

Radio Bilingüe supports the Comments filed by the California Emerging Technology Fund and urges the California Air Resources Board to optimize Digital Inclusion in funding from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. Broadband is a green strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and shrink the carbon footprint of major infrastructure systems.

Radio Bilingüe knows first-hand the importance of closing the Digital Divide. We work to get disadvantaged communities connected and low-income households online. Radio Bilingüe is a noncommercial bilingual Latino public radio network headquartered in Fresno and Oakland, CA, and the major producer of national Spanish news and information in public broadcasting. RB has produced thousands of news and informational campaigns on important consumer topics including broadband access, health, employment, immigration, financial literacy, education and civic participation -- creating forums in Spanish, English and Mixteco on our airwaves that connect listeners with community partners and resources.

Since 2010 Radio Bilingüe has been at the center of successful model efforts in California to expand broadband awareness and adoption of low-cost or discounted programs to low-income Latinos, as a consistent partner with other non-profits in the California Emerging Technology Fund's major statewide initiative. In this time, RB has made core to its mission helping Spanish- and Mixteco-speaking communities gain access to broadband through outreach, education and connection to resources, proving that low-income Latinos and language minority groups, when aware of the benefits, DO want to be connected to computers and Internet-related resources to improve their families' education, economic opportunity and quality of life. Still, while there has been good progress, the latest study of internet penetration in households in California finds that half of the Spanish speaking homes in Fresno County do not have broadband at home and thus do not have an even playing field when it comes to many life opportunities. Thus, we commend and endorse your focus on disadvantaged communities and low-income households.

We also know that collaboration among stakeholders can produce powerful partnerships. We stand ready to assist you in implementing the Third Investment Plan and helping meet the greenhouse gas emission reduction goals for the State of California.

Sincerely,

Hugo Morales
Executive Director