



**Public Advocates Office**  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, California 94102  
Tel: 415-703-1584  
[www.publicadvocates.cpuc.ca.gov](http://www.publicadvocates.cpuc.ca.gov)

April 3, 2019

The Honorable Miguel Santiago  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 6027  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 497 (Santiago) – Support**

Dear Assemblymember Santiago:

The Public Advocates Office is the independent consumer advocate at the California Public Utilities Commission. Our mission is to advocate for the lowest possible rates for customers of California's regulated utilities consistent with safe, reliable service levels and the state's environmental goals.

We support AB 497, as introduced, which would extend the sunset date of the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program from 2020 to 2025.

The Public Advocates Office strongly supports the State's goals of universal service. This bill would ensure that deaf and disabled Californians continue to have access to essential specialized equipment and services to access telecommunications services in order to participate in a broad spectrum of social and economic activities.

We look forward to working with you on this legislation. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further, please don't hesitate to contact me at (415) 703-2381 or at [elizabeth.echols@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:elizabeth.echols@cpuc.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Echols  
Director