



103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2023 and 2024

HB2470

Introduced 2/15/2023, by Rep. Aaron M. Ortiz

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act

Creates the Low-Income Broadband Assistance Program Act. Requires the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to establish a Low-Income Broadband Assistance Program to ensure the availability and affordability of broadband service to low-income families. Provides that the Department shall coordinate with local administrative agencies identified by the Department to determine eligibility for the program, provided that eligible income shall be no more than 150% of the federal poverty level. Provides that families whose annual household income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty level shall be eligible for free broadband service. Provides that a credit of at least \$9.95 a month for broadband services shall be payable monthly to: (i) families whose annual household income is greater than 135% but less than 150% of the federal poverty level; and (ii) families that include at least one adult person or dependent child who qualifies for or participates in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the Supplemental Security Income program, Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefits Programs, or other specified assistance programs. Provides that the \$9.95 broadband service credit may be adjusted according to family size. Provides that families who participate in the federal Lifeline program or any other State Internet service subsidy program shall not be eligible to participate in the Low-Income Broadband Assistance Program. Grants rulemaking powers to the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

LRB103 29381 DTM 55770 b

1 AN ACT concerning State government.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Low-Income Broadband Assistance Program Act.

6 Section 5. Definitions. As used in this Section:

7 "Broadband service" means a high-speed service connection
8 to the public Internet capable of supporting, in at least one
9 direction, a speed in excess of 200 kilobits per second (kbps)
10 to the network demarcation point at the subscriber's premises.

11 "Department" means the Department of Commerce and Economic
12 Opportunity.

13 "Economic unit" means all adult individuals contributing
14 to and sharing in the income and expenses of a household.

15 "Family" or "household" means any individual or group of
16 individuals who live together at the same address as one
17 economic unit.

18 "Federal poverty level" means the poverty guidelines
19 updated periodically in the Federal Register by the U.S.
20 Department of Health and Human Services. These guidelines set
21 poverty levels by family size.

22 Section 10. Low-Income Broadband Assistance Program. The

1 Department shall establish a Low-Income Broadband Assistance
2 Program to ensure the availability and affordability of
3 broadband service to low-income families. The Department shall
4 coordinate with local administrative agencies identified by
5 the Department to determine the eligibility of families for
6 the program, provided that the income of eligible families
7 shall be no more than 150% of the federal poverty level.

8 Section 15. Eligible families.

9 (a) Families whose annual household income is at or below
10 135% of the federal poverty level shall be eligible for free
11 broadband service.

12 (b) A credit of at least \$9.95 a month for broadband
13 services shall be payable monthly to:

14 (1) families whose annual household income is greater
15 than 135% but less than 150% above the federal poverty
16 level; and

17 (2) families that include at least one adult person or
18 dependent child who qualifies for or received benefits
19 under one of the following programs:

20 (A) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

21 (B) Supplemental Security Income program.

22 (C) Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefits
23 Programs.

24 (D) Federal Public Housing Assistance Program.

25 (E) Medical Assistance Program under Article V of

1 the Illinois Public Aid Code.

2 (F) Tribal Programs for Native Americans.

3 (G) National School Lunch Program.

4 Credit amounts provided under this subsection (b) may be
5 adjusted according to family size as prescribed by the
6 Department.

7 (c) Families who receive a discount for broadband service
8 under the federal Lifeline program or any other State Internet
9 service subsidy program shall not be eligible to participate
10 in the Low-Income Broadband Assistance Program if they elect
11 to remain enrolled in those other programs.

12 Section 20. Eligibility. To be eligible for free broadband
13 service or a monthly credit for broadband service under this
14 Act, an applicant must provide proof of eligibility in the
15 form and manner prescribed by the Department.

16 Section 25. Broadband service payments and credit.

17 (a) For each family enrolled in the Low-Income Broadband
18 Assistance Program, the Department shall remit, through local
19 administrative agencies identified by the Department, to the
20 broadband service provider that portion of the family's bill
21 that is not the responsibility of the family. For purposes of
22 this Section, payment is due on the date specified on the
23 family's bill. The Department, the Department of Revenue, and
24 the local administrative agencies identified by the Department

1 shall adopt processes that provide for the timely payment
2 required by this Section.

3 (b) Each family that receives a credit for broadband
4 service under subsection (b) of Section 15 is responsible for
5 all actual charges for broadband service in excess of the
6 credit provided under subsection (b) of Section 15. The
7 Department may terminate a program participant's eligibility
8 for the credit available under subsection (b) of Section 15
9 upon notification by the broadband service provider that the
10 participant's monthly service payment is more than 45 days
11 past due.

12 Section 30. Rules. The Department may adopt any rules
13 necessary to implement the provisions of this Act.