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**Lighting Up Libraries: High-speed Broadband in California Public Libraries**

Sacramento, Calif. -Recognizing the important role libraries play in workforce development and the state's education system, the Brown administration is bringing 21<sup>st</sup> Century digital service to more than one-third of California's 1,112 libraries, beginning July 1.

Through an appropriation approved by Governor Brown and lawmakers in the current budget, libraries will be joining the same broadband network linking the University of California, the state university system, community colleges, and a growing number of public school districts.

A summary of the first nine months of the effort's ramp-up - "Lighting Up California Libraries" -- can be found [here](#) on the State Library's website.

"At almost every library in California, there are lines of people waiting to use computers," said Greg Lucas, State Librarian.

"Over one-fourth of California families don't have Internet at home. So for many of us it's a library that's the connection to our information economy. Greater speed and better connectivity changes more people's lives by helping libraries become even better community hubs than they are already."

Many of the libraries participating in this program are also getting improved connectivity at significantly lower prices. Through the State Library's partnership with the Corporation for Education Network Initiatives in California, libraries can submit a group application to the Federal Communications Commission seeking discounts of up to 90 percent on their monthly service bills.

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For example, Corona Public Library will pay \$290 a month for 1 gigabit compared to the \$1,250 it's paying now for a very slow 10 megabits per second. Savings for other library jurisdictions can be found on page 17 of the report.

The more bits, the faster and more varied the Internet services, including video conferencing, video streaming, and delivery of digital content to e-readers.

A second round of applications for discounts will begin in late July.

Linked to the broadband initiative is a \$1 million program administered in partnership with the Southern California Library Cooperative. Local libraries are offered matching grants to help purchase equipment, make site improvement, or seek technical assistance to improve their connection to the broadband network.

In anticipation of larger library jurisdictions joining the program, Governor Brown's May budget plan proposes an additional \$1.5 million in technology grants for the fiscal year beginning July 1.

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**About the State Library:** Founded in 1850, the California State Library is the central reference and research library for the Governor's office, legislature, state employees, and the general public. The State Library administers federal and state grants for programs in historical preservation, library construction, civil liberties education, literacy, volunteering, and broadband connectivity in public libraries. For more information, visit [www.library.ca.gov](http://www.library.ca.gov).