

**ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT  
RESOLUTION No. 13**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
220th LEGISLATURE**

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PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2022 SESSION

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblyman PARKER SPACE**

**District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren)**

**Assemblyman HAROLD "HAL" J. WIRTHS**

**District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Assemblymen McClellan and Simonsen**

**SYNOPSIS**

Urges BPU to investigate broadband Internet and landline telephone services in State's rural communities; urges State Board of Agriculture and Department of Agriculture to explore ways these services can be brought to State's rural communities.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



ACR13 SPACE, WIRTHS

1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** urging the Board of Public Utilities  
2 to investigate the status of high-speed broadband Internet and  
3 landline telephone services in New Jersey's rural communities  
4 and urging the State Board of Agriculture and the Department of  
5 Agriculture to explore ways in which reliable high-speed  
6 broadband Internet and landline telephone services can be  
7 brought to New Jersey's rural communities.

8  
9 **WHEREAS**, Today's modern farming operators are as likely to sell  
10 their agricultural products direct-to-the-public at on-farm locations  
11 as they are to sell them to wholesale brokers or directly to retailers;  
12 and

13 **WHEREAS**, An increasing number of New Jersey farm operators are  
14 incorporating agricultural tourism components on their farms to  
15 attract consumers to their farm property to either purchase products  
16 or partake in agricultural tourism events, which requires these farm  
17 operators to employ advertising over various forms of media; and

18 **WHEREAS**, Social media and other forms of advertising over the  
19 Internet have become increasingly popular ways to reach the exact  
20 type of consumers that are interested in agricultural tourism; and

21 **WHEREAS**, The ability to maximize Internet-based advertising  
22 depends, especially in rural areas where farms are concentrated,  
23 upon connecting to adequate high-speed broadband Internet and  
24 other broadband services; and

25 **WHEREAS**, Today's agricultural operations also rely on high-speed  
26 broadband Internet and other broadband services for many vital  
27 functions beyond advertising, such as remote sensing of field and  
28 greenhouse conditions, remote control of equipment, shipping and  
29 receiving control and coordination, obtaining current weather  
30 information that is critical to the application of crop inputs, and for  
31 numerous other purposes; and

32 **WHEREAS**, A lack of adequate broadband communications capability  
33 inhibits or precludes the use of these tools that can enhance a farm's  
34 efficiency and viability, thereby creating an inequity for farmers  
35 living in areas underserved by adequate telecommunications  
36 capability; and

37 **WHEREAS**, As technology continues to grow in importance to  
38 agriculture, the need for adequate high-speed broadband Internet  
39 and other broadband service capability will grow in importance to  
40 successful farming; and

41 **WHEREAS**, Rural areas of New Jersey have been especially  
42 underserved by broadband service from Internet service providers;  
43 and

44 **WHEREAS**, The lack of high speed broadband in rural areas of New  
45 Jersey negatively effects not only farmers but all residents, students,  
46 businesses, and governmental entities who reside or are located in  
47 rural areas and puts rural areas at a distinct disadvantage in  
48 attracting economic development; and

ACR13 SPACE, WIRTHS

1 **WHEREAS**, The State Board of Agriculture has heard numerous  
2 complaints of diminished Internet, wireless, and landline service  
3 quality in rural areas of New Jersey; and

4 **WHEREAS**, The State Board of Agriculture has unanimously passed a  
5 resolution calling upon the Board of Public Utilities to investigate  
6 the status of high-speed Internet and landline telephone services in  
7 New Jersey's rural communities; and

8 **WHEREAS**, The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA)  
9 Rural Development Office for New Jersey has informed the New  
10 Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) that to help in addressing  
11 the lack of rural broadband Internet service in the State, the USDA  
12 needs guidance from the NJDA to create a mapping function that  
13 could help rural areas of New Jersey be eligible for grant programs  
14 offered by the USDA for broadband Internet service availability;  
15 and

16 **WHEREAS**, The State Board of Agriculture and the NJDA should  
17 explore ways in which adequate and reliable high-speed broadband  
18 Internet and landline telephone services can be brought to New  
19 Jersey's rural communities, so that the State's farmers, residents,  
20 students, businesses, and governmental entities who reside or are  
21 located in rural areas will be better positioned to maximize the  
22 overall use of technology to improve the efficiency and viability of  
23 their farms and communities while increasing economic  
24 development opportunities; now, therefore,

25  
26 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the General Assembly of the State of New  
27 Jersey (the Senate concurring):

28  
29 1. The Board of Public Utilities is respectfully urged to conduct  
30 an investigation of the status of high-speed broadband Internet and  
31 landline telephone services in New Jersey's rural communities.

32  
33 2. The State Board of Agriculture and the Department of  
34 Agriculture are respectfully urged to continue exploring ways in  
35 which adequate and reliable high-speed broadband Internet and  
36 landline telephone services can be brought to New Jersey's rural  
37 communities, so that the State's farmers, residents, students,  
38 businesses, and governmental entities who reside or are located in  
39 rural areas will be better positioned to maximize the overall use of  
40 technology to improve the efficiency and viability of their farms  
41 and communities while increasing economic development  
42 opportunities.

43  
44 3. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,  
45 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly or the  
46 Secretary of the Senate to each commissioner of the Board of Public  
47 Utilities, to each member of the State Board of Agriculture, and to  
48 the Secretary of Agriculture.

**ACR13 SPACE, WIRTHS**

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STATEMENT

This concurrent resolution urges the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) to conduct an investigation of the status of high-speed broadband Internet and landline telephone services in New Jersey's rural communities. Further, the concurrent resolution urges the State Board of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture to continue exploring ways in which adequate and reliable high-speed broadband Internet and landline telephone services can be brought to New Jersey's rural communities, so that the State's farmers, residents, students, businesses, and governmental entities who reside or are located in rural areas will be better positioned to maximize the overall use of technology to improve the efficiency and viability of their farms and communities while increasing economic development opportunities.