

2018 POLICIES

Telecom

CONTINUE IMPROVING INTERNET SERVICE ACROSS THE STATE

Internet access is essential for commerce. Minnesota's telecommunications providers have invested billions of dollars to build out Minnesota's broadband infrastructure. This investment has significantly increased broadband speed and availability, but there are places in Greater Minnesota still lacking a reliable, fast internet connection. These places tend to be in areas where geography, population density or other issues make the business case for deploying a broadband internet connection economically challenging. We support continued funding of the state's Border to Border Broadband Development Grant Program to bring technologically-neutral broadband to locations in Minnesota that lack a broadband connection. It's important that the program not overlap with federal broadband grant programs. We encourage policymakers to recognize that modern technology - such as delivering internet via satellite or fixed wireless - may make fiber broadband unnecessary for delivering internet to some residences.

RECOGNIZE THAT MINNESOTANS ALREADY HAVE INTERNET PRIVACY PROTECTIONS

Protecting individuals' internet privacy is important to everyone engaged in the telecommunications industry and at the core of every consumer relationship. Strong state and federal internet privacy statutes, regulatory provisions and robust oversight protect Minnesotans today. Minnesotans' protections include the following: a) internet Service Providers (ISPs) must have customer permission to divulge personal information, including consumer identity, web browsing activity, and stored computer data information; b) the Minnesota attorney general has the authority to enforce Minnesota's privacy statute; and c) Minnesotans have the right to sue their ISP for violating their privacy. Telecommunications service providers and ISPs are required to protect their customers' personal information and get

their permission before using personal information for any purpose other than delivering telecommunications service, protecting the property of the service provider, protecting individuals from fraud, or providing 911 service. We support efforts under way to develop consistent federal policy on internet privacy. ■