

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION 380

Introduced by DeBoer, 10.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this resolution is to propose an interim study to examine issues regarding affordable broadband in Nebraska.

The Affordable Connectivity Program, a federal benefit program to provide affordable broadband to households, announced that in February of 2024 it would no longer be able to enroll new households, and that by April of 2024 funding for the program will likely lapse. In Nebraska, approximately ninety-six thousand households have enrolled in the federal program. Nebraska is investing unprecedented amounts of money into providing broadband to areas that are currently unserved or underserved. It is vitally important that households are able to afford the broadband provided in such areas.

This study should include, but need not be limited to, an examination of the following:

(1) Prices currently offered by Internet service providers to customers in service territories, including, but not limited to, available discounts and the cost of any devices required by the Internet service provider for broadband service, the speed of broadband service provided at each price point, the type of broadband service available in such areas, and any data caps related to customer plans offered;

(2) Anticipated prices by Internet service providers in areas that are currently unserved or underserved who have received or who have applied to receive state or federal funds to provide Internet services in such areas, including the type of broadband service expected to be provided;

(3) Government-led efforts to provide or encourage affordable broadband services, including, but not limited to, ways to coordinate efforts between the Legislature, the Public Service Commission, the Nebraska Broadband Office,

Internet service providers, and the federal government to encourage and support affordable broadband;

(4) Long-term issues relating to broadband deployment in high-cost, low-density areas, including, but not limited to, maintenance costs, legal obligations to continually provide service, consumer price variability, and new and emerging technologies; and

(5) Any other issues relating to the affordability and reliability of broadband services in Nebraska.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, SECOND SESSION:

1. That the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee of the Legislature shall be designated to conduct an interim study to carry out the purposes of this resolution.

2. That the committee shall upon the conclusion of its study make a report of its findings, together with its recommendations, to the Legislative Council or Legislature.