
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 630 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY SNYDER, PHILLIPS-HILL, BIZZARRO, DAVIS, DRISCOLL,
MILLARD, READSHAW, RAPP, SCHWEYER, GROVE, IRVIN AND PEIFER,
DECEMBER 19, 2017

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AFFAIRS, DECEMBER 19, 2017

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Federal Communications Commission to favorably
2 consider the joint petition filed by the Pennsylvania Public
3 Utility Commission and the Department of Community and
4 Economic Development and to increase access to high-speed
5 Internet service in underserved areas of Pennsylvania.

6 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth has a long-standing commitment to
7 broadband deployment, especially in rural communities; and

8 WHEREAS, In April 2017, the Pennsylvania Public Utility
9 Commission (PUC) and the Department of Community and Economic
10 Development (DCED) filed a joint petition with the Federal
11 Communications Commission (FCC) as part of an ongoing effort to
12 address Pennsylvania's "digital divide" by preserving millions
13 of dollars in Federal funding intended to increase access to
14 high-speed Internet service in rural communities across this
15 Commonwealth; and

16 WHEREAS, Funding for the Connect America Fund Phase II (CAF
17 II) program is drawn from the Federal universal service
18 surcharges paid by State residents and businesses; and

19 WHEREAS, The CAF II program is intended to support the

1 deployment of broadband service in high-cost areas, including
2 many rural communities; and

3 WHEREAS, Most incumbent local telephone companies serving
4 Pennsylvania's high-cost areas accepted the CAF II funding,
5 along with the commitment to meet Federal benchmarks for
6 broadband speed (10 Mbps download and 1 Mbps upload), but
7 Verizon companies did not; and

8 WHEREAS, The FCC plans to conduct an auction to allocate the
9 broadband funding that was not accepted by Verizon and hopefully
10 the FCC will consider the joint petition by the PUC and DCED to
11 approve a Pennsylvania-specific weighting factor to the upcoming
12 CAF II auction; and

13 WHEREAS, A total of 31 counties face the loss of at least \$1
14 million in funding for broadband deployment, including
15 Allegheny, Beaver, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Chester, Clarion,
16 Clearfield, Clinton, Columbia, Crawford, Erie, Fayette, Forest,
17 Huntingdon, Indiana, Jefferson, Lebanon, Lycoming, Mercer,
18 Mifflin, Schuylkill, Snyder, Somerset, Tioga, Venango, Warren,
19 Wayne, Washington, Westmoreland and York; and

20 WHEREAS, Eight counties could lose \$5 million or more in
21 funding for high-speed Internet enhancements, including Centre,
22 Clearfield, Huntingdon, Indiana, Lycoming, Somerset, Warren,
23 Washington; and

24 WHEREAS, There appears to be a growing gap between
25 Pennsylvania communities and businesses that have access to
26 higher broadband speeds and those that do not; and

27 WHEREAS, Without the modifications requested by Pennsylvania
28 under CAF II, rural consumers are at risk of losing the full and
29 current Federal public support to receive modern broadband
30 services because of a private business decision; and

1 WHEREAS, If the request under the joint petition is declined,
2 these funds could be reallocated outside Pennsylvania, further
3 sanctioning the digital divide that these funds were designed to
4 remedy in the first place; therefore be it

5 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
6 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Federal Communications
7 Commission to favorably consider the joint petition filed by the
8 Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and the Department of
9 Community and Economic Development and to increase access to
10 high-speed Internet service in underserved areas of
11 Pennsylvania; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
13 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania encourage businesses, local leaders
14 and other concerned parties, especially in rural communities, to
15 support efforts to preserve the approximately \$140 million in
16 funding intended to increase access to high-speed Internet
17 service in underserved areas of Pennsylvania; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to
19 the Chairperson of the Federal Communications Commission, the
20 Chairperson of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, the
21 Secretary of Community and Economic Development and members of
22 the Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation.