

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 155

BY REPRESENTATIVE DESHOTEL

A RESOLUTION

To create and provide for a study group to study the barriers to deploying broadband across public and private property and to report its findings, along with proposed legislation to remove barriers to deployment across public and private property, to the House of Representatives no later than forty-five days prior to the convening of the 2024 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, several hundred thousand households throughout Louisiana lack access to broadband service; and

WHEREAS, the continued lack of access to broadband service in this state presents challenges to individuals residing and businesses operating in this state; and

WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana received more than one hundred seventy-six million dollars from the American Rescue Plan's Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund (CPF) to expand access to broadband in the state; and

WHEREAS, the office of broadband development and connectivity has awarded broadband providers CPF monies for the deployment of broadband to unserved areas through the Granting Unserved Municipalities Broadband Opportunities (GUMBO) grant program; and

WHEREAS, any unused CPF monies must be returned to the United States Department of Treasury by December 31, 2026; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that the state will receive an additional one billion dollars through the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program of the United States Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration to further expand access to broadband in the state; and

WHEREAS, acquiring rights to access and use of public and private property, including rights-of-way and servitudes, for broadband deployment can be a lengthy process that impedes broadband deployment; and

WHEREAS, delays in deploying broadband in the state puts the state's federal funding for broadband at risk.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby create a study group to study the barriers to deploying broadband across public and private property and does hereby request the study group to report its findings, along with proposed legislation to remove barriers to deployment across public and private property, to the House of Representatives no later than forty-five days prior to the convening of the 2024 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study group shall be comprised of the following members:

- (1) The secretary of the Department of Transportation and Development or his designee.
- (2) The executive director of the office of broadband development and connectivity or his designee.
- (3) The chief executive officer of the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives or his designee.
- (4) The chief executive officer of the Cellular Telecommunications Industry Association or his designee.
- (5) The president of the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry or his designee.
- (6) The executive director of the Louisiana Internet and Television-The Broadband Association or his designee.
- (7) The president of the Louisiana Landowners Association or his designee.

- (8) The executive director of the Louisiana Municipal Association or his designee.
- (9) One representative from the Louisiana Railroads Association.
- (10) The executive director of the Louisiana Police Jury Association or his designee.
- (11) The chairman of the Louisiana Telecommunications Association or his designee.
- (12) One representative from the Natural Resources Management Association.
- (13) One representative from AT&T.
- (14) The chief executive officer of Cleco or his designee.
- (15) One representative from Cox Communications.
- (16) The chief executive officer of Entergy Louisiana or his designee.
- (17) The general manager of the Louisiana Energy and Power Authority or his designee.
- (18) The director of special projects in the office of the governor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the director of special projects in the office of the governor shall serve as the chair of the study group.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation and Development shall provide staff support to assist the study group in its efforts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the names of the members designated or selected as provided herein shall be submitted to the chairman of the study group on or before July 31, 2023.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study group shall submit a written report of its findings and proposed legislation to the House of Representatives no later than forty-five days prior to the convening of the 2024 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the director of special projects in the office of the governor, secretary of the Department of Transportation and Development, the executive director of the office of broadband development and connectivity, the chief executive officer of the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives, the chief executive officer of the Cellular Telecommunications Industry Association, the president of the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry,

the executive director of the Louisiana Internet and Television-The Broadband Association, the president of the Louisiana Landowners Association, the executive director of the Louisiana Municipal Association, the Louisiana Railroads Association, the executive director of the Louisiana Police Jury Association, the chairman of the Louisiana Telecommunications Association, the Natural Resources Management Association, AT&T, the chief executive officer of Cleco, Cox Communications, the general manager of the Louisiana Energy and Power Authority, and the chief executive officer of Entergy Louisiana.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES