102ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
State of Illinois
2021 and 2022
HB2384


SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

220 ILCS 5/13-301.1
220 ILCS 5/13-1200
220 ILCS 5/21-1105 new
220 ILCS 5/21-1601

Amends the Public Utilities Act. Replaces provisions relating to the Universal Telephone Service Assistance Program with provisions that require the Illinois Commerce Commission to establish a Universal Broadband Service Assistance Program. Provides that the Program shall provide for a reduction of monthly charges, a reduction of installation charges, devices used in connection to the Internet, or any other alternative assistance or program to increase accessibility to broadband service and broadband Internet access service that the Commission deems advisable subject to the availability of funds for the program. Makes other conforming changes. Creates a similar program for low-income residential customers of cable and video service providers. Extends the repeal of the Telecommunications and Cable and Video Competition Articles from December 31, 2021 to December 31, 2022. Effective immediately.

LRB102 14041 SPS 19393 b

FISCAL NOTE ACT MAY APPLY
HOUSING AFFORDABILITY IMPACT NOTE ACT MAY APPLY
AN ACT concerning regulation.

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

Section 5. The Public Utilities Act is amended by changing Section 13-301.1, 13-1200, and 21-1601 and by adding Section 21-1105 as follows:

(220 ILCS 5/13-301.1) (from Ch. 111 2/3, par. 13-301.1)
(Section scheduled to be repealed on December 31, 2021)
Sec. 13-301.1. Universal Broadband Telephone Service Assistance Program.

(a) The Commission shall by rule or regulation establish a Universal Broadband Telephone Service Assistance Program for low-income residential customers. The program shall provide for a reduction of monthly access line charges, a reduction of installation connection charges, devices used in connection to the Internet, or any other alternative assistance or program to increase accessibility to broadband telephone service and broadband Internet access service that the Commission deems advisable subject to the availability of funds for the program as provided in subsections (d) and (e). The Commission shall establish eligibility requirements for benefits under the program, provided those eligibility requirements allow for eligibility verification by
participants' zip code.

(b) (Blank). The Commission shall adopt rules providing for enhanced enrollment for eligible consumers to receive lifeline service. Enhanced enrollment may include, but is not limited to, joint marketing, joint application, or joint processing with the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, the Medicaid Program, and the Food Stamp Program. The Department of Human Services, the Department of Healthcare and Family Services, and the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, upon request of the Commission, shall assist in the adoption and implementation of those rules. The Commission and the Department of Human Services, the Department of Healthcare and Family Services, and the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity may enter into memoranda of understanding establishing the respective duties of the Commission and the Departments in relation to enhanced enrollment.

(c) (Blank). In this Section:

"Lifeline service" means a retail local service offering described by 47 CFR 54.401(a), as amended.

(d) The Commission shall require by rule or regulation that each telecommunications carrier, wireless carrier, and Interconnected VoIP service provider providing communication local exchange telecommunications services notify its customers that if the customer wishes to participate in the funding of the Universal Broadband Telephone Service
Assistance Program he or she may do so by electing to contribute, on a monthly basis, a fixed amount that will be included in the customer's monthly bill. The customer may cease contributing at any time upon providing notice to the telecommunications carrier providing communications local exchange telecommunications services. The notice shall state that any contribution made will not reduce the customer's bill for communications telecommunications services. Failure to remit the amount of increased payment will reduce the contribution accordingly. The Commission shall specify the monthly fixed amount or amounts that customers wishing to contribute to the funding of the Universal Broadband Telephone Service Assistance Program may choose from in making their contributions. Every telecommunications carrier, wireless carrier, and Interconnected VoIP service provider providing communication local exchange telecommunications services shall remit the amounts contributed in accordance with the terms of the Universal Broadband Telephone Service Assistance Program.

(e) Amounts collected and remitted under subsection (d) may, to the extent the Commission deems advisable, be used for funding a program to be administered by the entity designated by the Commission as administrator of the Universal Broadband Telephone Service Assistance Program for educating and assisting low-income residential customers with a transition to Internet protocol-based networks and services. This entity shall include telecommunications carriers, wireless carriers,
Interconnected VOIP carriers, cable and video providers, the Illinois Attorney General, and consumer groups, such that the entity is balanced between service providers and consumer groups. This program may include, but need not be limited to, measures designed to notify and educate residential customers regarding the availability of alternative voice services with access to 9-1-1, access to and use of broadband Internet access service, and pricing options.  
(Source: P.A. 100-20, eff. 7-1-17.)

(220 ILCS 5/13-1200)
(Section scheduled to be repealed on December 31, 2021)
Sec. 13-1200. Repealer. This Article is repealed December 31, 2022.
(Source: P.A. 100-20, eff. 7-1-17; 101-639, eff. 6-12-20.)

(220 ILCS 5/21-1105 new)
Sec. 21-1105. Universal Broadband Service Assistance Program.
(a) The Commission shall by rule establish a Universal Broadband Service Assistance Program for low-income residential customers of cable and video service providers. The program shall provide for a reduction of monthly charges, a reduction of installation charges, devices used in connection to the Internet, or any other alternative assistance or program to increase accessibility to broadband
service and broadband Internet access service that the
Commission deems advisable subject to the availability of
funds for the program as provided in subsections (b) and (c).
The Commission shall establish eligibility requirements for
benefits under the program, provided those eligibility
requirements allow for eligibility verification by
participants' zip code.

(b) The Commission shall require by rule that each cable
and video service provider notify its customers that if the
customer wishes to participate in the funding of the Universal
Broadband Service Assistance Program he or she may do so by
electing to contribute, on a monthly basis, a fixed amount
that will be included in the customer's monthly bill. The
customer may cease contributing at any time upon providing
notice to the cable and video service provider. The notice
shall state that any contribution made will not reduce the
customer's bill for broadband services. Failure to remit the
amount of increased payment will reduce the contribution
accordingly. The Commission shall specify the monthly fixed
amount or amounts that customers wishing to contribute to the
funding of the Universal Broadband Service Assistance Program
may choose from in making their contributions. Every cable and
video service provider providing service shall remit the
amounts contributed in accordance with the terms of the
Universal Broadband Service Assistance Program.

(c) Amounts collected and remitted under subsection (b)
may, to the extent the Commission deems advisable, be used for
funding a program to be administered by the entity designated
by the Commission as administrator of the Universal Broadband
Service Assistance Program for educating and assisting
low-income residential customers with a transition to Internet
protocol-based networks and services. This entity shall
include telecommunications carriers, wireless carriers,
Interconnected VOIP carriers, cable and video service
providers, the Illinois Attorney General, and consumer groups,
such that the entity is balanced between service providers and
consumer groups. This program may include, but need not be
limited to, measures designed to notify and educate
residential customers regarding the availability of
alternative voice services with access to 9-1-1, access to and
use of broadband Internet access service, and pricing options.

(220 ILCS 5/21-1601)

Sec. 21-1601. Repealer. Sections 21-101 through 21-1501 of
this Article are repealed December 31, 2022 2021.
(Source: P.A. 100-20, eff. 7-1-17; 101-639, eff. 6-12-20.)

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
becoming law.