

# Energy and Technology Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-6442

**Title:** AN ACT CONCERNING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO BROADBAND.

**Vote Date:** 3/18/2021

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 3/9/2021

**File No.:**

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

## SPONSORS OF BILL:

Energy and Technology Committee  
Rep. Josh Elliott

## REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill is the Governors HB for the Energy and Technology committee. It focuses on the state's investment into affordable and accessible broadband in the state. Also creates new investments and regulations in the broadband industry. Provisions would be enacted starting July 1st if passed.

## RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

- **Governor Lamont:** The Governor writes in support of this bill. Highlights the importance of investing on affordable broadband access. Says that proposed legislation will help reduce costs and grow state's economy. Also notes the racial inequities when it comes to access to broadband in the state.
- **Katie Dykes, DEEP** writes in support of this bill. They say this will help Connecticut gain high-speed internet access and allow the state to remain competitive.
- **Marrissa Gillet, PURA** writes informational testimony on the bill. They lay out the different components and changes in the bill that would affect them as an agency and how the legislation would change the way they provide certain reports. They also add modifications they would like to see that deal with changes in dates that affect PURA.
- **Richard E. Sobolewski, The Office of Consumer Counsel** writes in support of this bill. They say this bill lays out an effective way for the state to deal with the issue of broadband and it will serve to help reduce costs and grow Connecticut.
- **Attorney General William Tong** Writes in Support of the bill. Highlights that this bill is a realistic and legal way for the state to monitor broadband for the future.

- **Treasurer Shawn T. Wooden** Writes in support of this bill. Says this bill tackles the need for highspeed internet in the state. Also says this bill will help reduce costs and address inequalities that are currently present in broadband access.
- **Doug Casey, The Connecticut Commission for Educational Technology** writes in support of the bill. They say this bill will help the education in our state and address inequities when it comes to broadband access.
- **Scott Gaul, The Office of Policy and Management** write in support of the bill. They say it offers an ambitious goal for highspeed broadband access and creates a comprehensive plan on how to implement it in the state going forward.
- **David Lehman, Department of Economic and Community Development** writes in support of this bill. They say highspeed broadband access is necessary of a 21st century economy and this bill helps achieve that.
- **State Comptroller Kevin Lembo:** Writes in support of this bill saying that it provides a quality of service many parts of Connecticut have been asking for. Will also help address inequities in service provided in the state.
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#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

- **Marjorie Arni:** Writes in support of this bill. Says it will provide and better environment for citizens and a better business environment in the state.
- **Al Carbone, Avangrid/UII Holdings** writes some suggestions for the bill. They write in their testimony things they believe the state needs to be mindful of in final passage of this bill. This includes things such as the safety of electrical workers and how PURA should work with telecommunication companies on how to go forward. Provides specific language for their proposals as well.
- **Joshua Broder:** Tilson Writes in support of this bill in concept but provides some suggestions on how to better write it.
- **Brent M. Colley, The First Selectman from Sharon** writes in support of this bill. Says the **upgrades are necessary and now is the time to address it.**
- **AARP:** Writes in support of the bill. Says that it provides a comprehensive and important blueprint for the state's future in highspeed broadband access. Also provide suggestions on how to further strengthen bill.
- **Betsy Gara:** Connecticut Council of Small Towns writes in support of the bill. They say this is important in increasing access to broadband and lower costs statewide.
- **Gary Greenberg, the first selectman from town of Scotland** writes in support of this bill. Says this is an important step to protecting Connecticut citizens from the monopolies of service providers.
- **Donna Hamzy, The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities** writes in support of this bill. Says this makes a necessary investment in broadband in the state and highlights some language changes that could help strengthen the bill.
- **Wayne Hileman: Northwest ConneCT** writes in support of this bill with provisions. Wants to see bill enacted with exceptions of having municipalities be able to attach wire to poles, preserve the rights of pole owners to conduct initial surveys, and institute conditions that PURA determines should vary from details of FCC regulations.
- **Seth Hoedl: The Post Road Foundation** writes in support of the bill. Says this provides a necessary investment to broadband in the state and that this bill is helpful to the citizens of Connecticut.

