

HB 1872 -- MISSOURI RURAL BROADBAND DEVELOPMENT FUND

SPONSOR: Johnson

This bill establishes the "Missouri Rural Broadband Development Fund." This fund consists of appropriated moneys, gifts, contributions, grants, or bequests made to the fund. The fund is to be used for the expansion of rural broadband access. For the purposes of the bill "rural areas" are defined as any county except chartered counties of the first classification or St. Louis city. The bill directs the Department of Economic Development to establish rules and regulations as well as a committee to evaluate the proposals for a grant submitted by each regional planning commission, on behalf of rural regional development groups, and to disburse grants in accordance with the purpose of the fund. However, a rural regional development group shall not qualify for a grant if the group's region includes a county outside of Missouri or a portion of another state, or if the group maintains an operating budget greater than \$250,000. A single grant may not exceed \$150,000.

This bill is similar to HB 2741 (2016).