

Legislative  
Assembly  
of Ontario



Assemblée  
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69 ELIZABETH II, 2020

# Bill 226

**An Act to enact the Broadband is an Essential Service Act, 2020**

**Mr. J. Vanthof**

**Private Member's Bill**

1st Reading      November 3, 2020

2nd Reading

3rd Reading

Royal Assent



## EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Bill enacts the *Broadband is an Essential Service Act, 2020*, which requires the Minister of Infrastructure to develop a Broadband Connectivity Strategy that aims to deliver high-speed internet connectivity to 95 per cent of Ontarians by 2026 and to all Ontarians by 2030. The Minister is required to update the strategy at specified intervals and undertake certain consultations in developing or updating the strategy.

## An Act to enact the Broadband is an Essential Service Act, 2020

Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows:

### Purpose

**1** The purpose of this Act is to guide policies and investments towards a goal of universal access to affordable and reliable high-speed internet, particularly for Northern and rural Ontarians, given that high-speed internet constitutes an essential service.

### Definitions

**2** In this Act,

“high-speed internet” means internet service with download speeds of 50 megabits per second or faster and upload speeds of 10 megabits per second or faster; (“service Internet haute vitesse”)

“Minister” means the Minister of Infrastructure or such other member of the Executive Council to whom the administration of this Act may be assigned under the *Executive Council Act*. (“ministre”)

### Strategy

**3** (1) The Minister shall develop a Broadband Connectivity Strategy that aims to deliver high-speed internet connectivity to 95 per cent of Ontarians by 2026 and to all Ontarians by 2030.

### Same

(2) Without limiting the generality of subsection (1), the strategy shall,

- (a) identify the number of Ontarians who lack access to high-speed internet and where, generally, they are situated within the province;
- (b) identify actions to be taken to achieve the strategy’s targets;
- (c) describe the roles of any partners in implementing the strategy; and
- (d) set out timelines for taking specified actions as well as performance measures against which the progress of the strategy may be measured.

### Updated strategy

(3) The Minister shall ensure that the strategy is updated at least once every two years after its initial development under subsection (1).

### Same

(4) Any updated strategy shall also include a progress report that summarizes the measures taken since the publication of the previous version of the strategy and an evaluation of the progress of the strategy against the performance measures set out in the previous version of the strategy.

### Consultation

(5) In developing or updating the strategy, the Minister shall consult with representatives of the federal government, municipal governments, Indigenous communities and the general public.

### Publication

(6) The Minister shall ensure that the strategy developed under subsection (1) and any updated strategy are published on a website of the Government of Ontario.

### Tabling

(7) The Minister shall table the strategy developed under subsection (1) and any updated strategy before the Legislative Assembly as soon as reasonably possible after they are developed or updated.

### Commencement

**4 This Act comes into force on the day it receives Royal Assent.**

**Short title**

**5** The short title of this Act is the *Broadband is an Essential Service Act, 2020*.