

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Authors: Hoppe

Subject: Amendments to the Telephone Assistance Plan (TAP)

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Overview

This bill makes several changes to the state's Telephone Assistance Plan (TAP) program. It eliminates certain eligibility requirements, and replaces those with the sole requirement that the household is eligible for the federal Lifeline telephone service discount.

Section

- 1 **Technical.** Changes "telephone company" to "local service provider" to update terminology.
- 2 **Technical.** Changes "telephone company" to "local service provider" to update terminology.
- 3 **Eligibility.** Eliminates a number of eligibility requirements and replaces those with the single requirement that the household is eligible for the federal Lifeline telephone service discount.

Minnesota law limits telephone assistance to households that that meet certain income requirements and that have a disabled or elderly member. Eligibility for the federal program is solely income-based. Under the federal program, eligible customers must participate in one or more of the following federal programs: medicaid; food stamps; supplemental security income; federal public housing assistance; low-income home energy assistance program. Funding for TAP comes from a monthly charge set by the Public Utilities Commission on each wireline (not wireless) not to exceed ten cents.
- 4 **Technical.** Changes "telephone company" to "local service provider" to update terminology.
- 5 **Technical.** Changes "telephone company" to "local service provider" to update terminology.
- 6 **Administration.** Makes changes to conform with section 3. Also, eliminates responsibility of the Department of Human Services to determine eligibility and transfers certain responsibilities from the Department of Human Services to the Department of Commerce.

Section

- 7 Changes "telephone company" to "local service provider" to update terminology.
Administration expense. Eliminates reimbursement of administrative expense to Department of Human Services.