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Governor Sandoval Signs Statewide Broadband Modernization

CARSON CITY, NV - May 26, 2017

Today, Governor Brian Sandoval signed SB 53, an executive agency bill sponsored by the Governor's Office of Science, Innovation and Technology (OSIT) as part of a statewide broadband modernization effort. The bill passed both the Assembly and Senate unanimously and will help enact the Governor's stated goal of increasing the percentage of cities, libraries, and schools that are connected with broadband. This measure will also help achieve the objective of ensuring broadband connectivity for rural hospitals, health clinics and state correctional facilities by 2025.

"Ensuring broadband connectivity for our rural hospitals, schools and cities is imperative in the new Nevada economy. All Nevada students and families should have access to technology, quality healthcare and information regardless of where they live," **said Governor Brian Sandoval.**

"SB 53 will implement national best practices to support and incentivize investment in the State's broadband infrastructure that is essential to providing broadband services throughout Nevada," **said Brian Mitchell, Director of OSIT.** "I would like to thank the Nevada Department of Transportation for their assistance in developing the policies in this bill."

SB 53 Summary – SB 53 implements two policies that will support and incentivize investment in Nevada's fiber infrastructure. These policies compliment Governor Sandoval's *Nevada Connect Kids Initiative* announced during his State of the State.

1. **Dig Once**- requires the State to add excess conduit into any road construction project, something that is not currently permitted.
2. **Fiber Trading**- allows telecommunications providers to access excess conduit added as a result of Dig Once in exchange for helping the State expand fiber lines or fiber assets elsewhere in Nevada.

Benefits – Innovative transportation solutions such as adoption of a Dig Once and fiber trade agreements can reduce broadband deployment time and costs, incentivize deployment in rural communities and improve broadband access throughout the state.

Connection to Nevada Connect Kids Initiative – The federal government, through its E-rate program, subsidizes the buildout of fiber connections to schools. Compared to other states, Nevada's school districts draw down fewer E-rate dollars. OSIT, through the *Nevada Connect Kids Initiative*, will assist school districts who apply for E-rate funds and will assist with technical, procurement, and project management support as needed. The Dig Once and Fiber Trading policies proposed in SB 53 will lower the cost of fiber infrastructure projects helping stretch local, state, and federal dollars, further allowing us to improve connectivity at more schools.