DOA:......Bong, BB0090 – Broadband expansion grant appropriation language

FOR 2015-2017 BUDGET -- NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION

AN ACT ...; **relating to:** the budget.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau
STATE GOVERNMENT
PUBLIC UTILITY REGULATION

Under the existing broadband expansion grant program, the PSC makes broadband expansion grants to eligible applicants for the purpose of constructing broadband infrastructure in underserved areas designated by the PSC. The PSC is required to establish criteria for awarding the grants. Currently, the criteria must prohibit grants that have the effect of subsidizing the expenses of a telecommunication provider or the monthly bills of telecommunications customers and must give priority to projects that include matching funds, that involve public–private partnerships, that affect areas with no broadband service providers, or that affect a large geographic area or a large number of underserved individuals or communities. Currently, the appropriation for this program is a continuing appropriation.

Under this bill, the appropriation for the program will be a biennial appropriation. Also under this bill, the criteria for awarding grants must also give priority to projects that are scalable.

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

SECTION 1. 196.504 (2) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

196.504 **(2)** (c) To establish criteria for evaluating applications and awarding grants under this section. The criteria shall prohibit grants that have the effect of subsidizing the expenses of a telecommunication provider or the monthly bills of telecommunications customers. The criteria shall give priority to projects that include matching funds, that involve public–private partnerships, that affect areas with no broadband service providers, that are scalable, or that affect a large geographic area or a large number of underserved individuals or communities.

(END)