Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and Minority Leader McCarthy,

The Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) strongly supports the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act’s critically needed broadband investments. Connecting all schools and other community anchor institutions to a “future proof” level of broadband capacity and ensuring that all households have high speed connectivity would help millions of students and transform the nation’s education system for a generation. We urge you to approve this investment swiftly, so that these important broadband infrastructure improvements can be completed quickly for the benefit of students, families, and schools.

CoSN’s members, school district technology leaders serving communities across the nation, worked tirelessly during the pandemic to connect students and school staff to home broadband service. We are grateful for the emergency federal assistance, including the vitally important Emergency Connectivity Fund, that helped support this work. Unfortunately, many households – especially homes located in isolated rural settings - lack proximity to the basic infrastructure required to deliver even the minimum broadband speeds required for online instruction, collaboration, and homework. Building robust infrastructure in these broadband “deserts” must be a top priority, but the nation’s connectivity gaps also affect millions of other households that only have access to substandard internet connections.

Earlier this year, CoSN initiated a Student Home Internet Connectivity study based on the deidentified, real-time pandemic remote learning data of approximately 750,000 students. An advisory group of school district technology leaders informed the study, which showed that the Federal Communications Commission’s broadband definition falls far short of students’ actual
home learning needs. Thus, passing the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will help not only unconnected households, but also the nation’s vast number of under-connected learners.

Thank you for working collaboratively to strengthen the nation’s infrastructure, including expanding the high-capacity broadband connectivity now required for teaching and learning, homework, and other parts of daily American life. We commend you for your leadership to address this need and stand ready to provide whatever information and assistance would be helpful to you and your staff.

Sincerely,

Keith Krueger
Chief Executive Officer
Consortium for School Networking