



State of Wisconsin  
2013 - 2014 LEGISLATURE



LRB-0996/P4  
EVM:sac&kjf:ph

DOA:.....Bong, BB0341 - Broadband expansion grant program

**FOR 2013-2015 BUDGET -- NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION**

**AN ACT ...; relating to:** the budget.

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*Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau*

**STATE GOVERNMENT**

**OTHER STATE GOVERNMENT**

This bill creates a broadband expansion program. Under the program, DOA in consultation with PSC, makes broadband expansion grants from the universal service fund to applicants for the purpose of constructing broadband infrastructure in underserved areas designated by DOA in consultation with PSC. DOA must establish criteria for evaluating applications and awarding grants. These criteria must give priority to projects that include matching funds, that involve public-private partnerships, that affect areas with no broadband service providers, or that affect a large geographic area or a large number on underserved individuals or communities. The criteria must prohibit grants that have the effect of subsidizing the expenses of a telecommunication service provider or the monthly bills of telecommunications customers.

For further information see the *state and local* fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

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*The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:*

**SECTION 1.** 16.9795 of the statutes is created to read:

**16.9795 Broadband expansion grant program. (1)** In this section:

(a) "Eligible applicant" means any of the following:

1. An organization operated for profit or not for profit, including a cooperative.
2. A telecommunications utility.
3. A city, village, town, or county that submits an application in partnership

with an eligible applicant under subd. 1. or 2.

(b) "Underserved" means served by fewer than 2 broadband service providers.

**(2)** The department shall administer the broadband expansion program and shall have the following powers:

(a) In consultation with the public service commission, to make broadband expansion grants to eligible applicants for the purpose of constructing broadband infrastructure in underserved areas designated under par. (d). Grants awarded under this section shall be paid from the appropriation under s. 20.505 (4) (u).

(b) To prescribe the form, nature, and extent of the information that shall be contained in an application for a grant under this section. The application shall require the applicant to identify the area of the state that will be affected by the proposed project and explain how the proposed project will increase broadband access.

(c) To establish criteria for evaluating applications and awarding grants under this section. The criteria shall prohibit grants that have the effect of subsidizing the expenses of a telecommunication service provider or the monthly bills of telecommunications customers. The criteria shall give priority to projects that include matching funds, that involve public-private partnerships, that affects areas

with no broadband service providers, or that affect a large geographic area or a large number of underserved individuals or communities.

(d) In consultation with the public service commission, to designate areas of the state that are underserved as underserved areas.

**SECTION 2.** 20.505 (4) (u) of the statutes is created to read:

20.505 (4) (u) *Broadband expansion grants.* From the universal service fund, as a continuing appropriation the amounts in the schedule for broadband expansion grants under s. 16.9795.

\*\*\*\*NOTE: This SECTION involves a change in an appropriation that must be reflected in the revised schedule in s. 20.005, stats.

**(END)**