



# Office of the City Clerk

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## Legislation Text

File #: R2020-287, Version: 1

Economic Development City Council  
4/22/20

### RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A FREE CITYWIDE MUNICIPAL BROADBAND NETWORK

WHEREAS, As unprecedented numbers of Chicagoans isolate in their homes in response to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, the need for free citywide broadband internet is more urgent than ever; and

WHEREAS, The internet is an indispensable tool and a necessary resource during this crisis, with people depending on it for access to news and government public service announcements, remote health appointments, telework, remote learning, and to purchase necessary goods; and

WHEREAS, While the City's free public wireless internet, ChicagoWiFi, provides free internet access to visitors of public spaces in the City, such as Daley Plaza and Millennium Park, many Chicago residents do not have access to the internet in their homes; and

WHEREAS, Nearly 200,000 households in the City do not have internet access, and most of these households are concentrated in low-income areas on the South, West, and Southwest sides of the City; and

WHEREAS, One in every ten households lack internet access in the Northside communities of Lakeview, Lincoln Park, and North Center, while nearly half or more of households lack internet access in South and West side communities such as Austin, Auburn Gresham, Brighton Park, South Shore, West Englewood, and Englewood; and

WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these inequalities in Chicago's digital divide, leaving children in low-income households unable to participate in remote learning, and people unable to work from home or electronically search and apply for jobs; and

WHEREAS, There is an immediate need for free citywide public broadband internet in Chicago to bridge the technology gap that is affecting thousands of Chicago households; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, gathered here this twenty-second day of April, 2020, do hereby call upon the Committee on Economic, Capital and Technology Development to hold a hearing to explore the possible options for establishing free broadband internet for all households in the City of Chicago; and

**GEORGE A. CARDENAS**

Alderman, 12th Ward

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we call upon the Department of Assets, Information and Services, and community groups focused on internet access in the City to testify at the hearing.

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