INTERNET. Provides for broadband connectivity. (8/1/22)

AN ACT

To amend and reenact R.S. 51:1362 through 1364, relative to internet; to provide for broadband connectivity; to provide for development and implementation of a plan to provide access to broadband internet; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 51:1362 through 1364 are hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

§1362. The office of broadband and connectivity

A. There is hereby created within the office of the governor the office of broadband and connectivity. The head of the office shall be the executive director of broadband and connectivity shall be the head of the office who shall be appointed by the governor to and shall serve at his the pleasure of the governor. The appointment shall be subject to Senate confirmation.

B. The executive director shall employ necessary staff to carry out the duties and functions of the office as provided in this Chapter, or as otherwise provided by law.

C. On or before February first of each year, the executive director shall
prepare and submit to the governor, the House Committee on Commerce, the Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and International Affairs, and the Joint Legislative Committee on Technology and Cybersecurity, a comprehensive report to include, at a minimum, the following information:

(1) Activities undertaken by the office during the previous year.

(2) Data concerning broadband and other connectivity services in this state and expansion and deployment of these services.

(3) An assessment of the current availability and accessibility of broadband and other connectivity services in the state.

(4) A mapping initiative to prioritize and identify the availability of broadband in all areas of the state to furnish broadband services to every home and business in the state.

(5) Availability and description of public or private grants available for the expansion or enhancement of broadband services and other connectivity services in the state.

(6) Recommendations for legislative proposals.

(7) Identification of resources to assist the office in performing its functions and duties.

D. The governor shall direct that all state agencies provide the executive director with assistance in advancing the purpose of the office and assure that the activities of the office are fully coordinated with the activities of state agencies with responsibilities of providing related services.

§1363. Functions, powers, and duties

The office of broadband and connectivity, by and through the executive director or his employees, shall have the following functions, powers, and duties:

(1) To provide comprehensive information relating to broadband and connectivity in the state upon request to any person or government agency.

(2) To promote broadband adoption for households that have not had access to broadband services.
(3) To study and identify **studying and identifying** barriers to households that have not adopted broadband services.

(4) To advise and assist **advising and assisting** any person or government agency in addressing particular broadband and connectivity needs, including cooperative efforts among such persons and agencies.

(5) To establish **establishing** procedures to review and comment on the federal mapping initiative created by the Broadband DATA Act, P.L. 116-130 that precisely maps the availability of broadband services to every home and business in the state.

(6) To research **researching** programs relating **relative** to broadband and connectivity services and to receive notification from every person and government agency engaged in the provision of broadband and connectivity services of **their** program descriptions, appropriation data, and application procedures. The office shall maintain a listing of existing programs and advise persons or government agencies of **their the existence of these programs**.

(7) To assist **assisting**, upon request, applicant persons or government agencies in obtaining timely and efficient responses from state and federal agencies; to assist the assisting applicants in consideration of program grant strategies; to assist assisting state and federal agencies in cooperative approaches to address the needs of the applicants; and to provide technical assistance to government agencies in formulating and implementing broadband expansion and connectivity programs.

(8) To encourage **encouraging** the assistance of the private sector, including broadband service providers, **in order** to effectuate the deployment **of** and access to broadband and other connectivity services to all residents of the state.

(9) To assist **assisting** the governor and the legislature in the development and integration of **developing and integrating** a broadband deployment plan and long-range plans to more effectively and efficiently provide access to **any new broadband connectivity options**.

(10) To analyze and make **provide analysis and possible** recommendations
concerning proposed state legislation or programs that may affect the expansion of broadband and other connectivity services.

(11) To apply for, receive, and administer Application for, receipt, and administration of grants or financial assistance from persons or government agencies.

(12) To adopt and promulgate such Promulgation of necessary rules and regulations, procedures, instructions, and forms as are deemed necessary to implement the functions, powers, and duties imposed upon the office by this Chapter in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act.

(13) To do all Performance of all things necessary or convenient to carry out the functions, powers, and duties expressly set forth in this Chapter.

§1364. Contract authority

The office is hereby empowered to enter into may execute any agreement or contract with any persons or government agencies necessary or convenient to carry out the provisions of this Chapter.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Thomas L. Tyler.

DIGEST
SB 455 Original 2022 Regular Session Boudreaux

Proposed law makes technical changes to provisions regarding the office of broadband and connectivity.

Effective August 1, 2022.

(Amends R.S. 51:1362-1364)