



**California Community
Technology Policy Group**

**AB 855 (Firebaugh)
Digital Opportunities Grant Program
POSITION: SUPPORT**

AB 855 creates a state Digital Opportunities Fund that would support community technology programs.

What AB 855 Does

- Creates a fund solely for the purposes of supporting community technology programs.
- Collects 15% of the revenue generated from wireless telecommunications companies who lease state-owned property to build cell towers.
- Places this fund under the direction of the California Public Utilities Commission, which administers the California Teleconnect Fund—a program advised by community technology representatives.

Why Support AB 855?

- Has potential for a long-term, continuous, and growing revenue stream dedicated to CTCs.
- Directs resources to programs that ensure that low-income communities do not miss out on the economic and educational benefits of technology.
- Can be enacted into law this year (even with California's state budget shortfall) because it does not draw upon existing state resources, but actually creates new revenue for the state.

Why Should the State Support Community Technology?

- Technology literacy is especially critical today, as the Department of Labor has reported that almost 50% of all workers use computers on the job (double the rate from a decade ago), with those using computers earning 43% more than other workers.
- CTCs have proven themselves to be effective at enrolling and training low-income residents in technology skills.
- Because CTCs are housed in trusted and established community-based organizations with staff who reflect the community in which they serve, reaching the most underserved residents.

How AB 855 Helps Californians

- Supports a wide range of community technology projects.
- Can assist with creating new community technology programs throughout the state.
- Assures that low-income community residents can reap the educational and employment benefits offered by California's technology-based economy.

For more information, contact Richard Chabran, Chair (chabran@cctpg.org, (909) 268-5975), James Lau, Policy Specialist (jlau@childrenspartnership.org, (310) 260-1220) or info@cctpg.org, or visit www.cctpg.org.

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c/o Community Partners • 606 South Olive Street, Suite 2400 • Los Angeles, CA 90014
Tel: 213-439-9640 • Fax: 213-439-9650 • Email: info@cctpg.org • Web: <http://www.cctpg.org>