

A REPORT BY THE HOOVER INSTITUTION

INNOVATIVE ALABAMA

Prepared for the Alabama Innovation Commission



HOOVER-ALABAMA INNOVATION INITIATIVE

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Foreword

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Throughout 2020, Alabama, like most states, struggled to adapt its technology infrastructure to the global pandemic that forced students, workers, and the government into virtual learning and working environments. This dramatic shift highlighted the critical need for technology modernization and innovation at the state and local levels, particularly in education, and underscored the importance of public-private partnerships in developing technology solutions to make our communities more resilient.

This report is the result of a unique partnership between Stanford University's Hoover Institution and the Alabama Innovation Commission. The Alabama Innovation Commission, known as "Innovate Alabama," was created to "examine policies to increase entrepreneurship, spur innovation, and enhance technology accelerators." The commission aims to increase Alabama's competitiveness in the technology sector and educate a twenty-first-century workforce. Hoover Institution scholars contributed to these efforts through data-driven research that enhanced and informed the policy-making efforts of the commission. Together, the Hoover Institution and Innovate Alabama have focused on essential infrastructure upon which technology innovation depends—internet connectivity, internet literacy, access to technology, good governance, and a legal and regulatory environment in which entrepreneurship can thrive.

Since becoming the director of the Hoover Institution, I have emphasized the issues facing state and local government and challenged us to address them as we seek to improve the human condition, foster innovation, and promote initiative and ingenuity. I am proud of the accomplishments of this collaboration and believe that together we can continue to foster research-driven policies that provide better outcomes for our children, our communities, and Alabama's technology innovation sector.

