



## **SB19-107**

# **Electrical Easements and Broadband Delivery**

**Utilizing Electrical Easements for Broadband Will Help Connect Rural Colorado**

**Sponsors: Donovan, Roberts**

All across Colorado, there are rural electric cooperatives serving communities with essential electrical power. In many cases, these cooperatives also have fiber attached to poles or in underground conduits that is currently being used for control and management of the electrical network - but that could also be utilized for broadband delivery.

SB19-107 would save millions of dollars in new infrastructure costs by allowing electrical easement holders to lease existing fiber resources on these easements for purposes of delivering broadband internet services to communities. The bill would allow for the utilization of so-called “dark fiber” (i.e., network capacity within the fiber cable that is not currently being used) by providers to connect areas without having to spend money on costly new infrastructure or easement renegotiation. In the past few years, similar legislation has been successfully passed in Indiana, Missouri and Tennessee, helping to create equity between rural and urban corridors.

This legislation will help connect rural communities by fostering the efficient use of existing infrastructure to address the growing digital divide in Colorado. It will help establish redundancy in isolated communities and ensure that services like public safety/E911 are not compromised when fiber lines are inadvertently cut. The bill also includes a remedy process for landowners who believe their property value has been reduced through the utilization of this dark fiber.

**Please Support SB19-107**

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