endorsed broadband grant applications and provided grant administration support for localities in the region; and

WHEREAS, the TJPDC presented regional perspectives and local initiatives on broadband to the Governor's Broadband Advisory Council in 2016; and

WHEREAS, the TJPDC localities have been very proactive the past several years in accelerating their efforts, both on their own and in partnership with the private sector, to bring or expand high speed internet to their communities; and

WHEREAS, Albemarle County adopted a community-based, telecommunication strategic plan, established a broadband authority, and working with private providers, has received two Virginia Telecommunication Initiative grants to extend last-mile broadband service to unserved areas of the county; and

WHEREAS, Fluvanna County established a Broadband Access Taskforce last year to identify broadband infrastructure status and underserved areas and is currently seeking private sector partners for establishing high speed internet service; and

WHEREAS, Greene County has a working broadband committee, has surveyed county residents and is working with the Center for Innovative Technology to facilitate broadband expansion throughout the county; and

WHEREAS, Louisa County received a Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) broadband planning grant, has a four-year-old broadband authority, and recently approved a contract to spend over \$600,000 in local funds for six wireless towers and two co-locations to extend high-speed internet service across the county; and

WHEREAS, Nelson County also received several DHCD broadband grants, has a long-standing broadband authority that has built a 39-mile, middle-mile network that is beginning to serve customers, and has four towers for extending wireless service to more remote areas of the county; and

WHEREAS, in the City of Charlottesville, the downtown area has been extensively wired to support residents and business, and the City continues to explore public/private opportunities to develop its broadband infrastructure to ensure communication paths needed for businesses to be successful; and

WHEREAS, the TJPDC most recently convened a meeting of local officials with the Central Virginia Electric Cooperative (CVEC) to discuss CVEC's plans to build 4,500 miles of fiber optic cable within five years to make broadband internet service available to 36,000 homes and businesses across parts of 14 counties; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission and the six localities making up the region for their numerous, ongoing efforts to bring broadband internet to their residents; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission as an expression of the General Assembly's appreciation of its valuable regional efforts and support of its localities.

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