

*The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 102-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.*

February 2, 2022

To: [Representative John Lively](#), Chair,  
[House Committee On Economic Recovery and Prosperity](#)

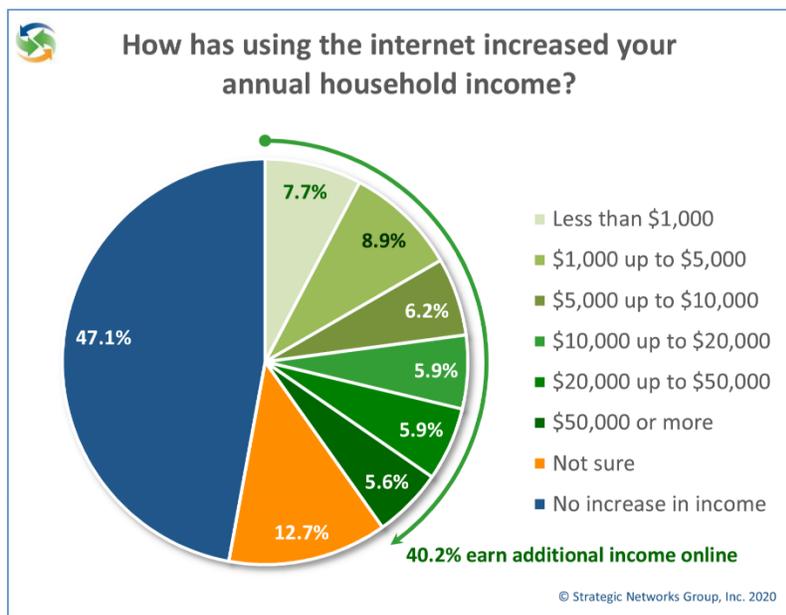
Re: [HB 4092 -2](#) – Oregon Broadband services and Advisory Council – **SUPPORT**

This bill would apply federal funds to improve, update, and oversee Oregon’s Broadband services. The League supports this bill from numerous positions.

**Internet access is a basic human need to function in today’s economy.** The LWVUS believes that federal funding should bear primary responsibility for financing programs designed to help meet the basic needs of individuals and families. LWVUS policy promotes self-sufficiency for individuals and families and that the most effective social programs are those designed to prevent or reduce poverty.

**The Oregon Broadband Council would help to coordinate information sharing.** The League supports coordinating data sharing, including geospatial mapping information as addressed in this bill, for providing a multitude of services, from elections administration to emergency preparedness. We are working with the DAS Data Sharing Work Group which is also addressing coordination concerns. The LWVOR lauds the attention to information privacy, based on our privacy and cybersecurity positions.

**Our rural areas need better broadband access.** The LWVOR has long supported economic development for which broadband access support is critical.



This bill would promote digital equity. Citing a 2020 Oregon study:<sup>1</sup>

*Oregon’s broadband landscape has distinct splits between urban and rural areas, with Oregon’s challenges further complicated by its geographic distances and features. Areas with low population density and difficult terrain still remain underserved, or even unconnected.*

<sup>1</sup> Oregon Statewide Broadband Assessment and Best Practices Study, Oregon Business Development Department, January 21, 2020. <https://www.oregon.gov/biz/Publications/SNGStudy2020.pdf>

**Every school age child needs access to the internet.** LWVOR believes that early intervention and prevention measures are effective in helping children reach their full potential. Broadband is so important for educational equity between rural and urban areas. LWVUS believes every person should have access to free public education that provides equal opportunity for all; and no person or group should suffer legal, economic, or administrative discrimination.

**COVID has exacerbated significant communications gaps across Oregon.** Communication is of the utmost importance as we miss opportunities, reducing equal access to education, work, medical care, religious services, and social connection, for example.

We urge your support for HB 4092 and thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.



Rebecca Gladstone  
President LWVOR