

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 177

BY SENATOR MIZELL

A RESOLUTION

To create the Task Force on Access to Broadband High-Speed Internet Service to study the current impediments to rural access to broadband service and to devise solutions to achieve statewide access to broadband high-speed internet service.

WHEREAS, in the modern economy, rural broadband is a lifeline to quality of life and economic opportunity; and

WHEREAS, while broadband high-speed internet service is abundantly available in Louisiana cities, it is woefully absent in the rural areas of the state; and

WHEREAS, according to the United States Department of Agriculture, eighty percent of the twenty-four million American households who lack reliable, affordable, high-speed internet are in rural areas; and

WHEREAS, the federal government, though the United States Department of Agriculture, is currently making investments in broadband infrastructures to help transform rural America, providing innovation and technology to increase economic competitiveness and opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Agriculture currently provides loans and grants to increase high-speed internet access in rural areas; and

WHEREAS, a task force to study the current impediments to rural access to broadband service would be the best way to obtain funding for achieving statewide access to high-speed internet broadband service.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana hereby creates the Task Force on Access to Broadband High-Speed Internet Service to study

the current impediments to rural access to broadband service in Louisiana and to devise solutions to achieve statewide access to high-speed internet broadband service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be comprised of the following members:

- (1) The president of the Senate or his designee, who shall serve as chairman.
- (2) The chairman of the Louisiana Public Service Commission or his designee.
- (3) One member appointed by the Northshore Business Council.
- (4) One member appointed by the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives.
- (5) The commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry or his designee.
- (6) The state's chief information officer for the office of technology services within

the division of administration or his designee.

- (7) The secretary of Department of Economic Development or his designee.
- (8) One member appointed by the Louisiana Internet and Television Association.
- (9) One member appointed by the Louisiana Telecommunications Association.
- (10) One member appointed by the Cellular Telecommunications and Internet Association.
- (11) One member appointed by the North Louisiana Economic Partnership.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that task force members shall serve without compensation or reimbursement of expense, other than what may be afforded by their appointing authority, and that legislative members of the task force shall receive the same per diem and reimbursement of travel expenses as provided for attendance at legislative committee meetings under the rules of the respective house in which they serve.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the names of the appointees and their designees to the task force shall be submitted to the president of the Louisiana Senate no later than August 15, 2019.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a majority of the membership of the task force constitutes a quorum and that if all task force members have not been appointed by September 1, 2019, a majority of the appointed membership shall constitute a quorum.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that no later than March 1, 2020, the task force shall prepare a written report of its findings and recommendations to the Senate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the chairman of the Louisiana Public Service Commission, the Northshore Business Council, the Association of Louisiana Business Cooperatives, the commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, the chief information officer of the office of technology services, the secretary of the Department of Economic Development, the Louisiana Internet and Television Association, the Louisiana Telecommunications Association, the Cellular Telecommunications and Internet Association, and the North Louisiana Economic Partnership.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE