PROMOTING FAIR ACCESS TO THE INTERNET AND CONSUMER PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATORY INTERNET TAXES

WHEREAS, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) recognizes the critical importance of access to, and usage of, the Internet in order for our communities to take full advantage of our 21st century digital economy in Resolution TST-10-25 “ADVANCING AMERICA’S BROADBAND INNOVATION ECONOMY FOR COMMUNITIES OF COLOR”;

WHEREAS, the NBCSL supports and promotes a nationwide economic environment that facilitates innovation, promotes efficiency, and empowers all Americans to broadly share ideas and information;

WHEREAS, the imposition of new taxes on Internet access by state and local governments seeking new sources of revenue to fund government services will hurt consumers and fails to support continued access and adoption of broadband technology among the nation’s most vulnerable and low-income communities;

WHEREAS, the Pew Research Center published in its January 2014’s Report, African Americans and Technology Use, A Demographic Portrait, that 80 percent of African Americans use the Internet and/or email;

WHEREAS, Congress enacted the Internet Tax Freedom Act in 1998, which blocked the taxation of Internet service fees and expired on September 30, 2015 and was extended until December 11, 2015; and

WHEREAS, the extension of the Internet Tax Freedom Act would protect our constituents from taxes on Internet access and multiple and discriminatory taxes on electronic commerce.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) supports federal legislation to permanently extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act, to preserve affordable access to the Internet by preventing state and local taxation of consumer access to the Internet;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL support a permanent Internet tax moratorium so that all Americans will continue to enjoy a tax free Internet commerce experience; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the NBCSL send a copy of this resolution to the President of the United States, members of Congress, members of the Federal Communications Commission, and State Legislatures and other Regulatory agencies.

SPONSOR: Representative Mia Jones (FL)
Committee of Jurisdiction: Telecommunications, Science, and Technology Policy Committee
Certified by Committee Co-Chairs: Delegate Michael Vaughn (MD) and Senator Anastasia Pittman (OK)
Ratified in Plenary Session: Ratification Date is December 4, 2015
Ratification is certified by: Senator Catherine Pugh (MD), President