

HB 2256 -- BROADBAND INTERNET SERVICE

SPONSOR: Johnson

This bill establishes a grant program within the Department of Economic Development to expand broadband Internet access to unserved and under-served parts of Missouri. Grants may be awarded to fund the acquisition and installation of middle-mile and last-mile infrastructure. Grants may be provided to corporations, incorporated businesses or partnerships, nonprofit organizations, cooperative associations, and political subdivisions. The department is directed to develop certain application procedures for the grant program, while other procedural time lines are already provided, and the grant application's requirements are listed in the bill. The department shall give priority to applications for broadband service projects in unserved areas, and may give priority to under-served areas in limited circumstances. No grant awarded under the bill may fund more than 50% of the total cost of a broadband service project, and no grant awarded to a single project shall exceed \$5 million. The department is also directed to report annually on the participation in the Broadband Internet Access Grant Program, and any results thereof.