

SB 69 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Hass

Senate Committee On Business and General Government

Action Date: 01/31/19
Action: Do pass.
Vote: 3-0-2-0
Yeas: 3 - Dembrow, Girod, Riley
Exc: 2 - Hass, Olsen
Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact
Revenue: No revenue impact
Prepared By: Tyler Larson, LPRO Analyst
Meeting Dates: 1/31

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Includes broadband internet in the services for which the Public Utility Commission must establish a plan to provide low-income assistance.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Reduced-cost broadband internet service for low-income households

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Public Utility Commission (PUC) administers the Oregon Telephone Assistance Program (OTAP), a joint state and federal program that provides reduced-cost phone and broadband internet service for qualifying low-income households. Households can qualify for the subsidy by demonstrating their income or participation in a government assistance programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Current Oregon statute requires the PUC to provide low-income assistance only for phone service. Broadband subsidies in the OTAP are provided only through federal funds. Senate Bill 69 aligns the OTAP with federal regulations, which will have the effect of increasing the monthly discount low-income households can receive on their broadband internet service from \$9.25 to \$12.75 per month.