

Committee on Communications, Energy, and Public Utilities

CS/HB 945 — Broadband Internet Service

by Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development Appropriations, and Senators Hays, Lynn, and Sachs)

The bill requires the Department of Management Services (DMS), in consultation with the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), to develop and submit to the United States Department of Commerce a request to transfer the federal broadband grant from DMS to DEO. DMS is to provide immediate written notice upon receipt from the United States Department of Commerce of its approval or denial of the request for a transfer of the broadband to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives of that decision. If the request for transfer is approved, DMS is required to submit a budget amendment for approval by the Legislative Budget Commission to transfer from DMS to DEO the funds necessary to implement the remainder of the bill.

Effective upon approval of the budget amendment, the bill transfers, by type-two transfer, the Broadband Initiative Program from DMS to DEO. It designates DEO to replace DMS as the agency responsible for implementing the state's broadband program, and designates DEO as the single state entity to receive and manage all federal State Broadband Initiative funds. DEO is required to establish a public-private partnership that will collaboratively perform the work of implementing the broadband program. DEO's strategic plan to increase use of broadband Internet service in Florida must be developed with the use of consumer research into residential and business technology utilization data. Broadband mapping must be developed at the census block level of detail.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

Vote: Senate 40-0; House 97-19