



2021 Telecom, Broadband and ROW Management LEGISLATIVE WATCH LIST

BROADBAND

Bonding for Broadband

The Governor's Recommended Budget (GRB) provides for a lot of money towards broadband infrastructure through bonds. However, statute must be amended to allow bonding of this nature.

HB 2654 – Electric Utility Easements for Expanded for Broadband

Allows electric utility to expand the use of their electric easement in provision of broadband services. Currently, this bill is too broad and the LOC is seeking an amendment to exempt easements granted by cities on their private property to electric utilities from the impacts of this bill as it could affect the compensation cities are rightly owed.

DIGITAL EQUITY

HB 2410 – Low Income Broadband Programs

Prohibits public bodies, including cities, from contracting with broadband Internet access service providers that do not offer low-income rate program that meets minimum standards established by Public Utility Commission by rule. This bill is using the same section of statute as Oregon's Net Neutrality bill from 2018 (HB 4155). An amendment is in the works on this bill. The LOC is opposed to this bill as introduced.

HB 2507 – OTAP Decoupling

Decouples Oregon Telephone Assistance Program (OTAP) from funding offered by Federal Communications Commission. This affordability program is the state counterpart to the federal Lifeline program which is being phased out. The goal of this bill is to make sure that OTAP does not phase out with the federal program as it is still needed in Oregon. LOC is supportive of this bill.

HB 2698 – Right to Repair

Require makers of electronics (like cell phones, tablets and laptops) to provide fair and reasonable access to parts, tools, documentation and updates necessary for repair. This would allow individuals to fix a device themselves or support a local repair business who can fix it.

SB 615 – Low Income Broadband Bill Payment Assistance Fund

Establishes the Low Income Broadband Bill Payment Assistance Fund. Business Oregon would administer the fund. Rules for the program would be created by Business Oregon in consultation with OHCS and the Oregon Broadband Advisory Council.

League of Oregon Cities

Representing Oregon's 241 incorporated cities

RIGHT-OF-WAY MANAGEMENT

[HB 2411](#) – ODOT Open Trench Notification

This would require notification and process for allowing interested telecommunications providers to coordinate with Department of Transportation to include installation of underground infrastructure for provision of broadband as part of certain projects included in Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

[HB 2613](#) – Open Trench Notification by Cities, Counties and State

This is a broader version of HB 2411 and requires cities, counties and the state to notify all telecommunication providers in the area of when a public right-of-way area is being excavated for an infrastructure project so that they can put in conduit. This bill prescribes an expedited process for telecommunication providers to obtain permits to tack onto existing infrastructure projects. LOC is opposed to this bill.

[HB 3049](#) – County ROW Construction Permits

This is a bill being pushed by AOC to allow counties to charge for construction permit fees in their ROWs. As of right now, they can require a permit but not charge for it because of an Oregon Supreme Court decision. LOC is currently taking no position on this bill.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

[HB 2425](#) – PSAP Grant Program

Creates a grant program in support of projects to consolidate and modernize or upgrade public safety answering points within the Office of Emergency Management.



Questions? Contact Jenna Jones

971-707-0304 | jjones@orcities.org

More Information Available at

<https://www.orcities.org/advocacy/legislative-advocacy>