

Broadband Expansion Planning Task Force; Senate Sub. for HB 2701

Senate Sub. for HB 2701 establishes the Statewide Broadband Expansion Planning Task Force (Task Force).

Mission

The mission of the Task Force is to:

- Work collaboratively to develop an approach that includes, but is not limited to, the development of criteria for the creation of a statewide map for defining and evaluating the broadband needs of Kansas citizens, business, industries, institutions, and organizations;
- Identify and document risks, issues, and constraints associated with a statewide broadband expansion project and to develop any corresponding risk mitigation strategies where appropriate;
- Consider any recent actions by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) relating to broadband services including, but not limited to:
 - The 2018 Broadband Deployment Report;
 - Recommendations of the Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee; and
 - Any actions to implement broadband initiatives using the Connect America Fund Phase II, the Mobility Fund II, or the Remote Areas Fund;
- Identify opportunities and potential funding sources to:
 - Expand broadband infrastructure and increase statewide access to broadband services;
 - Remove barriers that may hinder deployment of broadband infrastructure or access to broadband services; and
 - Consider options for the deployment of new advanced communication technologies;
- Develop criteria for prioritizing the expansion of broadband services across Kansas;
- Review current law and regulations concerning access to the public right-of-way for public utilities and make corresponding recommendations for any changes necessary to encourage broadband deployment; and
- Propose future activities and documentation required to complete the statewide broadband expansion plan, including an upgradeable, functional map of the state

of available broadband service, as well as including which technologies should be deployed and the methods to finance broadband expansion.

The bill also requires the Task Force to submit an initial report to the House Committee on Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications and the Senate Committee on Utilities regarding its initial work and progress prior to January 15, 2019. Unless all work is completed and reported in the initial report, the Task Force is required to submit a final report outlining its recommendations to the Legislature prior to January 15, 2020.

Task Force Composition

The Task Force is composed of 17 voting members. The membership is as follows:

- The chairperson, vice-chairperson, and ranking minority member of the House Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications;
- The chairperson, vice-chairperson, and ranking minority member of the Senate Standing Committee on Utilities;
- One member appointed by the Kansas Association of Counties;
- One member appointed by the Kansas League of Municipalities;
- One member appointed by the Kansas Rural Independent Telephone Coalition;
- One member from the Kansas Cable Telecommunications Association;
- One member appointed by the Cellular Telecommunications Industry Association representing a wireless carrier;
- One member representing an electing carrier;
- One member representing an incumbent local exchange carrier that is price-cap regulated and a recipient of Kansas Universal Service Fund moneys and serves a rural service area;
- One member appointed by the Kansas Electric Cooperatives;
- One member appointed by the State Independent Telephone Association;
- One member appointed by the Kansas Municipal Utilities; and
- One member appointed by the Kansas Independent Fiber Association.

In addition, the bill requires the Task Force to include the following five non-voting *ex officio* members:

- The Secretary of Transportation, or the Secretary's designee;
- The Commissioner of Education, or the Commissioner's designee;
- The chairperson of the State Corporation Commission, or the chairperson's designee;
- One member appointed by the Kansas Hospital Association; and
- One member at-large, appointed by the Governor.

All members must be appointed no later than 45 days from the effective date of the bill and membership must represent the 4 congressional districts in Kansas. In addition, the bill requires members to reside or work in Kansas. Any vacancy on the Task Force will be filled by appointment in the same manner as the original appointment.

Legislative members of the Task Force attending authorized meetings will be paid amounts provided in continuing law. Non-legislative members may be reimbursed by their appointing authority.

Committee Structure and Meetings

The bill stipulates one of the legislative members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and one member appointed by the President of the Senate serve as co-chairpersons of the Task Force. The Task Force may meet in an open meeting at any time upon call of either co-chairperson. A majority of the voting members of the Task Force constitutes a quorum. Any action taken by the Task Force must be by motion adopted by a majority of voting member present with a quorum.

Staff

The bill requires staff from the Division of Legislative Administrative Services, the Kansas Legislative Research Department, and the Office of Revisor of Statutes to provide assistance as requested by the Task Force.

Sunset

The Statewide Broadband Expansion Task Force sunsets on June 30, 2020.