August 21, 2020

The Honorable Toni G. Atkins
President pro tempore
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 205
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: AB 1196 (Gipson), AB 1299 (Salas), & AB 2054 (Kamlager) - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Atkins,

At AT&T, we believe we each have a responsibility to identify and eliminate racial inequality not only in our company, but also in other institutions. Part of that commitment means being honest about the history of violence and racism that persists in our public institutions and that makes the members of our community – including law enforcement officers who dutifully serve – less safe.

This issue is important to all people of color, but particularly for Black Americans, who have been subject to injustices, often with tragic consequences. With more than 38,000 employees working in the state, more than 60% of whom are people of color, AT&T supports legislative reform that will ensure all our employees feel safe, whether at home, at work, or in the communities we serve.

Today, we are faced with a unique opportunity to make important strides in the struggle to ensure equal justice and outcomes for all. In the wake of the horrific deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Rayshard Brooks, as well as many other before them, we acknowledge our responsibility to be part of the solution to achieve equitable justice.

Change starts with the actions of every one of us here in California. But our commitment to racial justice must also be reflected in our policies and laws. Civil rights organizations, law enforcement, elected officials, and other businesses on the local, state and federal levels must work together to push for comprehensive change.

Consistent with our long-held corporate values, AT&T supports legislative reforms that advance racial equality and social justice for all. We are committed to standing up for justice and elevating diverse voices in our state’s conversation about the future of policing.
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We therefore applaud the swift action of California leaders to address through legislative action the disparities that exist in policing practices. The following three measures meet AT&T’s guiding principles to effect needed change through collaborative, bipartisan efforts that will clarify police conduct standards, promote officer accountability, and embrace innovative approaches to protecting our communities:

- Assembly Bill 1196, authored by Assembly Member Gipson, will make it illegal to use a carotid artery restraint tactic to forcibly detain a suspect.
- Assembly Bill 1299, authored by Assembly Member Salas, will help make sure that local departments do not hire problematic officers who have a history of serious misconduct.
- Assembly Bill 2054, authored by Assembly Member Kamlager, will support community-oriented response to emergencies by establishing the Community Response Initiative to Strengthen Emergency Systems (CRISES) Act pilot program.

AT&T is committed to standing up for justice and improving accountability, transparency, and safety — here in California and across the country. Together, we can build a future where all individuals are treated equally and empowered to thrive.

Sincerely,

Susan Santana

cc: The Honorable Mike Gipson  
The Honorable Rudy Salas  
The Honorable Sydney Kamlager  
The Honorable Shannon Grove, Senate Republican Leader