- **Sal Luciano: The Connecticut AFL-CIO** writes in support of the concept of the bill but have reservations. Want to work with the administration to develop legislation that will protect Connecticut workers and jobs while providing highspeed broadband to the state.
- **Kim Maxwell: Northwest Connect** Writes in general support for the bill. They say the need for broadband access in the state is great and fully support the bill in that regard. Have some comments on how the bill can be improved going forward.
- **Kelly McConney Moore: The American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut** writes in support of the bill. Says the bill addresses inequities in broadband access that have been made clearer because of the pandemic.
- **Dr. Michael A. Rooke: Northwestern CT Community College** writes in support of this bill saying access to broadband is necessary in the state of Connecticut.
- **JoAnn Ryan: Northwest Connecticut Chamber of Commerce** writes in support of the bill saying it provides necessary investment into broadband.
- **David Weidlich: CWA Local 1298** writes in support in part and opposition in part to the bill. They say if modified to protect Connecticut works, they could wholeheartedly support the bill. Outline details on how to do that in their testimony.
- **Senator Kevin Witkos:** Writes in support of overall goal of the bill. Says the need for broadband access in Connecticut have never been clearer than it is now.
  
- Many pieces of testimony were submitted by the public in general support that followed along the same lines. They write saying broadband creates better more affordable internet access and that the goals laid out should be pursued by the state legislature.
- **Monique Abreu**
- **Ceely Ackerman**
- **Michael Barlerin**
- **Hugh Barnett**
- **Joseph Baxer**
- **Tony Bedini**
- **Edward Bent**
- **Candace Bouchard**
- **John Brannelly**
- **John Brett**
- **Greg Brick Jr.**
- **Bill Brown**
- **Todd Bryda**
- **Mark Bunnell**
- **Matt Butcher**
- **Debra Cahill**
- **Deborah Carter**
- **Michael Cheng**
- **Mr and Mrs. Bruce L. Crumley**
- **John Cusano**
- **Rufus de Rham**
- **Doreen Deary**
- **DeMelle Walter**

- **Peter Demy**
- **Marvin Den**
- **Marilyn Diaz**
- **Carole Dmytryshak**
- **Michael Dobo**
- **Kim Downey**
- **Jill Drew**
- **Jan and ike Dudek**
- **Dennis Fallon**
- **Katherine Freygang**
- **Kathleen Friedman**
- **Patrick Gallaway**
- **Bert Goff**
- **Janet Graaff**
- **Laurie Greene**
- **John Halloran**
- **James Hatch**
- **Robert Hobbs**
- **Kelly Hughes**
- **Susan Irwin**
- **Daniel Javitch**
- **Maura Johnson**
- **Michael Johnson**
- **Rhonda Kincaid**
- **Dominique Lahaussais**
- **Patricia Lang**
- **Kenneth Levien**
- **Laurie Lisle**
- **Brooke Loening**
- **David Low**
- **Brett Marchard**
- **Michael McCabe**
- **Laura McCarthy**
- **Larry McChesney**
- **Duncan McClelland**
- **Libby Mitchell**
- **Judith Motel**
- **Francoise Mouly**
- **Phyllis Nauts**
- **Ben Paletsky**
- **Candy Perex**
- **Alexandra Peters**
- **Lottie Prushinski**
- **Dennis Raap, First Selectman of Litchfield**
- **Drew Robbins**
- **Grace Schalkwyk**

- Kathi Schapp
- Jacque Schiller
- Albertus Schmitz
- Michael Schulde
- Louis Sciuillo
- Helen Scoville
- Mike Selbach
- Victoria Selbach
- Tom Shachtman
- Bernard Singer
- Bill Skoczylas
- Michelle Sorrentino
- Art Spiegelman
- Ann Spindler
- Doreen Springsteen
- Lloyd Stableford
- Donald Stein, First Selectman town of Barkhamsted
- Peter Steiner
- Ian Strever
- Beverly Sullivan
- Anna Timell
- Any Tobin
- Todd Henry, First Selectman town of Canaan
- Mark Trager
- Christopher Tripler
- Edmund Ullman
- Jennifer Weigel
- Christopher Weldon
- Elaine Werner
- Gaby Wessberg
- John Wessberg
- Christian Williams
- Roberta Willis
- Johan Winsser
- Amy Wynn
- Patricia Zyjewski

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

- **Rick Aiello:** Writes in opposition to this law. Says the effects of 5G radiation will be detrimental to the health and livelihood of all citizens in Connecticut and provides reports on the claim.
- **Paska Ann: CT Residents for Responsible Technology** writes in opposition to the bill. Says state should wait until the bill complies with federal law and precedent regarding 4G and 5G deployment in the state.

