

No. R-424. Joint resolution urging Google Incorporated to give all due consideration to Vermont applicants for selection to participate in the Google Fiber for Communities project.

(J.R.H.45)

Offered by: Committee on Commerce and Economic Development

Whereas, pursuant to Act 79 of 2007, the general assembly found that “the availability of mobile telecommunications and broadband services is essential for promoting the economic development of the state, the education of its young people and life-long learning, the delivery of cost-effective health care, the public safety, and the ability of citizens to participate fully in society and civic life” and that “the universal availability” of “broadband services promotes the general good of the state,” and

Whereas, in order to meet this crucial public policy objective, Act 79 provided for the establishment of the Vermont Telecommunications Authority (VTA), whose primary goals included “that all residences and business in all regions of the state have access to affordable broadband services not later than the end of the year 2010,” and

Whereas, although the VTA is working diligently to meet this objective and has made great progress, there are still too many Vermonters who are dependent on 20th century dial-up technology for access to the Internet, and

Whereas, even in Vermont communities that are fortunate enough to have broadband access, the speed and quality of the service are far below the technological standards that are available in other nations, as is true in nearly all broadband systems in the United States, and

Whereas, in order to test in the United States the use of greatly improved broadband service that is delivered at the amazing speed of one gigabit per second, 100 times faster than the speed currently available to most U.S. residents, Google Inc. has organized the Google Fiber for Communities project, and

Whereas, in this project, Google Inc. will select a limited number of communities nationwide with populations of at least 50,000 and up to 500,000 to be wired with fiber-to-the-home connections, and

Whereas, as a first step, the interested communities are required to submit an application to Google Inc. no later than March 26, 2010, and

Whereas, each community's new connectivity will serve as a platform for testing next-generation Internet applications and new deployment (construction) techniques to build fiber networks, and these new Google networks will be operated as open access systems allowing users a choice of multiple service providers, and

Whereas, the VTA board is applying on behalf of the state of Vermont with a daring proposal that the Google Fiber for Communities project be conducted in the Green Mountain State with the entire state serving as the test community, and

Whereas, as a state with a population of slightly over 600,000, Vermont would serve as an excellent testing ground for Google Inc. to experiment with new Internet capacities in urban and rural areas and to develop new ways of

constructing fiber systems across Vermont's imposing mountainous geography, and

Whereas, Governor Douglas has expressed his support for the VTA's application for Vermont to be selected, as a state, to participate in the Google Fiber for Communities project, and

Whereas, aside from the VTA application, individual Vermont municipalities are applying to be selected as a Google Fiber Community and have developed innovative and worthy proposals for Google Inc.'s review, and

Whereas, the state of Vermont would be an ideal candidate, based either on the proposal of the VTA or on those of individual municipalities, to host one or more Google Fiber for Communities projects, especially as Google Inc. has already established an administrative presence in the state with an office in White River Junction, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly urges Google Inc. to give all due consideration to Vermont applicants, both the Vermont Telecommunications Authority and local municipalities, for selection to participate in the Google Fiber for Communities project, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Google Inc.'s chairman of the board and chief executive officer, Eric Schmidt, to senior vice president for corporate development and chief legal officer David Drummond, to the Vermont Telecommunications

Authority's executive director, Thomas Murray, and to the Vermont
Congressional Delegation.