

2022 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 455

BY SENATOR BOUDREAUX

INTERNET. Provides for broadband connectivity. (8/1/22)

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AN ACT

To amend and reenact R.S. 51:1362 through 1364, relative to internet; to provide for broadband connectivity; to provide for development and implementation of a plan to provide access to broadband internet; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 51:1362 through 1364 are hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

§1362. The office of broadband and connectivity

A. There is hereby created within the office of the governor the office of broadband and connectivity. The ~~head of the office shall be the~~ executive director of broadband and connectivity **shall be the head of the office** who shall be appointed by the governor ~~to~~ **and shall** serve at his ~~the~~ pleasure **of the governor**. The appointment shall be subject to Senate confirmation.

B. The executive director shall employ necessary staff to carry out the duties and functions of the office as provided in this Chapter, or as otherwise provided by law.

C. On or before February first of each year, the executive director shall

1 prepare and submit to the governor, the House Committee on Commerce, the Senate
2 Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and International Affairs, and the
3 Joint Legislative Committee on Technology and Cybersecurity, a comprehensive
4 report to include, at a minimum, the following information:

5 (1) Activities undertaken by the office during the previous year.

6 (2) Data concerning broadband and other connectivity services in this state
7 and expansion and deployment of these services.

8 (3) An assessment of the current availability and accessibility of broadband
9 and other connectivity services in the state.

10 (4) A mapping initiative to **prioritize and** identify **the** availability of
11 broadband **in all areas of the state** to **furnish broadband services to** every home
12 and business in the state.

13 (5) Availability and description of public or private grants available for the
14 expansion or enhancement of broadband services and other connectivity services in
15 the state.

16 (6) Recommendations for legislative proposals.

17 (7) Identification of resources to assist the office in performing its functions
18 and duties.

19 D. The governor shall direct that all state agencies provide the executive
20 director with assistance in advancing the purpose of the office, and assure that the
21 activities of the office are fully coordinated with the activities of state agencies **with**
22 **responsibilities of** providing related services.

23 §1363. Functions, powers, and duties

24 The office of broadband and connectivity, ~~by and~~ through the executive
25 director or his employees, shall have the following functions, powers, and duties:

26 (1) ~~To provide~~ **Providing** comprehensive information relating to broadband
27 and connectivity in the state upon request to any person or government agency.

28 (2) ~~To promote and encourage~~ **Promoting and encouraging** broadband
29 adoption for households that have not accessed **had access to broadband** services.

1 (3) ~~To study and identify~~ **Studying and identifying** barriers to households
2 that have not adopted broadband services.

3 (4) ~~To advise and assist~~ **Advising and assisting** any person or government
4 agency in addressing particular broadband and connectivity needs, including
5 cooperative efforts among ~~such~~ persons and agencies.

6 (5) ~~To establish~~ **Establishing** procedures to review and comment on the
7 federal mapping initiative created by the Broadband DATA Act, P.L. 116-130 that
8 precisely maps the availability of broadband services to every home and business in
9 the state.

10 (6) ~~To research~~ **Researching** programs ~~relating~~ **relative** to broadband and
11 connectivity services and **to** receive notification from every person and government
12 agency engaged in ~~the provision of~~ broadband and connectivity services of **their**
13 program descriptions, appropriation data, and application procedures. The office
14 shall maintain a listing of existing programs and advise persons or government
15 agencies of ~~their~~ **the** existence **of these programs**.

16 (7) ~~To assist~~ **Assisting**, upon request, applicant persons or government
17 agencies in obtaining timely and efficient responses from state and federal agencies;
18 ~~to assist the~~ **assisting** applicants in consideration of program grant strategies; ~~to~~
19 ~~assist~~ **assisting** state and federal agencies in cooperative approaches to address the
20 needs of the applicants; and to provide technical assistance to government agencies
21 in formulating and implementing broadband expansion and connectivity programs.

22 (8) ~~To encourage~~ **Encouraging** the assistance of the private sector, including
23 broadband service providers, **in order** to effectuate the deployment **of** and access to
24 broadband and other connectivity services to all residents of the state.

25 (9) ~~To assist~~ **Assisting** the governor and the legislature in ~~the development~~
26 ~~and integration of~~ **developing and integrating** a broadband deployment plan and
27 long-range plans to more effectively and efficiently provide access to ~~any~~ new
28 **broadband** connectivity options.

29 (10) ~~To analyze and make~~ **Provide analysis and possible** recommendations

1 concerning proposed state legislation or programs that may affect the expansion of
2 broadband and other connectivity services.

3 (11) ~~To apply for, receive, and administer~~ **Application for, receipt, and**
4 **administration of** grants or financial assistance from persons or government
5 agencies.

6 (12) ~~To adopt and promulgate such~~ **Promulgation of necessary** rules and
7 regulations, procedures, instructions, and forms ~~as are deemed necessary~~ to
8 implement the functions, powers, and duties imposed upon the office by this Chapter
9 in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act.

10 (13) ~~To do all~~ **Performance of all** things necessary or convenient to carry out
11 the functions, powers, and duties expressly set forth in this Chapter.

12 §1364. Contract authority

13 The office is hereby empowered to enter into **may execute** any agreement or
14 contract with any persons or government agencies necessary or convenient to carry
15 out the provisions of this Chapter.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Thomas L. Tyler.

SB 455 Original DIGEST 2022 Regular Session Boudreaux

Proposed law makes technical changes to provisions regarding the office of broadband and connectivity.

Effective August 1, 2022.

(Amends R.S. 51:1362-1364)