- **Antje Bakalov:** Writes in opposition to this bill. Cites the New Hampshire Commission on 5G and states there are adverse health effects that would be caused by this bill.
- **Kristin Beatty: Last Tree Laws** writes in opposition to this bill saying that only hard-wired broadband investment should be allowed.
- **Doug Brake: The Information Technology and Innovation Foundation** write in opposition to the bill. Says the bill will disrupt current broadband success.
- **Michael A. Chowaniec: Charter Communications** writes in opposition to the bill. They believe that the bill will actually lessen Connecticut resident access to highspeed broadband. Says that the bill will slow down the progress made with broadband by having it run through PURA.
- **Michael J. Cicchetti: Frontier Communications** writes in opposition to the bill. They say that provisions in the bill will slow down progress made by service providers in Connecticut and actually increase costs.
- **Connecticut Realtors:** Writes in Opposition to the bill. They say that section 5 of this bill would create new obstacles in the real estate marketplace.
- **The CT Freedom Alliance LLC:** Writes in Opposition to the bill. Their main point of contention stems around the lack of a safety study to the ever growing impact of electromagnetic frequency radiation from 5G.
- **AT&T:** Writes in opposition to this bill. They support the intent of the bill and it's mission but find that the Biden Administration and federal government are better equipped to deal with this.
- **Eric Gjede: The Connecticut Business & Industry Association** writes in opposition to this bill. They take concerns with how broadband is defined and how success is measured with this bill. Also has concerns with cost to the tax payers that are laid out in the bill
- **David Lamendola: Verizon** writes in opposition to the bill. They say that they hold similar goals in terms of highspeed broadband access but vary on how to get there. They say that the regulatory doctrine used in this bill is outdated and would slow down broadband progress in the state.
- **Vincent Pace: Eversource** writes amendments to the current bill that would change section 20 of the bill.
- **Jim Perras: Home Builders & Remodelers Association** writes in concern over this bill. Wants to delete section 5 of the bill and to JFS out of committee with that change.
- **John Souza: Connecticut Coalition of Property Owners** writes in concern over this bill. Wants to delete section 5 of the bill and to JFS out of committee with that change.
- **Altice USA & Charter Communications:** Writes in opposition to this bill. Says the bill violates section 253 of the Communications Act.
- Many pieces of testimony were submitted by the public in general opposition that followed along the same lines. They write saying broadband and 5G have unresearched health effects that should be taken seriously. Also pointed to economic issues such as cost to the tax payer and utilities regulation.
- **Rick Aiello**
- **Antje Bakalow**
- **Megan Belval**
- **Suzanne Binelli**
- **Marguerite Christie**
- **Eileen Ciampini**

- **Dellamarie**
- **Sally Finck**
- **Whitney Flood**
- **Jen Freed**
- **Lena Gjonaj**
- **Judith Graffenried**
- **Brian Griffin, Greater Norwalk Chamber**
- **Susan Hill**
- **Alison Hobbs**
- **Eva Ingegerd**
- **Barbara Johnson**
- **Brittany Kilburn**
- **Christine Kurowski**
- **Sofia Ljuslin**
- **Denise Lusitani**
- **Margaret Lynch**
- **Andrea Malise**
- **Erin Mariano**
- **Colin McNamara**
- **Isabelle Menozzi**
- **Meredith Mielson**
- **Meredith Obreiter**
- **Jessica Patterson**
- **Joan Polzin**
- **Sandeep R.**
- **Jennifer Ramos-Marrero**
- **Julie Retzlaff**
- **Bella Romano**
- **Patty Roth**
- **Kristen Sabad**
- **Amanda Seitz**
- **Taya Stanley**
- **Ryan Suter**
- **Jennifer Sylvia**
- **Ronald Vivar**
- **Carl Waldo**
- **Lisa Waldo**
- **Diana Waller**
- **Cheryl Wiener**
- **Jessia Wysocki**

**Reported by: William Ginn**

**Date: April 6<sup>th</sup> 2021**