



**Hundredth Legislature - First Session - 2007
Committee Statement
LB 660**

Hearing Date: January 30, 2007

Committee On: Transportation and Telecommunications

Introducer(s): (Transportation and Telecommunications Committee)

Title: Change the Nebraska Telecommunications Universal Services Fund Act

Roll Call Vote – Final Committee Action:

Advanced to General File

Advanced to General File with Amendments

X Indefinitely Postponed

Vote Results:

7	Yes	Senators Pedersen, Louden, Lauatenbaugh, Schimek, Fischer, Stuthman, Aguilar
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No
Present, not voting

1	Absent	Senator Hudkins
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Proponents:

Dusty Vaughan, Legal Counsel, Introducer

Jerry Vap
John Jordison

Representing:

Transportation & Telecommunications Committee
Nebraska Public Service Commission
Great Plains Communications, Inc.

Opponents:

Rex Fisher
Wauneta Browne

Representing:

Qwest
AT&T

Neutral:

Representing:

Summary of purpose and/or changes:

LB 660 amends the Nebraska Telecommunications Universal Service Act to require Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) providers to contribute to the Nebraska Universal Service Fund.

The bill amends § 86-318 to add a new definition of “Telecommunications” to the Act, which means the transmission between or among points specified by the user of information of the user’s choosing without change in the form or content of the information as sent and received.

This definition widens the scope of telecommunications to include VoIP providers as offering telecommunications, thus requiring them to contribute to the Nebraska Universal Service Fund as any other company does that offers telecommunications.

The bill also amends the current definition of telecommunications company by substituting the word “providing” for the word “offering” and strikes the word “services” after telecommunications, so that telecommunications company means any organization “providing telecommunications for hire in Nebraska.” This wording broadens the definition and keeps Nebraska’s statutory definition consistent with recent FCC rulings.

The bill also amends § 86-323 in section 5 by striking the word “services” after telecommunications, so that the subsection reads “all providers of telecommunications should make an equitable and nondiscriminatory contribution to the preservation and advancement of universal service.” This slight change is consistent with recent FCC rulings, and conveys the intent of the Legislature that all telecommunications companies, including VoIP providers, should be contributing to the Nebraska Universal Service Fund.

Explanation of amendments, if any:

Senator Deb Fischer, Chairperson