

February 17, 2009

H 179. ACCESSIBLE ELECTRONIC INFO ACT/BLIND/DISABLED. Filed 2/17/09. *TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN AN ACCESSIBLE ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SERVICE FOR BLIND AND DISABLED PERSONS AND TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR THE SERVICE.*

Enacts a new Article 4 of GS Chapter 168 to establish the "Accessible Electronic Information Act," which directs the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Division of Services for the Blind (Division), to establish, operate, promote, and administer a statewide accessible electronic information service. Defines the service as providing blind and disabled persons with news and other timely information from a multistate service center that uses computers and telecommunications technology for the content acquisition and rapid distribution in an appropriate form. Requires that the Director of the Division provide the service to blind and disabled persons through an agreement with a qualified entity. Directs that the Division (1) plan for continuation of the service from year to year, (2) maximize the use of federal and other funds available by obtaining grant or in-kind support from appropriate programs, and (3) secure access to low-cost interstate rates for telecommunications by reimbursement or otherwise. Creates definitions for *accessible electronic information service*, *blind and disabled persons*, and *qualified entity*. Includes legislative findings.

Appropriates \$75,000 for 2009-10 from the General Fund to DHHS to be used by the Division to establish an accessible electronic information service for blind and disabled persons in the state.

Effective July 1, 2009.

Intro. by Adams.

GS 168, APPROP