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Golden State Connect Authority Celebrates Broadband Win for California in Latest Federal Grant Awards

SACRAMENTO, CA – Golden State Connect Authority (GSCA) celebrates the recent award announcement by the Biden Administration of \$97,000,000 in federal grant funding to California through the Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program. These funds, awarded to the California Department of Technology and Zayo, LLC, will help advance the development of California’s state-wide middle-mile network, which is a vital step in connecting high-speed internet to rural California communities.

“Lack of broadband infrastructure is a significant barrier to expanding internet access and reducing the digital divide, particularly in rural California,” said GSCA Board Chair and Calaveras County Supervisor Jack Garamendi. “The state’s middle-mile network is essential to advancing broadband deployment and these grant awards represent a substantial win for California in developing this important infrastructure for the benefit of our underserved communities.”

Funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure program includes \$1 billion to expand middle-mile infrastructure to reduce the cost of last-mile network connections to homes and businesses in unserved and underserved areas. The awarded funds will be utilized by the California Department of Technology to construct 680 miles of middle-mile fiber impacting 30 California counties and by Zayo, LLC to build 645 miles of middle-mile fiber across Oregon, Nevada and Northern California for the benefit of rural areas that currently have inadequate broadband services.

This grant funding will build upon the \$6 billion investment in California broadband approved in 2021 through Senate Bill 156. The legislation provides \$3.25 billion to construct a statewide open-access middle-mile network and over \$2 billion, including \$1 billion specifically for rural communities, for last-mile network construction. These investments aid in increased connectivity and affordability for all by making it easier for more internet providers to provide faster, more affordable service throughout the state and creating opportunities for entities to build last-mile infrastructure in more places.

GSCA is one of these entities working to deploy last-mile infrastructure. At this time GSCA is identifying project locations in rural California for installation of last-mile broadband fiber networks, beginning with select initial locations and then expanding to additional project areas. These projects will utilize an Open-

Access municipal broadband model, under which multiple internet service providers use the same publicly owned high-speed network to provide a range of services to homes and businesses.

For additional information about GSCA and its upcoming projects, visit www.goldenstateconnect.org.

ABOUT GOLDEN STATE CONNECT AUTHORITY

Golden State Connect Authority (GSCA) is a joint powers authority comprised of 40 rural California counties designed for the purpose of increasing access to reliable, affordable high-speed internet for the residents and businesses of those counties. GSCA will assist rural counties in identifying pathways for development of internet infrastructure within their communities, including the construction of municipal-owned and/or operated internet systems, among other options. Get up to speed with GSCA at www.goldenstateconnect.org.

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