S-4199.1

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**SENATE BILL 6545**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2018 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Chase and Short

AN ACT Relating to community economic revitalization board administered broadband infrastructure; and amending 2018 c 2 s 1021 (uncodified).

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

**Sec.**  2018 c 2 s 1021 (uncodified) is amended to read as follows:

**FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

CERB Administered Broadband Infrastructure (91000943)

The appropriation in this section is subject to the following conditions and limitations: During the 2017-2019 fiscal biennium, the community economic revitalization board may make grants and loans to local governments and federally recognized tribes to build infrastructure to provide high-speed, open-access broadband service, with a minimum of 25 megabits per second download speed, to rural and underserved communities, for the purpose of economic development.

(1) "Local governments" means cities, towns, counties, municipal corporations, public port districts, quasi-municipal corporations, and special purpose districts.

(2) "Broadband" means networks of deployed telecommunications equipment and technologies necessary to provide high-speed Internet access and other advanced telecommunications services.

(3) The board is authorized to make rural broadband loans to local governments and to federally recognized Indian tribes for the purposes of financing the cost to build infrastructure to provide high-speed, open-access broadband service, to rural and underserved communities, for the purpose of economic development. Grants may also be authorized for purposes designated in this chapter, but only when, and to the extent that, a loan is not reasonably possible, given the limited resources of the local government or the federally recognized Indian tribe, and subject to a finding by the board that financial circumstances require grant assistance to enable the project to move forward. However, no more than 25 percent of all financial assistance approved by the board in any biennium may consist of grants to local governments and federally recognized Indian tribes.

(4) Application for funding must be made in the form and manner as the board may prescribe. In making grants or loans the board must conform to the following requirements:

(a) The board may not provide financial assistance:

(i) For a project the primary purpose of which is to facilitate or promote a retail shopping development or expansion.

(ii) For any project that evidence exists would result in a development or expansion that would displace existing jobs in any other community in the state.

(iii) For a project the primary purpose of which is to facilitate or promote gambling.

(iv) For a project located outside the jurisdiction of the applicant local government or federally recognized Indian tribe.

(v) For equipment or facilities which would enable a public entity to provide retail telecommunications services or services that the entity is not authorized by statute to provide.

(vi) For the deployment of publicly-owned telecommunication network infrastructure ("backbone") solely for the sake of creating competitive, publicly-owned telecommunication network infrastructure.

(b) The board may provide financial assistance only((~~:~~

~~(i) For projects demonstrating convincing evidence that a specific private development or expansion is ready to occur and will occur only if the public facility improvement is made that:~~

~~(A) Results in the creation of significant private sector jobs or significant private sector capital investment as determined by the board;~~

~~(B) Will improve the opportunities for the successful maintenance, establishment, or expansion of industrial or commercial plants or will otherwise assist in the creation or retention of long-term economic opportunities; and~~

~~(C) Is located in a rural community as defined by the board, or a rural county; or~~

~~(ii) For a project that does not meet the requirements of (b)(i) of this subsection but is a project that:~~

~~(A) Results in the creation of significant private sector jobs or significant private sector capital investment as determined by the board;~~

~~(B) Is part of a local economic development plan consistent with applicable state planning requirements;~~

~~(C) Can demonstrate project feasibility using standard economic principles; and~~

~~(D) Is located in a rural community as defined by the board, or a rural county;~~

~~(c) The board must develop guidelines for local participation and allowable match and activities.~~

~~(d) An application must demonstrate local match and local participation, in accordance with guidelines developed by the board.~~

~~(e)~~)) for projects located in a rural community as defined by the board, or located in a rural county, that encourage, foster, develop, and improve broadband within the state in order to:

(i) Drive job creation, promote innovation, and expand markets for local businesses; or

(ii) Serve the ongoing and growing needs of local education systems, health care system, public safety system, industries and businesses, governmental operations, and citizens; and

(iii) Improve accessibility for underserved communities and populations.

(c) An application must be approved by the local government and supported by the local associate development organization or local workforce development council or approved by the governing body of the federally recognized Indian tribe.

((~~(f)~~)) (d) The board may allow de minimis general system improvements to be funded if they are critically linked to the viability of the project.

((~~(g) An application must demonstrate convincing evidence that the median hourly wage of the private sector jobs created after the project is completed will exceed the countywide median hourly wage.~~

~~(h) The board must prioritize each proposed project according to:~~

~~(i) The relative benefits provided to the community by the jobs the project would create, not just the total number of jobs it would create after the project is completed, but also giving consideration to the unemployment rate in the area in which the jobs would be located;~~

~~(ii) The rate of return of the state's investment, including, but not limited to, the leveraging of private sector investment, anticipated job creation and retention, and expected increases in state and local tax revenues associated with the project;~~

~~(iii) Whether the proposed project offers a health insurance plan for employees that includes an option for dependents of employees;~~

~~(iv) Whether the public facility investment will increase existing capacity necessary to accommodate projected population and employment growth in a manner that supports infill and redevelopment of existing urban or industrial areas that are served by adequate public facilities. Projects should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and provide for adequate funding of necessary transportation improvements;~~

~~(v) Whether the applicant's permitting process has been certified as streamlined by the office of regulatory assistance; and~~

~~(vi) Whether the applicant has developed and adhered to guidelines regarding its permitting process for those applying for development permits consistent with section 1(2), chapter 231, Laws of 2007.~~

~~(i)~~)) (e) When evaluating and prioritizing projects, the board must give consideration, at a minimum, to the following factors:

(i) The project's value to the community, including evidence of support from affected local businesses and government;

(ii) The project's feasibility, using standard economic principles;

(iii) Commitment of local matching resources and local participation;

(iv) The project's inclusion in a capital facilities plan, comprehensive plan, or local economic development plan consistent with applicable state planning requirements; and

(v) The project's readiness to proceed.

(5) A responsible official of the local government or the federally recognized Indian tribe must be present during board deliberations and provide information that the board requests.

((~~(5)~~)) (6) Before any financial assistance application is approved, the local government or the federally recognized Indian tribe seeking the assistance must demonstrate to the community economic revitalization board that no other timely source of funding is available to it at costs reasonably similar to financing available from the community economic revitalization board.

Appropriation:

State Taxable Building Construction Account—

State ((~~$5,000,000~~))

$10,000,000

Prior Biennia (Expenditures) $0

Future Biennia (Projected Costs) $0

TOTAL ~~$5,000,000~~

$10,000,000

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