

obligations and shall recommend best practices for minimizing disruptions to

E-911 services during power outages through:

(1) consumer education and community outreach;

(2) technical and financial assistance to consumers and communities;

(3) cost-effective and technologically efficient ways in which providers

or alternative entities can provide such information and assistance; and

(4) ongoing monitoring of provider compliance with backup-power

obligations.

* * * PEG Access; Joint Information Technology

Oversight Committee * * *

Sec. 27. PEG ACCESS STUDY COMMITTEE

(a) Creation. There is created a PEG Access Study Committee. The Committee shall consider changes to the State's cable franchising authority and develop for legislative consideration alternative regulatory and funding mechanisms to support public, educational, and government (PEG) access channels and services to communities across Vermont.

(b) Members. The Committee shall be composed of the following members:

(1) a member of the Senate Committee on Finance appointed by the Committee on Committees;

(2) a member of the House Committee on Energy and Technology appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(3) the Commissioner of Public Service or designee;

(4) a member of the Public Utility Commission or designee;

(5) a representative from the Vermont Access Network, selected by its

Board of Directors;

(6) a representative from a Vermont cable company, selected by the

Governor; and

(7) the Executive Director of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns or designee.

(c) Powers and Duties. The Committee shall consider changes in federal and State law and policy, market trends, and any other matters that have an affect on the availability of or funding for PEG access channels and services in Vermont. The Committee shall hold at least one public hearing on the value of PEG access television to Vermont communities; the costs of such programming and services; and funding options. The Committee shall solicit input from regulators, communications providers, access management organizations, and any other organizations or individuals it deems appropriate.

(d) Assistance. The Committee shall be entitled to staff services of the Department of Public Service, the Office of the Legislative Council, and the Joint Fiscal Office.

(e) Report. The Committee shall submit its findings and recommendations in the form of draft legislation to the Senate Committee on Finance and the

House Committee on Energy and Technology on or before November 15, 2019.

(f) Meetings. The Commissioner of Public Service shall call the first meeting of the Committee to occur on or before July 1, 2019. The Committee shall select a chair and vice chair from among its members at the first meeting. A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum. A member's physical presence is required in order to count toward a quorum and to vote. The Committee is authorized to meet up to six times and shall cease to exist on December 15, 2019.

(g) Compensation and reimbursement. Legislative members of the Committee shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 406. Except for members employed by the State, other members of the Committee shall be entitled to per diem compensation as provided under 32 V.S.A. § 1010(a) and mileage reimbursement as provided under 32 V.S.A. § 1267.

* * * State-owned 2G Microcells; Municipal Use * * *

Sec. 27a. 2G MICROCELLS; MUNICIPALITIES; EMERGENCY
SERVICES

(a) The Commissioner of Public Service is authorized to spend up to \$100,000.00 for contractual services to provide resources and technical assistance to municipalities seeking to acquire or use State-owned 2G microcells for the purpose of providing emergency communications in areas

that otherwise would not have access to mobile wireless E-911 service, consistent with the objectives of prior State investments in microcell network infrastructure. Technical assistance shall include a cost-benefit analysis, which shall include consideration of rates and charges related to electric, backhaul, and geolocation services, pole rental fees, backup-power requirements, co-location requirements, the use of radio spectrum, and the negotiation of roaming agreements with national wireless providers.

(b) The Commissioner of Public Service is authorized to provide financial assistance to municipalities for capital costs associated with the acquisition or installation of 2G microcells pursuant to this section. The Commissioner shall establish uniform standards and procedures applicable to the financial assistance provided pursuant to this subsection and those standards and procedures shall be consistent with the objectives of prior State investments in microcell network infrastructure. The standards shall specify that the municipality is responsible for operational costs of any microcell it acquires under this section and, in addition, the standards shall require that such microcells become fully operational within a reasonable period of time.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, a municipality may use funds generated by its taxing or assessment power for the limited purpose of paying costs related to the operation of microcells pursuant to this section.

(d) Contracts and financial assistance authorized by this section shall be funded with the \$900,000.00 capital appropriation to the Department of Public Service for a VTA wireless network pursuant to 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 190, Sec. 14.

Sec. 27b. 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 84, Sec. 16c, as amended by 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 190, Sec. 14 is further amended to read:

Sec. 16c. PUBLIC SERVICE

(a) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2019 to the Department of Public Service:

(1) VTA wireless network, <u>projects and technical assistance:</u>	\$900,000.00
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* * * Effective Dates * * *

Sec. 28. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on passage, except that Sec. 6 (repeal of prepaid wireless revenue surcharge) shall take effect on January 1, 2020.

Date Governor signed bill: June 20, 2019