

Hi everyone,

I am sending out this special email because the end of the legislative session was on Friday 9/15, and I thought that people would want to know the outcome of 3 bills specifically that relate to broadband and how our elected officials voted on these bills. I encourage you to let your elected officials know if you are happy/disappointed with their vote - they need to hear from you. Unfortunately, the news is not good (You can also find more info on our [website](#)). And if you read to the end, I do have some other good news posted.

Let's start with AB 375 - the Internet Privacy Bill. This is a bit complicated because it was a "gut and amend" bill. It started in the Assembly as a video arcade bill which easily passed 77-0, but when it got to the Senate it was "gutted and amended" to be the privacy bill. The privacy bill that would have re-instated privacy protections in California that were rescinded at the national level by the FCC, prohibiting providers from "using, disclosing, or permitting access to customer proprietary information." We strongly supported this bill, as did other broadband advocates and smaller providers... but big telecom was against it. Unfortunately it got stuck in a Senate Rules Committee and did not make it out of for a Senate Floor vote, nor get back to the Assembly for another floor vote. How our representatives voted: *Senator McGuire voted "yes" in committee (thank-you!) and Assemblymember Wood did not vote on this bill (his "yes" vote was for the video arcade bill, and he never had the chance to vote on the privacy one since it never made it back to the Assembly).*

AB 1665 - this is the bill that re-authorizes the state broadband program (CASF). Originally we supported it as a good thing, but it was severely damaged by a series of industry amendments, each worse than the previous, which made it into a bill which we came to actively oppose. It changes the definition of "broadband" to a lower speed so that more areas will be considered "served" (and therefore ineligible for grant funding). In addition, "regions" that are already 98% served are ineligible as well, and since Mendocino is part of a highly-served region which includes Marin, Napa, and Sonoma, our county as a whole is ineligible for funding from this program - but we will continue to pay into it. AB 1665 passed and is now being sent to the Governor's desk for his signature. I am encouraging people to contact the governor and ask him to VETO this bill. (You can read a few letters asking for this veto here and here.) How our representatives voted: *Senator McGuire - no (thank-you!); Assemblymember Wood - yes (He was actually a co-sponsor and would not withdraw his support as the bill became corrupted).*

SB 649 - the Small Cell Deployment bill also passed. This bill streamlines the wireless permit process, but at the expense of local government control and discretion over where cell sites can be located (and public input). It requires local governments to rent space on street lights,

traffic signals, and other “vertical” infrastructure they own in ALL land use zones (including residential) at rates far below market value. Our Board of Supervisors (and the city of Ukiah and Point Arena) and other local governments were strongly opposed to this legislation. How our representatives voted: *Senator McGuire - “no” on final concurrence vote (“yes” in May Senate floor vote); Assemblymember Wood - “no vote recorded” on final Assembly floor vote, “yes” in committee votes.*

Okay now here’s the good news - Digital Help is Available!

Join the WEST company for small business workshop on Thursday, Sept. 21 (Ukiah) to learn social media tools and strategies to grow your business. The WEST company will be offering a whole series of workshops this fall, so check them out [here](#).

Freaked out about the recent Equifax hack? Check out our technical expert Joe Feigon’s most [recent blog](#) on how to protect yourself and what to do. We are up to about [80 blogs](#) posted on our website, so you have plenty of opportunity to learn more.