

CITY OF ALBANY

NEW YORK

ALBANY COMMON COUNCIL

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January 11, 2021

Hon. Andrew Cuomo, Governor
Executive Chamber - State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Re: A.6679-C (Ryan)/S.8805 (Metzger); Public Service Commission review broadband and fiber optic services within NYS

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We are writing as the elected members of the Albany Common Council in support of the above referenced legislation related to the availability of broadband and fiber optic services within New York State, which has passed both houses of the legislature and is currently pending before you.

Availability and access to reliable internet services is a pressing issue for many areas of our state, as well as within neighborhoods in the City of Albany, including those bordering the Executive Mansion. Issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic, including remote learning and the need to work from home, have further exposed the gaps and digital divide in broadband access which most often impacts urban low-income and rural areas.

This bill would require the Public Service Commission to review available technology in order to find delivery solutions to underserved or unserved areas and publish a detailed internet access map of the state. This measure is a crucial part of efforts to foster broadband expansion since the data that would be collected is not otherwise available. It would be an important tool in fostering economic development, enhancing education, tele-health and so many other areas important to building thriving and strong communities.

The current pandemic has exposed the critical need on how vital access to high-speed internet is and the importance of acting in a timely manner. This bill is an important part of the process in addressing these issues. For the foregoing reasons, we strongly urge your support for the above referenced bill and that it be signed into law.

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Council Member, Ward 6

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Council Member, Ward 10

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