

House Bill 15

By: Representative Kendrick of the 95th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 1 of Chapter 40 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to general provisions relative to promotion and deployment of broadband services,
3 so as to provide for the duties, membership, chairperson, meetings, reports, and
4 reimbursement of a task force to be established to evaluate and monitor the broadband equity
5 of state-funded broadband network projects; to require state agencies to cooperate with and
6 provide certain information to the task force; to provide for the Georgia Technology
7 Authority to promulgate certain policies concerning such task force; to provide for automatic
8 repeal; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

10 **SECTION 1.**

11 Article 1 of Chapter 40 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
12 general provisions relative to promotion and deployment of broadband services, is amended
13 by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

14 "50-40-4.

15 (a) There is established the Broadband Equity Task Force, which shall consist of five
16 members as follows:

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17 (1) Two members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

18 (2) Two members appointed by the President of the Senate; and

19 (3) One member appointed by the Governor.

20 (b) At its first organizational meeting, the task force shall elect from among its members
21 a chairperson who shall serve as such for the duration of the existence of the task force.

22 The chairperson shall call all meetings of the task force and preside over such meetings.

23 The members may also elect such other officers from among their number as they deem
24 appropriate. In the event that the chairperson's position becomes vacant, the task force
25 shall elect a new chairperson from among its legislative members following the
26 appointment of a new legislative member.

27 (c) Each task force member shall serve for a two-year term and until a successor is
28 appointed and qualified. No member shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

29 Vacancies in the task force shall be filled by appointment in the manner of the original
30 appointment. Three members of the committee shall constitute a quorum.

31 (d) The task force shall review and monitor all broadband network projects funded or
32 proposed to be funded with state funds and make recommendations to the Georgia
33 Technology Authority as to whether each broadband network project encourages and
34 fosters broadband equity within the state by evaluating whether such broadband network
35 project:

36 (1) Provides equitable deployment of broadband services to rural, low-income, and
37 historically disenfranchised communities;

38 (2) Utilizes data-driven, economically inclusive development strategies and
39 implementation plans deployed down to a neighborhood level; and

40 (3) Includes community planning and budgeting processes designed to highlight local
41 assets scaled for community economic growth.

42 (e) The task force shall make a report with its findings and recommendations regarding
43 each broadband network project to the Georgia Technology Authority.

44 (f) All state agencies shall cooperate with the task force by providing requested
45 information to assist the task force in its review and monitoring of broadband network
46 projects as provided for in this Code section.

47 (g) The members of the task force shall be reimbursed for their actual travel expenses
48 necessarily incurred in the performance of their duties and, for each day actually spent in
49 the performance of their duties, shall receive the same per diem as do members of the
50 General Assembly. Such allowance and reimbursement shall be paid in lieu of any other
51 per diem, allowance, or remuneration and shall be paid from funds appropriated to the
52 Georgia Technology Authority.

53 (h) The Georgia Technology Authority shall promulgate any policies necessary to
54 effectuate the provisions of this Code section.

55 (i) This Code section shall stand repealed on January 1, 2030."

56

SECTION 2.

57 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.