

**BARNSTABLE COUNTY**  
**In the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-Three**  
**Resolution 23- 01**

**Whereas,** the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is on the precipice of a historic influx of broadband funding, and;

**Whereas,** Barnstable County has been overlooked by state programs for broadband investment, and;

**Whereas,** our seasonal population increase provides a disproportionate burden on our under-served Internet infrastructure without incentivizing sufficient private investment, and;

**Whereas,** Barnstable County has the oldest population and some of the most remote regions in the Commonwealth, which would benefit tremendously from fiber-optic broadband, and;

**Whereas,** high-speed internet will expand opportunities for young and working people to live and work on Cape Cod, and;

**Whereas,** a failure to invest in the future of the year-round Cape Cod economy will only compound ongoing affordability issues and jeopardize the future of the region, and;

**Whereas,** there is wide-spread public support behind establishing competitive, high-speed Internet service across the region.

**Now therefore,**

**Be it Hereby Resolved that the Cape Cod regional government:**

Calls upon our Governor, our Federal, and our State legislative delegations—by delivering a copy of this resolution and a letter authorized by the Barnstable County Assembly of Delegates and County Commissioners—to prioritize the urgent need for, and tremendous potential of, last-mile Internet infrastructure on Cape Cod as it allocates up to \$350 million in once-in-a-generation Federal and State grants for fiber-optic broadband.

**The Assembly of Delegates adopted the foregoing Resolution 23-01 at its regular meeting on January 18, 2023 by a roll call vote with delegates representing 93.42% of the population of Barnstable County voting in the affirmative, and delegates representing 6.58% of the population absent.**

Attested by:



Owen Fletcher

Clerk of the Assembly of Delegates

Massachusetts is on the precipice of a historic influx of broadband funding. This investment acknowledges that reliable Internet is a fundamental necessity for communities seeking to thrive in the modern economy. Yet, as the Internet makes the world smaller, it threatens to make Cape Cod—with its often overlooked, aging broadband infrastructure—more distant than ever before.

Zoom meetings have made living wages accessible outside the proximity of the office, and telehealth has ensured that those in need have greater access to health-care. Few regions could benefit more from this progress than Barnstable County. Remote work would free our citizens from commuting daily over the congested bridges, and remote medicine would be a godsend to the County with the oldest population in the Commonwealth. However, without sufficient resources to invest in the necessary broadband infrastructure, all of these promises remain out of our grasp.

Over the last decade, the state, realizing the urgency of the issue, has invested more than \$57 million dollars in developing last-mile networks in fifty-three different communities—none of which have been located on Cape Cod<sup>1</sup>

Far too often there is a generalization that our region is nothing more than a vacation destination. This could not be further from reality. We have a diverse year-round population consisting of young, working, and retired people seeking to live and make a future in the place they call home. As it stands, our working people are already forced to compete with inflated home-prices and a cost of living afforded by the richest in state, while making a household income less than the Massachusetts average<sup>2</sup>. Refusing to invest in our people threatens to push them out of their jobs and homes, creating a future where the Cape is nothing more than a playground for the well-off.

This issue, in part, stems from overlooking “underserved” communities in the Commonwealth. A network—built on decades old technology—which under perfect conditions may operate acceptably, can altogether fail when confronted by a population swelling up to fifteen-fold<sup>3</sup> for four months at a time. This unique reality of seasonal population change on Cape Cod simultaneously destroys network reliability while not establishing a customer-base deemed worthy of investment from private capital.

As our region confronts issues of housing affordability and environmental mitigation, allowing federal resources already ear-marked for broadband investment to build-out last mile fiber-optic networks in our fifteen towns would be a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reinforce the economic backbone of our unique region. It would create opportunities for our young and working people to find employment in their home-towns, incentivize business owners and

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<sup>1</sup> Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development. (2022, December 1). Baker-Polito Administration celebrates broadband expansion progress. Mass.gov. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from <https://www.mass.gov/news/baker-polito-administration-celebrates-broadband-expansion-progress>

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (2021). Barnstable County, Massachusetts. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/barnstablecountymassachusetts>

<sup>3</sup> Official website. Town of Provincetown, MA. (2022). Retrieved December 20, 2022, from <https://www.provincetown-ma.gov/>

industries to see a future in the region, and drastically improve the quality of life for our retired population.

The State of Massachusetts is due to allocate up to \$350 million in digital equity and broadband deployment money in the next year<sup>4</sup> We ask our State and Federal Representatives that Cape Cod be prioritized for this much-needed investment.

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<sup>4</sup> Parnass, L.— The Berkshire Eagle. (2022, December 7). Your town may have high-speed Internet. but does everyone in your community have access? The Berkshire Eagle. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from [https://www.berkshireeagle.com/news/local/berkshire-county-digital-equity-massachusetts-broadband-institute/article\\_4b7adc5e-7671-11ed-87ab-078d1453620f.html](https://www.berkshireeagle.com/news/local/berkshire-county-digital-equity-massachusetts-broadband-institute/article_4b7adc5e-7671-11ed-87ab-078d1453620f.html)