

MAC Legislative Priority/Policy Proposal

[INSERT TITLE]

Issue: [Short sentence stating the purpose of the priority/policy proposal] **Example:** Members of the Missouri Association of Counties (MAC) are uniquely positioned to advise and help facilitate digital connectivity for urban and rural areas for which long-standing connectivity inequities have been made more acute by the COVID-19 pandemic. The expansion of broadband internet will require resources from all levels of government, but foremost will require the integration of local government in establishing the programmatic components that will successfully implement connectivity for all communities.

Priority/Proposed Policy: [Concise statement specifying a position or action by MAC and/or other entities] **Example:** The Missouri Association of Counties (MAC) urges the General Assembly, Congress and involved state and federal agencies to commit to the inclusion and engagement of MAC members in the earliest phases of the strategic planning and expansion of broadband services and access.

Background: [1-2 paragraph statement which clearly outlines the county interest in the particular issue] **Example:** While our state's urban areas have made progress in expanding high-speed internet to their residents, other areas remain far behind. Today, Missouri ranks 32nd in broadband availability. In 2022, Missouri Gov. Mike Parson recommended \$400 million of funding be appropriated to expand the broadband infrastructure to areas of Missouri that are unserved or underserved.

With members from all areas across that state, MAC serves as a vital resource to help bridge the digital divide and supports funding to expand broadband to all areas of the state that can result in economic gains for communities and businesses that are currently suffering with connectivity issues from lack of dependable high-speed internet from internet providers in their areas.

MAC urges the General Assembly to provide funding to expand and improve access to high-speed internet for areas that are unserved or underserved.

Fiscal/Urban/Rural Impact: [(If needed) Short statement addressing the potential impacts for counties in the specific issue area]

Sponsor: [Name, Title, County]