

1 TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

2 The Committee on Ways and Means to which was referred House Bill  
3 No. 870 entitled “An act relating to telecommunications” respectfully reports  
4 that it has considered the same and recommends that the bill be amended as  
5 follows:

6 First: By striking out Sec. 4 (capital appropriation for Connectivity  
7 Initiative) in its entirety

8 Second: In Sec. 5, 30 V.S.A. § 7523, in subsection (b), by striking out  
9 “2020” and inserting in lieu thereof “2021”

10 Third: By striking out Sec. 10 in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a  
11 new Sec. 10 to read as follows:

12 Sec. 10. PROPOSAL; SCHOOL CONNECTIVITY GRANT PROGRAM

13 On or before December 1, 2016, the Secretary of Education and the Director  
14 of Telecommunications and Connectivity shall propose to the General  
15 Assembly in the form of a draft bill a school connectivity grant program  
16 designed to provide competitive grants to public schools for capital costs  
17 associated with upgrading the Internet connection to a public school or  
18 purchasing hardware for infrastructure for internal Internet connections. The  
19 goal of the program is to ensure that the maximum Internet service available to  
20 the school is accessible by all personnel and students on school grounds,  
21 consistent with and supportive of educational policies and objectives.

1 Proposed criteria shall prioritize rural communities having a percentage of  
2 households categorized as low-income that is higher than the State average,  
3 and shall seek to maximize the availability of federal matching funds.

4 Fourth: By adding a new Sec. 11 and a readers' assistance to read as  
5 follows:

6 \* \* \* Miscellaneous Provisions; Telecommunications

7 Grant Programs \* \* \*

8 Sec. 11. RECOVERY AND REPURPOSING OF

9 TELECOMMUNICATIONS GRANT FUNDS

10 To the extent State funds are recovered by the Department of Public  
11 Service, as the successor in interest to the Vermont Telecommunications  
12 Authority (VTA), as the result of a grant recipient's failure to comply with the  
13 terms of a grant agreement entered into with the VTA, such public monies  
14 shall be deposited in the Connectivity Fund.

15 Fifth: By adding a new Sec. 12 to read as follows:

16 Sec. 12. HIGH-COST PROGRAM; PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD;

17 DEADLINE

18 The Public Service Board shall issue a procedures order for implementation  
19 of the High-Cost Program established under 30 V.S.A. § 7515 not later than  
20 September 1, 2016. If the Board fails to do so, the Board shall provide a report

1 to the General Assembly and the Governor detailing reasons for failing to  
2 comply with this mandate.

3 and by renumbering all sections to be numerically correct

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6 (Committee vote: \_\_\_\_\_)

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\_\_\_\_\_

8

Representative \_\_\_\_\_

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FOR THE COMMITTEE