

PCB EDCA 09-03

ORIGINAL

YEAR

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to broadband Internet service; providing
 3 legislative findings and intent; authorizing the
 4 Department of Management Services to engage in certain
 5 activities related to assessing the need for broadband
 6 Internet service in the state, planning for such service,
 7 and encouraging the statewide deployment of such service;
 8 authorizing the department to apply for and accept certain
 9 funds; providing an effective date.

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11 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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13 Section 1. (1) The Legislature finds that broadband
 14 Internet service is critical to the economic development of the
 15 state and is beneficial for libraries, schools, colleges and
 16 universities, health care providers, and community
 17 organizations. The Legislature further finds that barriers exist
 18 to the statewide deployment of broadband Internet service,
 19 especially in rural communities. The Legislature therefore
 20 intends to promote the efficient and effective deployment of
 21 broadband Internet service throughout the state through a
 22 coordinated statewide effort.

23 (2) The Department of Management Services is authorized to
 24 work collaboratively with Enterprise Florida, Inc., state
 25 agencies, local governments, private businesses, and community
 26 organizations to:

27 (a) Conduct a needs assessment of broadband Internet
 28 service in collaboration with telecommunications service

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29 providers, including, but not limited to, Internet service
 30 providers, to assess, create, and regularly update a geographic
 31 information system map at the census tract level of the
 32 privately owned high-speed Internet infrastructure in the state.
 33 The department may contract with an independent nongovernmental
 34 organization for the purpose of developing the needs assessment.

35 (b) Create a strategic plan with goals and strategies for
 36 increasing the use of broadband Internet service in the state.

37 (c) Build and facilitate local technology planning teams
 38 and partnerships with members representing cross-sections of the
 39 community, which may include, but are not limited to,
 40 representatives from the following organizations and industries:
 41 libraries, K-12 education, colleges and universities, local
 42 health care providers, private businesses, community
 43 organizations, economic development organizations, local
 44 governments, tourism, parks and recreation, and agriculture.

45 (d) Encourage the use of broadband Internet service,
 46 especially in the rural, unserved, and underserved communities
 47 of the state through grant programs that assist state agencies
 48 and public-private partnerships with effective strategies to
 49 facilitate the statewide deployment of broadband Internet
 50 service. For any grants to be awarded, priority must be given to
 51 projects that:

52 1. Provide access to broadband education, awareness,
 53 training, access, equipment, and support to libraries, schools,
 54 colleges and universities, health care providers, and community
 55 support organizations.

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56 2. Provide service options that give consumers a choice of
 57 more than one broadband Internet service provider.

58 3. Work toward establishing affordable and sustainable
 59 broadband Internet service in the state.

60 4. Facilitate the development of applications, programs,
 61 and services, including, but not limited to, telework,
 62 telemedicine, and e-learning to increase the usage of, and
 63 demand for, broadband Internet service in the state.

64 (3) The department may apply for and accept federal funds
 65 for purposes of this section as well as gifts and donations from
 66 individuals, foundations, and private organizations.

67 Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.