AN ACT

Providing for the expansion of broadband access in underserved areas; establishing the Underserved and Unserved Broadband Deployment Grant Program and the Underserved and Unserved Broadband Deployment Fund; and transferring funds from the COVID-19 Response Restricted Account.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Short title.

This act shall be known and may be cited as the Underserved and Unserved Broadband Deployment Act.

Section 2. Definitions.

The following words and phrases when used in this act shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Department." The Department of Community and Economic Development of the Commonwealth.

"Fund." The Underserved and Unserved Broadband Deployment
Fund established under section 4(a).

"Grant program." The Underserved and Unserved Broadband Deployment Grant Program under section 3(a).

Section 3. Underserved and Unserved Broadband Deployment Grant Program.

(a) Establishment.--The Underserved and Unserved Broadband Deployment Grant Program is established within the department to expand broadband access in underserved areas.

(b) Award of grants.--The department shall award grants with money from the fund to applicants that:

1. Are a municipality or resident of this Commonwealth located in an underserved area, determined by the department.
2. Show a lack of broadband access and demonstrate a need for broadband access.

(c) Application.--The application for a grant under the grant program shall be in a form and manner prescribed by the department.

(d) Initial review.--Within one year of the effective date of this section, the department shall coordinate with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, municipalities, counties and other stakeholders to determine how much money is needed to continue to expand the grant program and prepare a report which shall be submitted to the following:

1. The Governor.
2. The General Assembly.

(e) Annual review.--The department shall conduct an annual review of the grant program and shall prepare a report which shall be submitted to the following:

1. The Governor.
2. The General Assembly.
Section 4. The Underserved and Unserved Broadband Deployment Fund.

(a) Establishment.--The Underserved and Unserved Broadband Deployment Fund is established as a special fund in the State Treasury. Money in the fund shall be appropriated to the department on a continuing basis for purposes of the grant program.

(b) Transfer from COVID-19 Response Restricted Account.--The sum of $50,000,000 is transferred from the COVID-19 Response Restricted Account to the fund.

(c) Additional money.--Money available to the fund shall include appropriations and transfers from the General Fund, special funds, Federal money and other sources of revenue made available to the fund.

Section 5. Effective date.

This act shall take effect in 60 days.