

HB 2638 -- BROADBAND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

SPONSOR: Riggs

This bill establishes the "Broadband Development Council" consisting of 29 members including members from certain state agencies, members of the general public representing certain classifications of broadband users, and three members each from the Senate appointed by the President Pro Tem and the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker. The public members of the Council will be appointed by the Governor and serve terms as specified in the bill.

The responsibilities of the Council are specified in the bill and include exploring ways to expand access to broadband services; the potential for increased use of broadband for education, career readiness, workforce preparation and alternative career training; ways to encourage state and municipal agencies to expand service to better serve the public through the use of streaming, voice over Internet protocol, teleconferencing, and wireless networking. The Council shall make recommendations to the General Assembly regarding strategies to make broadband available to certain communities and statutory changes needed to enhance broadband access in the state. The Council must submit a report to the General Assembly and the Governor on or before January 1 of each year summarizing the actions of the Council the previous year. The bill specifies the powers of the Council.

The Council must establish a mapping of broadband services in the state based on analysis of data, demand, and other relevant information and publish an interactive public map that provides certain information based on information received by the Council from specified data sources. Any entity that receives state or federal funds to install infrastructure for broadband services must provide information to the Council concerning the location, type and extent of the infrastructure.