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The Senate of The State of Texas

SENATOR KELLY HANCOCK

August 24, 2020

The Honorable Sylvester Turner
Mayor, City of Houston
901 Bagby Street
Houston, Texas 77002

Dear Mayor Turner:

Chairman Taylor and I write to you today on the heels of the Governor's announcement of \$200M funding for the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to purchase and distribute devices to ensure Texas students have access to online learning. We are encouraged by the additional funding, and we recognize the need to boost network coverage to put these devices to good use.

We urge you to review and approve any outstanding construction or building permits in your municipality, with no more than the minimum necessary processing requirements and using streamlined processes for all telecommunications and broadband infrastructure, including cell towers, small cell nodes, cable, broadband and telecommunications lines and equipment.

The public health concerns resulting from COVID-19 have underscored the need for connectivity to all Texas citizens. The urgency is increased because school children are learning at home. We are fortunate that our state's infrastructure has met the challenge of increased internet traffic. Increased connectivity, however, will remain a critical challenge, especially for underprivileged Texans and those struggling to make ends meet. We are in the midst of a pivotal moment for Texas cities to step forward and ensure all Texas school children can have the education they need and deserve, and network upgrades and expansion are the avenue to ensure this happens.

We are urging cities to review and approve any permits that are currently outstanding and in the pipeline for telecommunications, broadband, cable, and cellular infrastructure in your area.

Thank you for your service to your constituents and the State of Texas.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Kelly Hancock in cursive script.

Kelly Hancock
State Senate, District 9
Chairman, Business & Commerce

Handwritten signature of Larry Taylor in cursive script.

Larry Taylor
State Senate, District 11
Chairman, Education