

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 510

By Bowling

A RESOLUTION relative to high-speed broadband Internet access in rural areas.

WHEREAS, a recent study from the University of Texas-Austin states that rural areas without broadband Internet access will be economically crippled in an increasingly competitive world; and

WHEREAS, thus, broadband access is not a luxury; it is a necessity, as affordable and reliable broadband is a building block for healthy communities and crucial to expanding jobs and future development; and

WHEREAS, less than one-half of rural adults have access to broadband Internet at home, while two-thirds of metropolitan area adults do; and

WHEREAS, as the Internet becomes even more important in agriculture, economics, education, and health care, rural communities without 21st century broadband access will be at a severe disadvantage; and

WHEREAS, rural residents lag behind the rest of the nation when it comes to the use of high-speed Internet connections, and although the gap between rural and non-rural home broadband adoption is narrowing, there are still substantial gaps; and

WHEREAS, rural residents need speeds, availability, and affordability in parity with urban and suburban areas; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that the General Assembly supports increasing access to high-speed Internet connections in rural areas through any available source, including wireless, by using a combination of tax incentives, grants, or the removal of regulatory restrictions.