



ORA

Office of Ratepayer Advocates
California Public Utilities Commission

505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, California 94102
Tel: 916-445-5071
<http://ora.ca.gov>

April 3, 2018

The Honorable Jim Wood
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 6005
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 1959 (Wood) – Support

Dear Assemblymember Wood:

The Office of Ratepayer Advocates (ORA) is the independent consumer advocate within the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). ORA's mission is to advocate for the lowest possible rates for customers of California's regulated utilities consistent with safe, reliable service levels and the state's environmental goals.

ORA supports AB 1959, as introduced on January 30, 2018, which would ensure that all Californians continue to have access to affordable and high-quality essential communication services. Specifically, AB 1959 would extend the sunset date for the operation of the California High Cost Fund – A (CHCF-A) and the California High Cost Fund – B (CHCF-B) programs from January 1, 2019 to January 1, 2023.

Without these essential programs, customers who live in rural or high cost-to-serve areas of the state would otherwise face unaffordable monthly service bills or be without service. The continuation of these programs is critical to ensure that communication services continue to reach all Californians. These services are necessary to live our daily lives, such as having the ability to call 911 in an emergency situation.

ORA looks forward to working with you on this legislation. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further, please don't hesitate to contact me at (415) 703-2381 or at elizabeth.echols@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Echols
Director