



**Communications
Workers of America**
AFL-CIO, DISTRICT 9

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Frank Arce
Vice President

September 16, 2026

Governor Gavin Newsom
California State Governor
1020 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: BEAD Program

Dear Governor Newsom,

The Communications Workers of America, District 9 (CWA D9) actively engaged and strongly supported the initial BEAD program when it was announced in 2023. At that time BEAD represented an historic commitment to a future proof broadband-for-all investment. An investment that sought to connect rural, urban, and underserved alike. It was a means to connect individuals and families who have been left behind by providers who valued profit over service. The program also signaled a robust respect for workers - including high road labor standards - to help build out critical broadband infrastructure, elevating the well-being of hardworking families in California and beyond.

Unfortunately, as California is on the precipice of finally receiving its BEAD funding, we are disappointed and outraged that the current federal administration has chosen to use the program as a political leverage point to specifically undermine net neutrality laws in California and could become an invitation to providers to egregiously seek to bulldoze other labor and consumer protection laws. This is due to the language of Condition 50 contained in the terms and conditions of funding recipients.

At minimum Condition 50 is an explicit effort to undo California's historic net neutrality laws. At worst, broadband providers will attempt to twist the language of Condition 50 to shirk non-discrimination laws thereby leaving vulnerable communities without equal access to quality service.

Additionally, we are concerned that broadband and telecom providers will act in bad faith and test the limits of Condition 50 to challenge or ignore current and future laws that are aimed to ensure broadband for all, protect workers, and

provide key consumer protections. The potential for legal manipulation of Condition 50 by providers is real and frightening.

While CWA D9 has long been on record, and remains steadfast, in support of broadband for all, fiber for all, and to heavily invest in well-trained union workers, accepting the BEAD funding while being forced to sacrifice net neutrality and create the potential for providers to run roughshod over key labor and consumer protections is significant.

As a result we are calling on the CPUC, Governor Newsom and legislative leaders, to at minimum take the following steps:

- 1) Delay the CPUC's scheduled vote on the final BEAD proposal current set for Thursday September 17th. If necessary, California should request a 30-day extension of the deadline to decide on BEAD funding.
- 2) Call on NTIA to withdraw Condition 50 as a mandatory obligation of grantee states.
- 3) Require providers to comply with existing net neutrality and other existing broadband-related laws, regardless of BEAD funding, and at risk of significant penalties.
- 4) Convene stakeholders, including CWA, to identify options to protect BEAD funding without sacrificing net neutrality or other broadband-related laws and rules.

We also call on the broadband providers to immediately make a commitment to honor consumer protection laws and denounce the federal administration's attempt to inappropriately and perhaps illegally, assert Condition 50.

CWA D9 remains strongly committed to broadband and fiber for all policies, as well as, rules to prohibit discrimination in the provision of broadband and telecom service. BEAD was originally intended and created for these purposes and has been grossly reconfigured to carry out an anti-consumer and anti-labor agenda.

We ask that you make every effort to pause the current process and identify strategies to secure funding without sacrificing existing and future labor and consumer protection laws.

If there are any questions, please reach out to our Legislative advocate, Ignacio Hernandez at Ignacio@Hernandezstrategy.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Frank Arce', with a stylized, cursive script.

Frank Arce
Vice President, CWA, District 9