

## Committee on Commerce and Tourism

### **CS/HB 969 — Broadband Internet Service**

by Transportation and Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee; and Reps. Drake and Ausley (CS/CS/SB 1166 by Appropriations Committee; Commerce and Tourism Committee; and Senator Albritton)

The bill transfers the state's broadband program from the Department of Management Services (DMS) to the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), creating the Florida Office of Broadband within DEO's Division of Community Development. The bill transfers specific powers and duties regarding the development, marketing, and promotion of broadband that were previously under DMS. More specifically, the office is directed to perform the following duties:

- Create a strategic plan to increase the use of broadband Internet service in Florida. The plan must include a process to review and verify public input on broadband Internet transmission speeds and availability;
- Build and facilitate local technology planning teams, especially with community members from the areas of education, healthcare, business, tourism, agriculture, economic development, and local government;
- Encourage public use of Internet service through broadband grant programs; and
- Monitor, participate in, and provide input on Federal Communications Commission proceedings that are related to the geographic availability and deployment of broadband Internet in Florida.

The bill also provides that the Department of Transportation may, beginning in Fiscal Year 2022-2023, use up to \$5 million annually from the funds transferred to Florida's Turnpike Enterprise to the Multi-use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance program for projects that assist in the development of broadband infrastructure within or adjacent to a multiuse corridor.

Lastly, the bill repeals ch. 2012-131, L.O.F., which is obsolete language.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2020.

*Vote: Senate 37-0; House 114-0*