

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 903

99TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE KELLEY (127).

1823H.011

D. ADAM CRUMBLISS, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To repeal section 209.253, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof one new section relating to the statewide telecommunications equipment distribution program.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Section 209.253, RSMo, is repealed and one new section enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as section 209.253, to read as follows:

209.253. 1. The commission shall provide a statewide dual-party system, using third-party intervention to connect deaf, hearing-impaired and speech-impaired persons and offices of organizations representing the deaf, hearing-impaired and speech-impaired with telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDDs) and the telephone system, making available reasonable access to telephone service to eligible subscribers.

2. The Missouri assistive technology advisory council shall provide a statewide telecommunications equipment distribution program making available reasonable access to basic telecommunications service for eligible subscribers who are unable to use traditional telecommunications equipment due to disability.

3. The program administrator of the statewide telecommunications equipment distribution program shall:

(1) Provide consumer support and outreach;

(2) Develop administrative procedures to assure an appropriate match between an individual with a disability and adaptive telecommunications equipment;

(3) Provide a full range of adaptive telecommunications equipment to meet the needs of individuals with all types of disabilities;

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

17 (4) Procure and distribute adaptive telecommunications equipment in the most
18 cost-effective manner possible; ~~and~~

19 (5) Expend no less than ten percent of total expenditures for consumer support and
20 outreach and no more than twenty percent of total expenditures for program administration in
21 any fiscal year; **and**

22 **(6) Provide financial assistance to allow individuals whose household income is at**
23 **or below seventy-five percent of the federal poverty level to obtain hearing aids.**

24 4. Missouri public or nonpublic organizations shall be used to deliver consumer support
25 and outreach and administrative services in all contracts and subcontracts for a statewide
26 telecommunications equipment distribution program.

27 5. The Missouri assistive technology advisory council shall be the program administrator
28 for the statewide telecommunications equipment distribution program.

29 6. The Missouri assistive technology advisory council may promulgate rules necessary
30 to implement and administer the telecommunications equipment distribution program, but no
31 rule or portion of a rule promulgated pursuant to the authority of this section shall become
32 effective unless it has been promulgated pursuant to chapter 536.

33 7. The Missouri assistive technology advisory council may enter into contracts as
34 necessary to carry out the telecommunications equipment distribution program, including but not
35 limited to contracts with disability organizations.

36 8. Nothing in sections 209.251 to 209.259 shall be construed to require the state to
37 purchase, install or maintain equipment on an eligible subscriber's premises which will enable
38 the eligible subscriber to participate in the dual-party relay system.

39 9. Nothing in sections 209.251 to 209.259 shall be construed to require the state to
40 provide adaptive telecommunications equipment at no cost to all eligible subscribers. The
41 Missouri assistive technology advisory council shall adopt procedures to limit eligibility based
42 on financial means, existing access to adaptive telecommunications equipment, prior usage of
43 the equipment distribution program, and other factors deemed appropriate by the program
44 administrator. The scope of the program shall be limited to reasonable access to basic
45 telecommunications as defined by the program administrator, subject to appropriations.

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