

AN ACT concerning State government.

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

Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Illinois Broadband Adoption Fund Act.

Section 5. Definitions. As used in this Act:

"Broadband Internet" means lines or wireless channels that terminate at an end-user location and enable the end-user to receive a minimum service level of 25 megabits per second download speed and 3 megabits per second upload speed.

"Covered agencies" means those social service agencies receiving State or federal funds to assist persons eligible under the Illinois Broadband Adoption Program.

"Department" means the Department of Human Services.

"Fund" refers to the Illinois Broadband Adoption Fund.

"Provider" means a provider of broadband Internet in this State.

Section 10. Illinois Broadband Adoption Program. The Illinois Broadband Adoption Program is established for the purpose of expanding availability of broadband Internet connectivity throughout the State by:

- (1) providing financial assistance to State residents

to whom broadband Internet service is available, but who may require assistance to adopt or maintain service due to economic hardship;

(2) promoting the adoption of home broadband Internet service by State residents; and

(3) supporting digital skills training for State residents.

Section 15. Illinois Broadband Adoption Fund.

(a) The Illinois Broadband Adoption Fund is established as a special fund within the State treasury for the purpose of providing financial assistance under this Act. The Department shall administer the fund.

(b) The fund consists of:

(1) money received through the federal American Rescue Plan and other vehicles designed to address and relieve economic hardship for State households;

(2) money appropriated by the General Assembly;

(3) money transferred to the fund under the Treasurer as Custodian of Funds Act; and

(4) donations, gifts, and money received from any other source, including transfers from other funds or accounts.

(c) The Treasurer shall invest the money in the fund not currently needed to meet the obligations of the fund in the same manner as other public funds may be invested.

Section 20. Application for financial assistance.

(a) The Department may determine qualifications for broadband Internet provider participation and enter into an agreement with each provider under which the provider agrees to accept vouchers distributed by the Department under this Act as a form of payment for the provider's broadband Internet service.

(b) In coordination with the covered agencies, the Department shall send information regarding the availability of financial assistance under this Act to each eligible family or person receiving the public assistance in Section (d). The information must include:

(1) the name and contact information of each provider who has entered into an agreement with the Department as described in subsection (a) whose broadband Internet service is available in their area; and

(2) instructions for applying to the Department for financial assistance under this Section.

(c) An individual who receives information under subsection (b) may apply for financial assistance under this Section in the manner specified by the Department. Upon receipt of an application, the Department shall determine:

(1) the applicant's eligibility for financial assistance;

(2) the amount of financial assistance for which the

applicant is eligible; and

(3) whether the applicant is eligible for a single payment or a recurring payment of financial assistance, based on the Department's assessment of the applicant's need.

(d) An applicant for financial assistance under this Act is automatically eligible for financial assistance under this Act if:

(1) the applicant is receiving, or the applicant's household includes, an individual who is receiving benefits under:

(A) the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program;

(B) the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); or

(C) the Medicaid program; or

(2) the applicant's household includes a child who is eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

(e) If the Department determines under subsection (c) that an individual is eligible for financial assistance, or that the individual is eligible for financial assistance under subsection (d), the Department may provide financial assistance to the individual or to the broadband Internet provider designated by the individual in the form of one or more vouchers, each in an amount of up to \$50, that can be used by the individual to pay one or more of the following expenses:

(1) fees charged by a broadband Internet provider for installation, activation, equipment purchase, Wi-Fi extenders, or other one-time expenses of providing broadband Internet service to the individual;

(2) monthly subscription fees charged by a broadband Internet provider for the provision of broadband Internet service to the individual household, including modem, router, or other service or equipment charges; and

(3) overdue amounts owed to provider, including administrative fees and penalties.

A voucher or similar designation of eligibility may be provided by the Department in printed or electronic form.

(f) A provider that receives a voucher under this Section from an individual household who subscribes to the provider's broadband Internet service shall deduct the amount of the voucher from the amount owed by the subscriber for the provider's provision of broadband Internet service to the individual household on a monthly basis.

(g) If the fund does not receive an ongoing appropriation from the General Assembly, the Department shall provide a 90-day notice to participating households and broadband Internet providers that financial support will be discontinued.

Section 100. The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Law of the Civil Administrative Code of Illinois

is amended by adding Section 605-1055 as follows:

(20 ILCS 605/605-1055 new)

Sec. 605-1055. Illinois Innovation Voucher Program.

(a) The Department is authorized to establish the Illinois Innovation Voucher Program to be administered in accordance with this Section for the purpose of fostering research and development in key industry clusters leading to the creation of new products and services that can be marketed by Illinois businesses. Subject to appropriation, the Department may award innovation vouchers to eligible businesses to offset a portion of expenses incurred through a collaborative research engagement with an Illinois institution of higher education.

(b) Subject to appropriation, the Department may award matching funds in the form of innovation vouchers up to 75% of the cost of the research engagement not to exceed \$75,000. A business may receive only one innovation voucher under this Section per year.

(c) The Department, when administering the Program under this Section:

(1) must encourage participation among small and mid-sized businesses;

(2) must encourage participation in the Program in diverse geographic and economic areas, including urban, suburban, and rural areas of the State; and

(3) must encourage participation in the Program from

businesses that operate in key industries, as defined by the Department. These industries include, but are not limited to, the following: (i) agribusiness and agtech; (ii) energy; (iii) information technology; (iv) life sciences and healthcare; (v) manufacturing; and (vi) transportation and logistics.

(d) In order to be eligible for an innovation voucher under this Section, a business must satisfy all of the following conditions:

(1) the business must be an Illinois-based business. For the purposes of this Section, "Illinois-based business" means a business that has its principal place of business in this State or that employs at least 100 full-time employees, as defined under Section 5-5 of the Economic Development for a Growing Economy Tax Credit Act, in this State;

(2) the business must remain in this State for the duration of research engagement; and

(3) the partnering institution of higher education must be an Illinois-based institution of higher education and non-profit. For the purposes of this Section, "Illinois-based institution of higher education" means an institution of higher education that has its main physical campus in this State.

(e) The Department may adopt any rules necessary to administer the provisions of this Section.

Public Act 102-0648

SB2290 Enrolled

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Section 105. The State Finance Act is amended by adding  
Section 5.935 as follows:

(30 ILCS 105/5.935 new)

Sec. 5.935. The Illinois Broadband Adoption Fund.

Section 999. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
becoming law.