

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 388(CRA)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE HOUSE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Offered: 3/20/08

Referred: Finance

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES GUTTENBERG, Kerttula, LeDoux, Joule

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act establishing the Alaska Broadband Task Force; and providing for an effective**
2 **date."**

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 * **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section
5 to read:

6 **LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.** (a) The legislature finds that

7 (1) many smaller communities in the state, particularly in rural areas, have
8 limited access to the Internet;

9 (2) although the state is connected to the rest of the world through several
10 fiber optic cables, many areas within the state are unable to take advantage of the speed and
11 capacity the fiber optic cables offer;

12 (3) removing barriers to broadband deployment by using a technology-neutral
13 approach will encourage lower prices for broadband service and offer more choices to
14 consumers;

1 (4) the deployment of broadband networking and advanced
2 telecommunications services throughout the state are essential for the state to keep pace with
3 global changes in economic diversification, education, health care, energy and environmental
4 technology, and public safety;

5 (5) state action is necessary to support investment in and development of
6 accessible broadband networks in the state.

7 (b) The purpose of this Act is to establish the broadband task force to

8 (1) identify barriers to broadband access and recommend options for removing
9 those barriers;

10 (2) identify opportunities for increased broadband deployment and access by
11 users in the state;

12 (3) recommend the means for the creation and deployment of new and
13 advanced communications options in the state.

14 * **Sec. 2.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
15 read:

16 ALASKA BROADBAND TASK FORCE. (a) There is established in the legislative
17 branch of state government the Alaska Broadband Task Force. The task force consists of 13
18 members appointed as follows:

19 (1) the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives
20 shall each appoint one member of the majority organizational caucus and one member of the
21 minority organizational caucus from their respective bodies; if there is no minority
22 organizational caucus in a house, the presiding officer of that house shall appoint two
23 members from the majority organizational caucus of that house;

24 (2) four members shall be representatives of federal, state, and municipal
25 agencies responsible for information technology, economic development, infrastructure
26 development, and public utility regulation and appointed jointly by the president of the senate
27 and the speaker of the house of representatives;

28 (3) five members shall be representatives of technology, telecommunications,
29 and investment businesses doing business in the state and appointed jointly by the president of
30 the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives.

31 (b) The task force established under (a) of this section

1 (1) may begin work immediately after a majority of the membership is
2 appointed;

3 (2) shall

4 (A) determine the current level of broadband access in the urban and
5 rural areas of the state;

6 (B) determine an acceptable level of broadband service throughout the
7 state;

8 (C) determine the means for increasing the level of service, including
9 regulatory changes and investment incentives for areas that are below the acceptable
10 level determined in (B) of this paragraph;

11 (D) explore the potential for increased use of broadband service for the
12 purposes of education and health care delivery and other private and governmental
13 uses;

14 (E) solicit suggestions from persons engaged in the development of
15 broadband infrastructure and operation of broadband services for expanding the
16 availability of broadband service in the state;

17 (F) study the different means for delivering broadband service,
18 including satellite and other wireless means;

19 (G) establish best practices to establish and maintain a database that
20 lists current broadband service providers and where each operates, projects that are
21 currently being developed, and projects that are in the planning and predevelopment
22 stage;

23 (H) explore ways for encouraging state and municipal agencies to
24 expand the development and use of broadband services, including audio and video
25 streaming, voice-over Internet protocol, teleconferencing, and wireless networking;

26 (I) submit a report of the initial findings and recommendations for
27 expanding access to broadband services throughout the state to the president of the
28 senate and the speaker of the house of representatives before January 31, 2009;

29 (J) submit a final report of findings and recommendations for
30 expanding access to broadband services throughout the state to the president of the
31 senate and the speaker of the house of representatives before December 31, 2009;

1 (K) terminate on June 30, 2010.

2 (c) Members of the task force shall select a chair and vice-chair. Administrative
3 support for the task force shall be provided by legislative staff designated jointly by the
4 president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives.

5 (d) A member of the task force who is not a legislator or a full-time employee of the
6 state or a municipality is entitled to per diem and travel expenses authorized for boards and
7 commissions under AS 39.20.180.

8 (e) A vacancy on the task force shall be filled in the same manner as the original
9 appointment under (a)(1) - (3) of this section.

10 * **Sec. 3.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2008.