



State of Wisconsin
2019 - 2020 LEGISLATURE

LRB-4876/1
MDK:cjs

2019 SENATE BILL 836

February 20, 2020 - Introduced by Senators SMITH, RINGHAND, BEWLEY, ERPENBACH, HANSEN, JOHNSON and MILLER, cosponsored by Representatives VRUWINK, MILROY, DOYLE, ANDERSON, CONSIDINE, EMERSON, OHNSTAD, POPE, SARGENT, SINICKI, SPREITZER, STUBBS and SUBECK. Referred to Committee on Utilities and Housing.

1 **AN ACT to repeal** 66.0422 (2) (c), 66.0422 (4) and 66.0422 (5); and **to amend**
2 196.504 (1) (ac) 3. and 196.504 (2) (a) of the statutes; **relating to:** broadband
3 expansion grants for cities, villages, towns, and counties and
4 telecommunications-related construction projects of cities, villages, and towns.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill makes changes to the broadband expansion grant program that affect cities, villages, towns, and counties (political subdivisions). Under current law, the PSC administers the program and makes grants to eligible applicants for constructing broadband infrastructure in underserved areas. The bill allows a political subdivision to apply for a grant without submitting the application in partnership with a telecommunications utility or a for-profit or not-for-profit organization, which is required under current law. The bill also allows a political subdivision to use a grant for the following purposes, in addition to constructing broadband infrastructure: 1) planning related to broadband infrastructure construction, including broadband feasibility reports; and 2) defraying no more than 50 percent of the cost of hiring and employing one broadband director.

The bill also eliminates a requirement for a city, village, or town to prepare a report before constructing or operating a facility for providing to the public telecommunications service, cable television or similar video service, or broadband service. With exceptions, current law requires a city, village, or town to hold a hearing before enacting an ordinance or adopting a resolution authorizing it to construct or operate such a facility. In addition, at least 30 days prior to the hearing,

