



Missouri House of Representatives

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
March 28, 2024

CONTACT: Rep. Ben Baker
(573) 751-9781
Ben.Baker@House.Mo.Gov

Missouri House Passes HB 2142 to Expand Broadband Access

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – The Missouri House of Representatives has passed HB 2142, an initiative aimed at bolstering broadband infrastructure and expanding internet access to underserved communities across the state. Sponsored by State Rep. Ben Baker, the bill garnered widespread bipartisan support and marks a significant milestone in Missouri's efforts to bridge the digital divide.

HB 2142 seeks to provide a tax deduction for funds received as grants to facilitate the provision or expansion of broadband internet in areas lacking connectivity. Currently, taxpayers can deduct federal grant money designated for this purpose from their state income tax. The bill extends this deduction to encompass state or local grant money, contingent upon the funds' earmarking for broadband development.

Rep. Baker, R-Neosho, hailed its passage as a pivotal moment for Missouri's future. "HB 2142 represents a crucial stride toward ensuring equitable access to essential broadband services for all Missourians. By incentivizing investment in broadband infrastructure through tax deductions, we're empowering communities to unlock their full potential and thrive in the digital age."

House Speaker Dean Plocher, R-Des Peres, echoed these sentiments, emphasizing the bipartisan collaboration that underpinned HB 2142's success. "Access to reliable broadband internet is not just a convenience but a necessity in today's interconnected world. The passage of HB 2142 underscores our commitment to ensuring that every Missourian has the tools they need to compete and succeed in the 21st century economy."

With its approval by the Missouri House of Representatives, HB 2142 now advances to the Missouri Senate for further consideration. The bill's passage signifies a concerted effort to bridge the digital divide and promote economic growth and opportunity throughout the state.

Representative Ben Baker, a Republican, represents Newton County (District 160) in the Missouri House of Representatives. He was elected to his first two-year term in November 2018. For more

*information, please contact Rep. Baker's office at 573-751-9781 or by email at ***Ben.Baker@House.Mo.Gov.****

###