

Senate Resolution No. 29

Introduced by Senator Murray

Relative to closing the Digital Divide

WHEREAS, California is the national leader in the use of technology for the information age; and

WHEREAS, Computers and the Internet are revolutionizing the ways people learn, communicate, earn a living, and entertain themselves; and

WHEREAS, The Digital Divide is the term commonly used to describe the gap between those who have access to the computer hardware, software, education, training, and technical assistance needed to access and make use of the Internet at home and those who do not; and

WHEREAS, The disparity created by the Digital Divide establishes a nearly impenetrable barrier to not only opportunities for quality employment, but also educational opportunities and access to information that all Americans will need in order to be successful; and

WHEREAS, Although there has been a significant and steady increase in low-income Americans' ownership and use of computers and the Internet, the disparity between low-income and higher income Americans continues to be large; and

WHEREAS, Nationwide computer ownership among households with children is now almost as common as cable television subscriptions (42 percent), and Internet access almost as common as newspaper subscriptions (26 percent), and these numbers are higher for California households; and

WHEREAS, Although nationwide more than 50 percent of children in urban households earning more than \$75,000 and 40 percent of two-parent households have Internet access, only 11 percent of Black, 12.6 percent of Latino, and 15 percent of female, single-parent households have Internet access; and

WHEREAS, The technology gap is not simply a reflection of choices made by an individual household, but a reflection of a deeper problem of access to infrastructure, quality education, effective training, and appropriate content and a growing income disparity; and

WHEREAS, A concerted effort is needed to address the children on the wrong side of the Digital Divide; and

WHEREAS, Most parents and children view the Internet as a positive force in children's lives and a powerful tool for learning and communicating; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, That the Senate of the State of California supports the goal described by United States Secretary of Commerce William Daley at the Digital Divide Summit: "A goal that will close the gap ... may be a goal where we would have a computer in every house like a chicken in every pot and two cars in every garage ..."; and be it further

Resolved, That the State of California should provide support, encouragement, and incentives to close the Digital Divide through, for example, widespread Internet access, education, and training at homes, schools, public places, and locally accessible sites; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

Senate Resolution No. 29 read and adopted by the Senate August 10, 2000.

Attest: _____
Secretary of the Senate

