

ASSEMBLY, No. 2168

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 7, 2022

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman HAROLD "HAL" J. WIRTHS
District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblyman Space, Assemblywomen McCarthy Patrick, Sawyer and
Assemblyman Umba

SYNOPSIS

Appropriates \$50 million to BPU from federal funds for reimbursing broadband telecommunications service providers for broadband infrastructure expansion to rural areas in State.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/16/2022)

A2168 WIRTHS

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1 **AN ACT** concerning broadband infrastructure expansion to rural
2 areas in this State, and making an appropriation.

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4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

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7 1. a. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
8 Board of Public Utilities a sum of \$50 million from a portion of
9 those federal block grant funds allocated to the State from the
10 federal "Coronavirus Relief Fund," established pursuant to the
11 federal "Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act,"
12 Pub.L.116-136, or from any other federal funds allocated to the
13 State pursuant to law, for use by the board to reimburse up to 50
14 percent of project costs related to broadband infrastructure
15 expansion made by a broadband telecommunications service
16 provider to a rural area in this State. A broadband
17 telecommunications service provider may submit an application to
18 the board, in a form and manner determined by the board, for
19 reimbursement pursuant to this section.

20 b. For the purposes of this act:

21 "Board" means the Board of Public Utilities or any successor
22 agency.

23 "Broadband telecommunications infrastructure" shall have the
24 same meaning as provided in section 1 of P.L.2007, c.191
25 (C.40:9D-1).

26 "Broadband telecommunications service" means any
27 telecommunications service used for the purpose of offering high
28 speed, switched, broadband wireline or wireless
29 telecommunications capability that enables users to send and
30 receive high-quality voice, data, graphics, or video
31 telecommunications through the Internet and using any technology
32 and with data transfer speeds of at least 25 megabits per second
33 download and at least three megabits per second upload.

34 "Broadband telecommunications service provider" means a
35 person, company, corporation, unincorporated association,
36 partnership, or professional corporation which is certified by the
37 board to offer broadband telecommunications service directly to the
38 public, or to classes of users as to be effectively available directly
39 to the public, regardless of the facilities used.

40 "Rural area" means any area included within the boundaries of
41 any municipality that has a population of 30,000 inhabitants or less
42 and a population density less than 4,000 persons per square mile,
43 according to the latest federal decennial census.

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45 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

This bill appropriates \$50 million from a portion of the federal block grant funds allocated to the State from the federal “Coronavirus Relief Fund,” or other federal funds allocated to the State pursuant to law, to the Board of Public Utilities (board) for use by the board to reimburse up to 50 percent of project costs related to broadband infrastructure expansion made by a broadband telecommunications service provider to a rural area, as defined in the bill, in this State. A broadband telecommunications service provider may submit an application to the board, in a form and manner determined by the board, for reimbursement pursuant to the bill.