

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 761

Introduced by Dorn, 30.

Read first time January 05, 2022

Committee: Transportation and Telecommunications

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to agriculture; to adopt the Precision
- 2 Agriculture Infrastructure Grant Act.
- 3 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. Sections 1 to 6 of this act shall be known and may be
2 cited as the Precision Agriculture Infrastructure Grant Act.

3 Sec. 2. For purposes of the Precision Agriculture Infrastructure
4 Grant Act:

5 (1) Adequate broadband speed means a symmetrical download and upload
6 speed of at least fifty megabits per second;

7 (2) Department means the Department of Economic Development;

8 (3) Program means the Precision Agriculture Infrastructure Grant
9 Program created in section 3 of this act; and

10 (4) Provider means a broadband Internet service provider, including
11 any telecommunications company or wireless network provider that provides
12 broadband Internet service.

13 Sec. 3. (1) The Precision Agriculture Infrastructure Grant Program
14 is created. The department shall administer the program. The purposes of
15 the program are to:

16 (a) Propel Nebraska agricultural producers to lead the nation in
17 precision agriculture connectivity, sustainability, traceability, and
18 autonomy to accelerate rural economic development; and

19 (b) Provide high-speed Internet service to the most remote and cost-
20 prohibitive areas of the state.

21 (2) It is the intent of the Legislature to appropriate ten million
22 dollars from Federal Funds for fiscal year 2022-23 to the department to
23 carry out the program. The Federal Funds to be appropriated are from
24 funds allocated to the State of Nebraska from the federal Coronavirus
25 State Fiscal Recovery Fund pursuant to the federal American Rescue Plan
26 Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2, Subtitle M, Sec. 9901.

27 Sec. 4. (1) A provider, an agricultural cooperative, an agronomist,
28 or an agricultural producer may apply to the department for a grant under
29 the program. The application shall be made on forms prescribed by the
30 department.

31 (2) Grants may only be used to provide:

1 (a) Symmetrical broadband service to on-farm structures and devices,
2 including, but not limited to, tractors, combines, irrigation systems,
3 livestock facilities, and farm offices. The broadband service shall be at
4 an adequate broadband speed;

5 (b) On-farm traceability solutions that satisfy food supply
6 stakeholder demand, including blockchain;

7 (c) Products that improve soil health, water management tools and
8 sensors that facilitate judicious use of water resources, and products
9 that promote the use of water efficiency seed technologies that lower
10 agriculture's water, carbon, and nitrate footprint; and

11 (d) Products that use autonomous solutions in agricultural
12 machinery, including, but not limited to, grain carts, spreaders,
13 precision drone scouting, and scouting robots.

14 (3) The department shall award up to one-half of the available grant
15 funds for the purpose described in subdivision (2)(a) of this section and
16 up to one-half of the available grant funds for the purposes described in
17 subdivisions (2)(b), (c), and (d) of this section.

18 Sec. 5. If the grant application is to provide symmetrical
19 broadband service as described in subdivision (2)(a) of section 4 of this
20 act, the applicant shall agree to:

21 (1) Complete the project within twelve months after the date on
22 which the grant is awarded. The department may permit one extension of up
23 to six months upon request and for good cause shown; and

24 (2) Submit the broadband service to speed tests. If the speed tests
25 show that the broadband service is not providing adequate broadband
26 speed, the applicant shall be allowed a reasonable time to correct the
27 deficiencies.

28 Sec. 6. The department may adopt and promulgate rules and
29 regulations to carry out the Precision Agriculture Infrastructure Grant
30 Act.