



State of Wisconsin
2017 - 2018 LEGISLATURE

LRB-5305/1
MDK:klm

2017 ASSEMBLY BILL 917

February 2, 2018 - Introduced by Representatives QUINN, BERNIER, E. BROOKS, KULP, NERISON, NOVAK, PETRYK, SPIROS, SUMMERFIELD, SWEARINGEN, TRANEL, TUSLER, VANDERMEER, ZIMMERMAN, EDMING, PRONSCHINSKE and MURSAU, cosponsored by Senators MARKLEIN, TESTIN and OLSEN. Referred to Committee on Rural Development and Mining.

1 **AN ACT** *to amend* 15.797 (title); and *to create* 15.797 (2) and 196.5045 of the
2 statutes; **relating to:** Telecommuter Forward! community certification and
3 creating a Telecommuter Forward! council.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill allows a city, village, town, or county (political subdivision) to apply to the Public Service Commission for certification as a Telecommuter Forward! community. The PSC must make the certification if the political subdivision adopts a resolution that states its support and commitment to promote the availability of telecommuting options and that provides for a single point of contact for coordinating telecommuting opportunities. The point of contact must have specified responsibilities, including the following: 1) coordination and partnership with telecommuting stakeholders; 2) collaboration with broadband providers and employers to identify, develop, and market telecommuter-capable broadband packages; and 3) communication and partnership with broadband providers and economic development professionals to develop common goals. In addition, the point of contact must be responsible for promoting telecommuter-friendly workspaces if such a workspace has been established in the political subdivision at the time it adopts the resolution. The PSC must prescribe the form and manner for making an application and a process for public notice and comment. Before approving an application, the PSC must consider any public comments.

The bill also creates a Telecommuter Forward! council and requires the PSC to consult with the council in carrying out its duties under the bill. The council consists

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of 13 members appointed to three-year terms. The PSC appoints four members, each of whom represents one of the following: 1) an employer who uses and promotes telecommuting for its employees; 2) a chamber of commerce; 3) a local economic development organization; and 4) a regional economic development organization. Each of the following appoints one of the remaining nine members: 1) the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation; 2) the department of workforce development; 3) the department of tourism; 4) an association specified by the PSC that represents telecommunications providers; 5) an association specified by the PSC that represents video service providers; 6) a broadband providers stakeholder group specified by the PSC; 7) the League of Wisconsin Municipalities; 8) the Wisconsin Counties Association; and 9) the Wisconsin Towns Association.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 15.797 (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

2 **15.797** (title) **Same; council councils.**

3 **SECTION 2.** 15.797 (2) of the statutes is created to read:

4 **15.797 (2) TELECOMMUTER FORWARD! COUNCIL.** (a) There is created in the public
5 service commission a Telecommuter Forward! council that consists of the 13
6 members specified in pars. (b) and (c).

7 (b) The public service commission shall appoint the following members for
8 3-year terms:

9 1. One member representing an employer who uses and promotes
10 telecommuting for its employees.

11 2. One member representing a chamber of commerce.

12 3. One member representing a local economic development organization.

13 4. One member representing a regional economic development organization.

14 (c) Each of the following shall appoint one member of the council for a 3-year
15 term:

16 1. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.

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1 2. The department of workforce development.

2 3. The department of tourism.

3 4. A state association specified by the public service commission that
4 represents telecommunications providers.

5 5. A state association specified by the public service commission that
6 represents video service providers.

7 6. A broadband providers stakeholder group specified by the public service
8 commission.

9 7. The League of Wisconsin Municipalities.

10 8. The Wisconsin Counties Association.

11 9. The Wisconsin Towns Association.

12 **SECTION 3.** 196.5045 of the statutes is created to read:

13 **196.5045 Telecommuter Forward! certification.** (1) In this section,
14 “political subdivision” means a city, village, town, or county.

15 (2) A political subdivision may apply to the commission for certification as a
16 Telecommuter Forward! community. The commission shall prescribe the form and
17 manner for making an application and a process for public notice and comment on
18 an application. The commission shall approve an application and certify a political
19 subdivision as a Telecommuter Forward! community if the commission determines
20 that the political subdivision has adopted a resolution that complies with sub. (3).
21 Before approving an application, the commission shall consider any public comments
22 made regarding the application. The commission shall consult with the
23 Telecommuter Forward! council in carrying out the commission’s duties under this
24 subsection.

ASSEMBLY BILL 917**SECTION 3**

1 **(3)** A political subdivision may not be certified as a Telecommuter Forward!
2 community under sub. (2) unless the political subdivision adopts a resolution that
3 does all of the following:

4 (a) States the political subdivision's support and commitment to promote the
5 availability of telecommuting options.

6 (b) Provides for a single point of contact for coordinating telecommuting
7 opportunities that has all of the following responsibilities:

8 1. Coordination and partnership with broadband providers, realtors, economic
9 development professionals, employers, employees, and other telecommuting
10 stakeholders.

11 2. Collaboration with broadband providers and employers to identify, develop,
12 and market telecommuter-capable broadband packages.

13 3. Communication and partnership with broadband providers and economic
14 development professionals to develop common goals.

15 4. Promotion of telecommuter-friendly workspaces, such as business
16 incubators with telecommuting spaces, if such a workspace has been established in
17 the political subdivision at the time the political subdivision adopts the resolution.

18 5. Familiarity with broadband mapping tools and other state-level resources.

19 6. Maintaining regular communication with the state broadband office.

20 7. Making regular reports to the governing body of the political subdivision.

21 **SECTION 4. Nonstatutory provisions.**

22 (1) INITIAL APPOINTMENTS. Notwithstanding the length of terms specified for the
23 members of the Telecommuter Forward! council under section 15.797 (2) (b) and (c)
24 of the statutes, initial appointments to that council shall be made as follows:

