



RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF DIGITALLY CONNECTED HOMES POST COVID-19

Committee: Telecommunication

Resolution: TEL-20-02

1. **WHEREAS**, the National Organization of Black Elected Legislative (NOBEL) Women
2. called on the federal government in 2009 to maximize its stimulus support for broadband
3. internet adoption and use programs in our nation's state through the Broadband
4. Opportunity Coalition that included the goals of advancing broadband adoption, literacy
5. and MBE participation; and
6. **WHEREAS**, there is a continued need to ensure economic empowerment in African
7. American and urban communities with advanced communication services and
8. information technology; and
9. **WHEREAS**, according to an early 2019 survey conducted by the PEW Research Center,
10. internet usage is near ubiquitous for young adults, college graduates and those from
11. high-income households; however, the digital divide persists with lower income
12. Americans with 44% not having home broadband services, and 46% not owning a
13. traditional computer; and
14. **WHEREAS**, the survey also found that Black and Hispanic adults remain less likely than
15. whites to own a traditional computer or have high speed internet at home with roughly
16. 82% of Whites reporting owning a desktop or laptop computer compared to 59% of
17. blacks and 57% of Hispanics and 79% of Whites reporting they have home broadband,
18. compared to 66% of Blacks and 61% of Hispanics; and
19. **WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has made internet access at home critical for
20. millions of students, families, employees and elderly who have to shelter safely in place
21. at home and negatively impacted their ability to access education, work, and healthcare
22. services; and
23. **WHEREAS**, according to the most recent data from the National Center for Education
24. Statistics (NCES), 14% of children ages 3-18 don't have internet access at home and
25. more than 9 million school children will face difficulty completing assignments online,
26. and

27. **WHEREAS**, of the families surveyed by NCES, 34% reported not having internet
28. because they were unable to afford it, 4% because they did not have a home computer,
29. and 4% because an internet connection was not available in their area, and
30. **WHEREAS**, the NCES reports among children ages 3-18, 17% live in households
31. without a laptop or desktop computer; and
32. **WHEREAS**, at least 11 million students don't have a computer for online learning at all,
33. and lack of access to home internet or a computer increases for lower-income students
34. according to the NCES data, and
35. **WHEREAS**, lack of home digital connections will further widen and exacerbate
36. academic, economic, and healthcare disparities.
37. **NOW, THEREFORE BE RESOLVED**, that the NOBEL Women calls on Congress and
38. the Federal Communication commission to require federal funding for infrastructure
39. deployment be administered with adoption and education efforts, and
40. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, NOBEL Women calls upon the Public Housing
41. Administration to require digitally connected homes an essential service for all Public
42. Housing and Affordable Housing communities, and
43. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the NOBEL Women calls upon all levels of
44. government to work cooperatively with the private sector, nonprofits, and academia to
45. employ technology-based applications in an effort to finally close the work gap,
46. homework gap and allow telehealth, and
47. **NOW, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NOBEL Women send a copy of this
48. resolution to the President of the United States, members of Congress the Federal
49. Communications Commission, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development,
50. and other relevant federal, state and local agencies.

**Introduced by Karen Camper
Tennessee General Assembly**