

Subject Broadband Development

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Overview

This bill would rename the Office of Broadband Deployment to the “Office of Broadband Deployment and Digital Equity” and adds new duties and goals related to digital equity. This bill also establishes the multifamily broadband development grant program.

Summary

Section	Description
1	Office of Broadband Development and Digital Equity. Renames the Office of Broadband Development to the Office of Broadband Development and Digital Equity.
2	Definitions, office, duties. Subd. 1. Definitions. Makes a conforming change for section 1’s name change. Subd. 2. Office established; purpose. Broadens the office’s purpose to include improving broadband access, adoption, and related digital inclusion activities needed for digital equity. Makes a conforming change for section 1’s name change. Subd. 3. Organization. Makes a conforming change for section 1’s name change. Subd. 4. Duties. Adds duties for the office, including developing a statewide digital equity plan and implementing programs to meet the state’s digital equity goals. Makes a conforming change for section 1’s name change. Subd. 5. Reporting. Requires additional information in the annual report from the Office of Broadband Development and Digital Equity on the office’s digital inclusion programs. Makes several conforming changes for section 1’s name change and section 9’s additional goal.

Section	Description
3	Definitions. Makes a conforming change for section 1's name change.
4	Definitions. Modifies the definitions of "underserved areas" and "unserved areas" to mean areas where households and businesses lack access to any kind of broadband service.
5	Awarding grants. Makes conforming changes for section 1's name change.
6	Application evaluation report. Makes a conforming change for section 1's name change.
7	Multifamily broadband development grant program. Subd. 1. Establishment. Establishes a grant program where Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) awards grants to provide broadband services and ensure digital equity in multifamily housing. Subd. 2. Eligible properties. Determines eligible properties for grants to be either multifamily residential properties or manufactured home parks. Subd. 3. Eligible expenses. Determines eligible expenses for grants to include installing Internet and Wi-Fi infrastructure, providing reduced-cost broadband services, technical assistance, and outreach efforts and digital navigation support. Subd. 4. Program administration. Requires DEED to develop application materials for the grant program and prioritize properties with a substantial share of unserved households or are in a location where the percentage of households below the poverty line is higher than the national average.
8	Updated broadband deployment data and maps. Makes a conforming change for section 1's name change.
9	State broadband adoption. Establishes a state goal that by 2028: (1) 95% of households have a home broadband subscription and are enrolled in an Internet service plan; (2) 70% of eligible households receive available Internet service discounts; and (3) 95% of households have access to a personal computer or comparable device.



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