SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

Amends the Broadband Advisory Council Act. Provides that, in addition to its other duties, the Council shall explore the feasibility of universal or public broadband.
AN ACT concerning government.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly:

Section 5. The Broadband Advisory Council Act is amended by changing Section 20 as follows:

(220 ILCS 80/20)
Sec. 20. Powers and duties of the Council generally.
(a) The Council shall:

(1) explore any and all ways to expand the availability to end-user customers of broadband services using available technologies, including, but not limited to, wireline, wireless, fixed wireless, and satellite applications;

(2) identify barriers to broadband adoption among the residents and small businesses of Illinois;

(3) research ways to eliminate barriers to adoption through measures such as: digital literacy programs; programs to assist older citizens in using broadband Internet access; programs to facilitate adoption by disabled citizens; and programs to encourage collaborative efforts among public universities, community colleges, libraries, public housing, and other institutions;

(4) assess the availability of broadband for
low-income households compared to the availability of broadband for other households and explore feasibility for universal or public broadband;

(5) explore the potential for increased use of broadband service for the purposes of education, career readiness, workforce preparation, and alternative career training;

(6) explore the potential for increased use of broadband services to facilitate aging in place;

(7) explore ways for encouraging State and municipal agencies, including public housing authorities, to expand the use of broadband services for the purpose of better serving the public, including audio and video streaming, voice-over Internet protocol, teleconferencing, and wireless networking;

(8) cooperate and assist in the expansion of electronic instruction and distance education services; and

(9) as the Federal Communications Commission updates the benchmark downstream data rates and upstream data rates, publish the revised data rates in the Illinois Register within 60 days after the federal update.

(b) In addition to the powers set forth elsewhere in this Act, the Council is hereby granted the powers necessary to carry out the purpose and intent of this Act, as enumerated in this Section, including, but not limited to:

(1) promoting awareness of public facilities that have
community broadband access that can be used for distance
education and workforce development; and

(2) advising on deployment of e-government portals
such that all public bodies and political subdivisions have
websites and encourage one-stop government access and that
all public entities stream audio and video of all public
meetings.

(c) The Council shall also:

(1) monitor the broadband-based development efforts of
other states in areas such as business, education, aging in
place, and health;

(2) receive input provided on a voluntary basis from all
Illinois broadband stakeholders and advise the Governor
and the General Assembly on policies related to broadband
in Illinois, provided that no stakeholders shall be
required to publicly disclose competitively sensitive
information or information that could compromise network
security or undermine the efficacy of reasonable network
management practices, and that any such information
voluntarily disclosed shall be protected from public
disclosure; and

(3) serve as the broadband advocate to State agencies
and other State entities to communicate the broadband needs
of citizens and organizations that do not have access to
broadband service or to broadband service adequate for
their needs.
(d) The Council shall exercise its powers and authority to
(1) advise and make recommendations to the General Assembly and
the Governor on bringing broadband service to unserved rural
and urban areas, (2) advise and make recommendations to the
General Assembly and the Governor on facilitating broadband
adoption by all citizens, and (3) propose statutory changes
that may enhance and expand broadband in the State.

(e) The Council shall report to the General Assembly on or
before January 1 of each year. The report to the General
Assembly shall be filed with the Clerk of the House of
Representatives and the Secretary of the Senate in electronic
form only, in the manner that the Clerk and the Secretary shall
direct. The report shall include the action that was taken by
the Council during the previous year in carrying out the
provisions of this Act. The Council shall also make any other
reports as may be required by the General Assembly or the
Governor.

(Source: P.A. 100-833, eff. 1-1-19.)