
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2293 Session of
2018

INTRODUCED BY CAUSER, BOBACK, CONKLIN, ENGLISH, GILLEN,
GODSHALL, A. HARRIS, IRVIN, JAMES, KAUFER, KAVULICH,
M. K. KELLER, LONGIETTI, MACKENZIE, MILLARD, MURT, PICKETT,
RAPP, ROEBUCK, SCHLOSSBERG, SOLOMON AND WARD, APRIL 23, 2018

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS,
APRIL 23, 2018

AN ACT

1 Establishing the Rural Broadband Deployment Fund; and conferring
2 powers and imposing duties on the Department of Community and
3 Economic Development.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Short title.

7 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Rural
8 Broadband Deployment Act.

9 Section 2. Definitions.

10 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
11 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
12 context clearly indicates otherwise:

13 "Department." The Department of Community and Economic
14 Development of the Commonwealth.

15 "Fund." The Rural Broadband Deployment Fund established
16 under this act.

17 "Rural." A municipality in this Commonwealth that is defined

1 by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania as rural based on
2 population density.

3 "Secretary." The Secretary of Community and Economic
4 Development of the Commonwealth.

5 Section 3. Advisory board.

6 (a) Creation.--The department shall create an advisory board
7 to advise the secretary in the administration of this act. The
8 advisory board members shall be appointed by the secretary and
9 shall consist of the following, who shall either be a resident
10 of this Commonwealth or a member of an organization located in
11 this Commonwealth:

12 (1) The secretary or a designee, who shall serve as
13 chairperson.

14 (2) The Secretary of Agriculture or a designee.

15 (3) A member of the Governor's executive staff.

16 (4) The executive director of the Pennsylvania Public
17 Utility Commission or a designee.

18 (5) The Office of Small Business Advocate or a designee.

19 (6) The Office of Consumer Advocate or a designee.

20 (7) The director of the Center for Rural Pennsylvania or
21 a designee.

22 (8) The director of the Governor's Pennsylvania Rural
23 Development Council or a designee.

24 (9) The president of the Pennsylvania Rural Electric
25 Association or a designee.

26 (10) The president of the Pennsylvania Telephone
27 Association or a designee.

28 (11) Two members of Statewide general farm organizations
29 from rural areas.

30 (12) The president of the Broadband Cable Association of

1 Pennsylvania.

2 (13) One member appointed by the President pro tempore
3 of the Senate.

4 (14) One member appointed by the Speaker of the House of
5 Representatives.

6 (15) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the
7 Senate.

8 (16) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the
9 House of Representatives.

10 (b) Terms.--The members appointed under subsection (a) (11),
11 (13), (14), (15) and (16) shall serve an initial term of three
12 years and thereafter shall serve until replaced by the
13 appointing authority.

14 (c) Meetings.--A majority of the board shall constitute a
15 quorum. Each action of the board shall be by a majority vote.
16 The board shall meet upon the call of the chairperson, but not
17 less than semiannually, to carry out the board's duties under
18 this act.

19 (d) Powers and duties.--The board shall have the power and
20 duty to:

21 (1) Investigate and make recommendations to the
22 secretary to improve the deployment of broadband and other
23 high-speed data Internet services to rural areas of this
24 Commonwealth.

25 (2) Issue requests for proposals to solicit the use of
26 money in the fund.

27 (3) Review and recommend proposals to deploy broadband
28 and other high-speed data Internet services in this
29 Commonwealth. Priority shall be given to proposals which will
30 primarily serve rural areas.

1 (4) Authorize expenditures from the fund.

2 (5) Assist in coordinating the use of existing or future
3 infrastructure resources to effectuate the efficient
4 deployment of broadband and other high-speed data Internet
5 services to rural areas.

6 (6) Promulgate, adopt and use guidelines to carry out
7 its duties. Guidelines shall be published in the Pennsylvania
8 Bulletin. The guidelines shall be subject to review under
9 section 204(b) of the act of October 15, 1980 (P.L.950,
10 No.164), known as the Commonwealth Attorneys Act, shall be
11 effective for a period of one year and shall be replaced by
12 regulations which have been promulgated, adopted and
13 published under the act of June 25, 1982 (P.L.633, No.181),
14 known as the Regulatory Review Act.

15 Section 4. Rural Broadband Deployment Fund.

16 (a) Establishment.--The Rural Broadband Deployment Fund is
17 established within the State Treasury. Money appropriated,
18 given, granted or donated for the purposes of rural
19 infrastructure improvement, including broadband and other high-
20 speed data Internet services, by the Federal Government, the
21 General Assembly and public or private sources, shall be
22 deposited into the fund.

23 (b) Specific funding.--At least 50% of funding made
24 available to the Commonwealth through the Federal Rural
25 Infrastructure Program shall be deposited into the fund.

26 (c) Use of fund.--Money deposited in the fund and interest
27 earned on money deposited in the fund shall be used solely for
28 the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act.

29 Section 5. Effective date.

30 This act shall take effect in 30 days.