

RESOLUTION 2020-070

A RESOLUTION OF THE GADSDEN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, SUPPORTING AFFORDABLE AND RELIABLE HIGH-SPEED INTERNET THROUGHOUT FLORIDA

WHEREAS, reliable and affordable high-speed internet access is essential for Floridians to be prosperous and meet today's challenges; and

WHEREAS, the absence of access to reliable and affordable high-speed internet service prevents communities from achieving the high quality of life that is considered a fundamental component for educational and economic success; and

WHEREAS, the absence and/or lack of high-speed internet:

- hinders the ability for all schoolchildren to have access to educational opportunities;
- hinders access to telemedicine to improve health outcomes for its residents, and to provide access without demanding travel and transportation;
- hinders the ability for rapid communication between the public and law enforcement agencies;
- hinders the ability for communities to maintain and expand business opportunities, stimulate job growth;
- hinders the ability to engage in innovative technologies that are required for a vibrant economy.

WHEREAS, the Florida Legislature recently passed House Bill 969 creating an Office of Broadband within the Department of Economic Opportunity requiring the creation of a strategic plan that has goals and strategies for increasing the use of broadband Internet service in the state; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that the strategic plan be based on accurate and up-to-date mapping and the internet access needs of the public and private sector; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties has developed – Test It! an easy to use "mapping tool" that can be used to assess availability of internet; and

WHEREAS, in order to meet the goal of universal access to high-speed internet, it will be necessary to determine what the private providers need to provide affordable and reliable connectivity in sparsely located areas, and the support necessary to address issues of sparse populations and to provide expanded internet services, and engage governmental entities at the Federal, State and Local level in order to be successful.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Gadsden County, Florida, as follows:

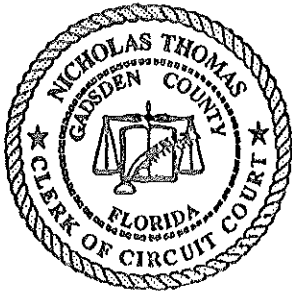
Section 1. The above recitals are true and correct and incorporated in this Resolution.



Section 2. That the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners, hereby supports the State of Florida, the Department of Economic Opportunities in the effort to achieve access to reliable and affordable high-speed internet access to every household and business throughout the State of Florida.

Section 3. That the Board of County Commissioners will assist the State Office of Broadband by participating as needed in meeting the obligations of HB 969 including providing information, assistance in mapping efforts, and supporting other such efforts that will lead to enhanced access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet services throughout Gadsden County and the State of Florida.

Section 4. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

APPROVED and ADOPTED by the Board of County Commissioners of Gadsden County, Florida, on the 17th day of November, 2020.




Anthony O. Viegbesie, Ph.D., Chairman
Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners


ATTEST:



Nicholas Thomas, Clerk