

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019

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SENATE BILL DRS45236-MQ-96

Short Title: Expand GREAT Grant Program. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators deViere, Woodard, and Foushee (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO ALLOW CITIES AND COUNTIES TO RECEIVE BROADBAND
3 INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS UNDER THE GROWING RURAL ECONOMIES WITH
4 ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 SECTION 1. G.S. 143B-1373 reads as rewritten:

7 "§ 143B-1373. Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) program.

8 (a) As used in this section, the following definitions apply:

9 (1) Agriculture. – Activities defined in G.S. 106-581.1.

10 (2) Broadband service. – For the purposes of this section, terrestrially deployed
11 Internet access service with transmission speeds of at least 10 megabits per
12 second (Mbps) download and at least one megabit per second upload (10:1).

13 (3) Coastal Plain Region. – The portion of the State lying east of the eastern
14 boundaries of Franklin, Lee, Moore, Wake, and Warren Counties.

15 (4) Cooperative. – An electric membership corporation, organized pursuant to
16 Article 2 of Chapter 117 of the General Statutes, or a telephone membership
17 corporation, organized pursuant to Article 4 of Chapter 117 of the General
18 Statutes.

19 (5) Eligible economically distressed county. – A county designated as a
20 development tier one area, as defined in G.S. 143B-473.08.

21 (6) Eligible project. – An eligible project is a discrete and specific project located
22 in an unserved area of an economically distressed county seeking to provide
23 broadband service to homes, businesses, and community anchor points not
24 currently served. Eligible projects do not include middle mile, backhaul, and
25 other similar projects not directed at broadband service to end users.

26 (7) Eligible recipient. – Eligible grant recipients are cities, counties, private
27 providers of broadband services, including cooperatively organized entities,
28 or any partnerships formed between cities, counties, cooperatively organized
29 entities, private providers, or any combination thereof, on or after January 1,
30 2018.

31 ...

32 (b) The Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology Fund is established as a
33 special revenue fund in the Department of Information Technology. The Secretary may award
34 grants from the Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology Fund to eligible recipients
35 for eligible projects. The funds shall be used by the recipient to pay for infrastructure costs
36 associated with an eligible project. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, a city



1 or county may utilize grant funds received under this section to partner with a private provider
2 of broadband services, including cooperatively organized entities in connection with an eligible
3 project. State funds appropriated to this Fund shall be considered an information technology
4 project within the meaning of G.S. 143C-1-2.

5"

6 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.