

HOUSE BILL NO. 5034

June 16, 2021, Introduced by Reps. Cynthia Johnson, Coleman, Sabo, Aiyash, Sowerby, Scott, Puri, Weiss, Morse, Anthony, Brabec, Brixie, Young, Hood, Cavanagh, Whitsett and Rabhi and referred to the Committee on Communications and Technology.

A bill to amend 1939 PA 280, entitled
"The social welfare act,"
(MCL 400.1 to 400.119b) by adding section 57aa.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

- 1 **Sec. 57aa. (1) Subject to state appropriations, not later than**
2 **October 1, 2021, the department shall establish and administer the**
3 **Michigan broadband assistance program statewide to provide**
4 **broadband assistance to eligible low-income households.**
5 **(2) The department shall manage eligibility and administration**

1 of broadband internet assistance in the same manner as the
2 department administers utility assistance under the state emergency
3 relief program.

4 (3) The department may use funds received from a federal
5 broadband assistance program and any funds collected or
6 appropriated to fund the program. The department shall distribute
7 the funds described in this subsection for broadband assistance and
8 may use a portion of the funds for necessary administrative
9 expenses. Necessary administrative expenses shall be calculated
10 using an established cost allocation methodology.

11 (4) Broadband assistance must include services that will
12 enable participants to become or move toward becoming self-
13 sufficient, including assisting participants in paying their
14 broadband bill on time, assisting participants in budgeting for and
15 contributing to their ability to provide for broadband expenses,
16 and assisting participants in utilizing energy services to optimize
17 on energy efficiency. By October 1, 2022, each entity that carries
18 out a contract with the department under this section must provide
19 or coordinate these services. The department must attempt to
20 coordinate its efforts with the efforts of other state departments
21 or agencies to assist low-income households in becoming or moving
22 toward becoming self-sufficient.

23 (5) The department shall develop a simplified, single
24 application for all applicants to use to apply for broadband
25 assistance under the program. The single application must be made
26 available to all entities that contract with the department to
27 provide services under the program.

28 (6) Not later than December 1, 2022, and annually after that,
29 the department must provide a report to the legislature, the senate

1 and house appropriations subcommittees on the department budget,
2 the senate and house committees on issues relating to broadband
3 internet, and the senate and house fiscal agencies on how money
4 from the program created in this section was distributed.

5 (7) The low-income broadband assistance fund is created within
6 the state treasury.

7 (8) The state treasurer may receive money or other assets from
8 any source for deposit into the fund. The state treasurer shall
9 direct the investment of the fund. The state treasurer shall credit
10 to the fund interest and earnings from fund investments.

11 (9) Money in the fund at the close of the fiscal year shall
12 remain in the fund and shall not lapse to the general fund.

13 (10) The department shall be the administrator of the fund for
14 auditing purposes.

15 (11) The department shall only use money from the low-income
16 broadband assistance fund for broadband assistance.