



CALIFORNIA FOUNDATION
ON THE ENVIRONMENT
AND THE ECONOMY

DRAFT AGENDA

CFEE Telecommunications & Technology Conference

*Surfing the Techno-Wave...
Can We Keep Riding High and Avoid the Wipe Out?*

August 24-25, 2023

For decades, California has deftly navigated the ever-flowing wave of technology for the overall betterment of our state. Yet with uncertainties about universal broadband, growing unease with the rise of artificial intelligence, and the deepening connectivity of people, business, and government, we face new challenges to ride the cresting wave of technology's promise while minimizing the potential for wipe out.

This conference will convene state leaders to explore how we can best leverage the current ample public and private funding and the ever-expanding world of communications platforms to engineer a beneficial and equitable techno-ecosystem for all of California.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 24

11:30 – 12:45pm	Arrival – Check-In and Lunch
12:45 – 1:00pm	Welcome – Conference Overview and Roundtable Introductions

Preview of conference topics, speakers, and goals

Jay Hansen, President & CEO, CFEE

1:00 – 2:30pm	Session 1 The Historic Network Modernization Opportunity – Are We Ready for It?
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With billions of public and private dollars ready to finance universal broadband and network upgrades, California is seemingly poised to make good on its goals of equity and connectivity. Yet the process for leveraging federal and state monies and the overall strategy for modernizing the communications systems is still challenged to coalesce. Our opening panel will assess our progress to date and consider what more must be done to make the most out of this generational opportunity.

- How close are we to achieving universal broadband? How many Californians have access today?
- How many people currently have access but opt not to sign up for one reason or another? What work is being done to target these households?
- When we talk about network modernization, it is not just about broadband – what is happening with the aging copper telephone system? What happens now that it is time to replace this network? What does it mean for consumers who rely on this tried-and-true form of communication?
- What money is available from the federal government via the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act? How much has California been able to access to date? Is there a deadline for securing this multibillion-dollar funding?
- What is going on with the billions of dollars the state legislature appropriated for middle mile and last mile infrastructure? What projects are underway to fulfill the legislature and the Governor’s vision?
- What is going on with the soon-to-be-lost federal subsidy provided in the Affordable Connectivity Program? Does California have a plan to help those households currently relying on this \$30/month supplement?

Speaker, National Telecommunications and Information Administration

Louis Fox, President & CEO, CENIC

Speaker, AT&T

Speaker, California Department of Technology

2:30 – 2:45pm	Break
2:45 – 4:00pm	<p><u>Session 2</u> The Local Angle – Permitting, Building Trust, and Economic Opportunity</p>

As network providers deploy their infrastructure in response to federal and state incentives and market opportunities, local permitting remains a point of friction that can delay even simple upgrades and add otherwise avoidable costs. For their part, local governments operate in a resource-constrained environment and shoulder broader responsibilities that make expeditious permitting a costly endeavor. How can California make faster progress on universal broadband and technological competitiveness while ensuring local communities have the resources they need to properly vet and benefit from proposed projects?

- What are the various ways that permitting at the local level can slow infrastructure deployment? What does permitting accomplish for the municipality?
- Why might local communities have earnest concerns about certain projects?
- What additional resources do local governments need to make faster determinations on permit applications?
- What best practices have been employed in other states to facilitate faster network buildout while respecting the public interest? How can California cities/counties better share best practices?
- How can network buildout deliver co-benefits to companies and communities?
- Is there a role for the state to create an expedited process?

Speaker, Local Government

Jeff Bellisario, Executive Director, Bay Area Council Economic Institute

Speaker, Network Provider

Speaker, The Greenlining Institute

4:00 – 4:15pm	Break
4:15 – 5:30pm	<p><u>Session 3</u> Cybersecurity in the Age of Cyber-Everything</p>

The expansion of the virtual world has connected communities, devices, and people like never before. Of course, the cybersphere is also rife with malicious actors eager to exploit anyone and anything. In 2022 alone, California experienced 140 million malware attacks, billions of phishing attempts, and countless other digital crimes that amounted to an estimated \$2 billion in losses. How can we best protect the public against this pervasive and growing threat?

- What are the primary cyber-threats facing the average Californian?
- What are the differences between malware, ransomware, phishing, and DDOS/IoT attacks? How common are they?
- What sectors in California are regularly fending off cyberattacks? What are the costs – financial and otherwise – if and when such attacks are successful?
- How are companies and governments hardening systems against malign behavior? How do we keep pace with the proliferation of the Internet of Things, especially as “smart” homes, cars, and infrastructure become more commonplace?
- How many cybersecurity professionals are employed in the state of California today? What is being done to invest in the future of this essential workforce?

Speaker, Network Provider

Speaker, Department of Homeland Security

Speaker, Speaker Energy/Water Utility

Tony Coulson, Professor and Executive Director, Cybersecurity Center (CSC), California State University, San Bernardino

6:00pm	Reception & Dinner
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FRIDAY, AUGUST 25

7:30 – 9:00am	Breakfast
9:00 – 10:15am	Session 4 The Many Conduits of Connectivity: Enabling the Right Tech for the Right Situation

Communications platforms are not created equally. Whether it is cable, wireless, satellite or another form of connectivity, each technology has its own unique engineering specs, performance capabilities, and costs. How can California facilitate the tailored and equitable build out of these different technologies?

- What are the different types of broadband technologies used by Californians?
- What situations would call for fiber? Wireless? Satellite?
- What does it mean to “future-proof” networks? How can California future-proof infrastructure in an industry that continues to innovate rapidly?
- By connecting state funding with requirements of 100 Mbps download and upload speeds, how does that affect network deployment?

Speaker, Wireless

Speaker, Cable

Lisa Scalpone, Worldwide Consumer Lead, Business Development, Project Kuiper

Alice Reynolds, President, California Public Utilities, Commission

10:15 – 10:30am	Break
10:30 – 12:00pm	Session 5 On the Cusp of an AI Revolution...Real Talk About Risks and Rewards

After the recent rollout of ChatGPT, alarm bells began ringing that the long-hyped birth of artificial intelligence (AI) is at hand. Complicating this already fraught development is fundamental confusion about what AI is and is not. For our final session, our panel of AI experts will shed light on its serious risks, its extraordinary possibilities, and the broader landscape of AI-like tools that we already use and embrace.

- What is “artificial intelligence?” Is ChatGPT considered AI?
- What other recent advancements have experts excited/worried?
- What is “artificial general intelligence,” and how close are we to engineering this truly groundbreaking technology?
- What are the primary risks that come from AI? Who is in charge of identifying and managing that risk?
- How might AI positively transform society? What rewards await those that harness its vast potential?
- What are the workforce implications?
- What are the different types of AI-like technologies that already exist in our daily lives? How do we craft policy that distinguishes between AI, algorithms, and other automated computer technologies?
- What does AI “alignment” mean?
- How can policymakers place appropriate guardrails around AI development and use in a world where nations, companies, and individuals are feverishly racing deeper into the unknown?

Speaker, Center for Human-Compatible Artificial Intelligence

Speaker, Healthcare in AI

Speaker, Academic/Industry Expert – breakdown of AI and AI-like tech

Speaker, AI Developer – Google/Open AI/Microsoft

12:00pm	Closing Remarks and Adjournment
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Jay Hansen, President & CEO, CFEE