

NEWS RELEASE

Office of Commissioner Brandon Presley
MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
NORTHERN DISTRICT

Internet Access Expansion Bill Passes Senate, Goes to Governor

Jackson, MS (January 23, 2019) – Legislation expanding broadband access has passed the Mississippi State Senate unanimously. House Bill 366, also referred to as the Mississippi Broadband Enabling Act, allows electric power cooperatives across the state to offer high-speed internet service to its customers.

The bill, sponsored by Speaker of the House Philip Gunn, previously passed the Mississippi House of Representatives by a vote of 115-3.

“I want to thank Lieutenant Governor Reeves, Chairman Doty, and the entire membership of the Mississippi Senate for passing this legislation,” said Public Service Commissioner Brandon Presley.

Commissioner Presley has been a champion of expanding high-speed internet access across Mississippi. Current state law prohibits rural electric cooperatives from providing internet service, although no such law exists anywhere else in America. Currently, 107 rural electric cooperatives are providing internet service across the country, including in all of the states bordering Mississippi.

“By passing this legislation, our state has an opportunity to move forward in a real way,” said Commissioner Presley. “With the Senate passing this bill and it soon becoming law, this will help improve the lives of people across Mississippi in many ways—from education to medicine to economic development and beyond.”

The bill now goes to Governor Phil Bryant, where it is expected he will sign the legislation into law.



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