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Introduced by Representatives Briglin of Thetford, Chesnut-Tangerman of  
Middletown Springs, Sibia of Dover, Burke of Brattleboro,  
Coffey of Guilford, Conlon of Cornwall, Conquest of Newbury,  
Cupoli of Rutland City, Gannon of Wilmington, Gonzalez of  
Winooski, Haas of Rochester, Hashim of Dummerston, Jickling  
of Randolph, Kimbell of Woodstock, Kornheiser of Brattleboro,  
Long of Newfane, McCormack of Burlington, Mrowicki of  
Putney, Pajala of Londonderry, Partridge of Windham, Patt of  
Worcester, Shaw of Pittsford, Toleno of Brattleboro, Trieber of  
Rockingham, and Young of Greensboro

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Utilities; electric companies; broadband Internet access service; study

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require the

Commissioner of Public Service to study the feasibility of electric companies

providing broadband Internet access service using electric distribution and

transmission infrastructure.

An act relating to electric companies and broadband Internet access service

1 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

2 Sec. 1. STUDY; FEASIBILITY OF ELECTRIC COMPANIES OFFERING

3 BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS SERVICE IN VERMONT

4 (a) The Commissioner of Public Service shall study the feasibility of  
5 Vermont electric companies providing broadband Internet access service  
6 (BIAS) using electric distribution and transmission infrastructure. Among  
7 other things, a feasibility determination shall address the maturity of the  
8 technology, the compatibility of BIAS with existing electric service, the  
9 financial investment necessary to undertake the provision of BIAS,  
10 identification of the unserved and underserved areas of the State where the  
11 provision of BIAS by an electric company appears feasible; the impact on  
12 electric rates, and the financial risk to electric companies.

13 (b) In performing the feasibility study required by this section, the  
14 Commissioner, in consultation with the Public Utility Commission, shall  
15 consider regulatory barriers to the provision of BIAS by electric companies,  
16 and shall develop legislative proposals to address those barriers. In addition,  
17 the Commissioner, in collaboration with electric company representatives,  
18 shall evaluate whether it is in the public interest and also in the interest of  
19 electric companies for electric companies to:

1           (1) make improvements to the distribution grid in furtherance of  
2           providing BIAS in conjunction with electric distribution grid transformation  
3           projects;

4           (2) operate BIAS using electric distribution and transmission  
5           infrastructure to provide such service to unserved and underserved areas of the  
6           State; and

7           (3) permit a commercial entity to lease utility capacity to provide BIAS  
8           to unserved and underserved areas of the State.

9           (c) As used in this section, “unserved” means a location having access to  
10          Internet service with speeds less than 10 Mbps download and 1 Mbps upload,  
11          and “underserved” means a location having access to Internet service with  
12          speeds greater than 10 Mbps download and 1 Mbps upload and less than  
13          25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload.

14          (d) The Commissioner shall report the feasibility findings and  
15          recommendations required by this section to the Senate Committee on Finance  
16          and to the House Committee on Energy and Technology on or before  
17          December 1, 2019.

18          Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

19          This act shall take effect on passage.