



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 6426

January Session, 2009

* HB06426GAE 042409 *

AN ACT IMPROVING BROADBAND ACCESS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2009*) (a) As used in this section,
2 "broadband" means a high-speed Internet service whose minimum
3 speed is the speed as defined by the Federal Communications
4 Commission, and "priority areas" means those parts of the state the
5 Department of Public Utility Control determines to be unserved in
6 terms of access to broadband.

7 (b) The Department of Public Utility Control shall, in consultation
8 with the Office of Consumer Counsel and the Broadband Internet
9 Coordinating Council, established pursuant to section 4d-100 of the
10 general statutes, develop a state-wide technology initiative program,
11 which shall include, but not be limited to, the following components:

12 (1) Expanding and deploying broadband infrastructure in priority
13 areas and increasing broadband subscriptions. The initiative program
14 shall include a detailed financial incentives component to award
15 incentives first to private providers and then to public-private
16 partnerships that deploy additional broadband infrastructure to such
17 priority areas. No such incentive shall be available to support any
18 deployment in areas where broadband, via wireline or wireless
19 technologies but not satellite technology, is already available.

20 (2) In partnership with the private sector, establishing a digital
21 technology access and education program to provide information,
22 computers and other technology to access broadband and
23 communications technology to local communities in priority areas.
24 Such program may include, but not be limited to, education and skill-
25 building opportunities, hardware and software, Internet connectivity
26 and development of locally relevant content and delivery of vital
27 services through technology.

28 (3) Providing organizational and capacity building support to
29 groups throughout the state, including, but not limited to,
30 municipalities, the community-technical colleges, school districts,
31 libraries and senior centers, and identifying and facilitating the
32 availability of other public and private funding sources to enhance the
33 purposes of the state-wide technology initiative established pursuant
34 to this subsection.

35 (4) Establishing a competitive grant program to provide grants to
36 private sector providers or public-private partnerships. Grants shall be
37 used to provide training and skill-building opportunities; provide
38 access to hardware and software; provide Internet connectivity; adopt
39 information and communication technologies in priority areas and
40 develop locally relevant content and delivery of vital services through
41 technology. The department shall develop criteria for awarding grants
42 pursuant to this subdivision, which may include, but not be limited to,
43 eligibility requirements and funding sources.

44 (c) The department, in consultation with telecommunications and
45 Internet service providers, shall contract with a third-party
46 organization to create and regularly update a detailed, geographic
47 information system (GIS) map, at the census block level of the
48 broadband services and other relevant telecommunications and
49 information technology services owned or leased by public entities in
50 the state. The map shall include (1) a baseline assessment of state-wide
51 broadband deployment in terms of percentage of households with
52 broadband; (2) the amount of excess capacity available; (3) whether the

53 broadband infrastructure is active or inactive; and (4) the geographic
54 gaps in broadband service, including the demographics of the
55 population in each of the geographic gaps.

56 (d) In developing the state-wide technology initiative program and
57 the geographic information system map pursuant to this section, the
58 department, third-party organization or other party shall only collect
59 data maintained in the normal course of business and such
60 organization or other party shall provide details on how proprietary
61 and competitively sensitive data will be handled, stored and used. The
62 department shall treat any information designated by the providing
63 entity as confidential or proprietary as such and shall execute an
64 appropriate nondisclosure agreement. The data submitted by
65 providing entities pursuant to this section shall not be subject to
66 disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, as defined in section
67 1-200 of the general statutes.

68 (e) On or before January 1, 2010, and annually thereafter for five
69 years, the department shall submit a report, in accordance with the
70 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, on the development
71 of the state-wide technology initiative program and the geographic
72 information system map prepared pursuant to this section to the joint
73 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
74 matters relating to energy.

75 (f) Nothing in this section shall give the Department of Public Utility
76 Control, or any other entity, any additional authority, regulatory or
77 otherwise, over providers of telecommunications and information
78 technology.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2009	New section

ET *Joint Favorable Subst.*

GAE *Joint Favorable*