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## **S.F. No. 4742 – Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program**

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**S.F. 4742** establishes “workforce best practices” for the broadband border-to-border program; establishes a Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program; provides requirements for installation of underground telecommunications structures; and gives authority to the Public Utilities Commission to investigate certain conduct by a telecommunications carrier, telephone company, or cable communications system provider.

**Section 1. Awarding grants** [116J.395] Establishes “workforce best practices” for the broadband border-to-border program, including payment of prevailing wages or providing annual skills training, provision of certain benefits, and evidence of representation of underrepresented groups in the construction industry. Provides yearly percentages of border-to-border broadband grants awarded that are reserved for applicants that commit to implementing the workforce best practices. Gives flexibility if there are not sufficient applicants that meet the percentages required.

**Section 2. Broadband, Equity, Access, and Development (BEAD).** [116J.3991] Directs the commissioner of employment and economic development to implement a Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program that prioritizes applicants that meet the criteria for state broadband funding set forth for the BEAD program.

**Section 3. Underground telecommunications structure.** [181.912] Subdivision 1 provides definitions for “directional drilling,” safety-qualified underground telecommunications installer,” underground telecommunications utilities,” and “underground utilities.”

**Subdivision 2** requires use of safety-qualified underground telecommunications installers when underground telecommunications infrastructure is installed within ten feet of underground utilities.

**Subdivision 3** requires the DLI commissioner to develop standards for a safety-qualified underground telecommunications installer certification program. Provides requirements for the certification program.

**Section 4. Telecommunications and cable communications systems.** [216B.17] Provides the Public Utilities Commission with authority to investigate conduct by a telecommunications carrier, telephone company, or cable communications system provider that damages or interferes with the function of public utility or cooperative electric association's infrastructure. Allows the PUC to take legal action against a provider under Chapter 216B, if damage or interference is found.