

# SB 626/HB 1221

The bill **discourages cooperatives from providing Internet access** to their consumer-members in rural areas who have long been ignored by traditional broadband companies.

The bill has been prepared without any input from the real stakeholders—the citizens in the state that reside in rural areas.

There is no public outcry for this legislation. There **is** public outcry for broadband service. The bill is being pushed by those that want to discourage co-ops from answering the public outcry.

## Co-ops & Broadband

- Not-for-profit electric co-ops are locally governed by their Boards, which are elected by the consumers they serve. **Congress has specifically exempted co-ops from pole attachment regulation and the state has never regulated co-op pole attachments.**
- Co-ops **already have the authority to provide broadband.**
- **All co-ops provide open and safe access** to those that want to attach to co-op poles, to ensure that their communities and those they serve have access to essential services.

## Expanding PSC Jurisdiction

- The bill would **add a layer of regulation on not-for-profit electric co-ops that has never existed on the federal or state level.**
- The bill would subject electric co-ops offering broadband **to PSC regulation under Ch. 425.** The expansion of PSC jurisdiction is unclear, goes beyond Ch. 425's purpose, and **could impact all electric co-ops regardless of their participation in broadband.**
- Additional regulation **will impose regulatory costs on not-for-profit co-ops that will ultimately fall on their consumer-members.**
- The bill is overbroad and **may lead to unnecessary regulation for co-ops that do not offer broadband.**

## Barriers to Rural Broadband

- Why pass a new law that will put up barriers to broadband expansion into rural and underserved areas.
- This bill will deprive citizens of access and will slow broadband rollout in Florida.