

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3346

To establish the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 1, 2018

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself and Mr. GARDNER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To establish the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth,
and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Advancing Critical
5 Connectivity Expands Service, Small Business Resources,
6 Opportunities, Access, and Data Based on Assessed Need
7 and Demand Act” or the “ACCESS BROADBAND Act”.

8 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

9 In this Act:

1 (1) AGENCY.—The term “agency” has the
2 meaning given that term in section 551 of title 5,
3 United States Code.

4 (2) ASSISTANT SECRETARY.—The term “Assist-
5 ant Secretary” means the Assistant Secretary of
6 Commerce for Communications and Information.

7 (3) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission”
8 means the Federal Communications Commission.

9 (4) FEDERAL BROADBAND SUPPORT PRO-
10 GRAM.—The term “Federal broadband support pro-
11 gram” does not include any Universal Service Fund
12 program and means any of the following programs
13 (or any other similar Federal program) to the extent
14 the program offers broadband internet service or
15 programs for promoting broadband access and adop-
16 tion for various demographic communities through
17 various media for residential, commercial, or com-
18 munity providers, or academic establishments:

19 (A) The Telecommunications and Tech-
20 nology Program of the Appalachian Regional
21 Commission.

22 (B) The following programs of the Rural
23 Utilities Service of the Department of Agri-
24 culture:

1 (i) The Telecommunications Infra-
2 structure Loan and Loan Guarantee Pro-
3 gram.

4 (ii) The Rural Broadband Access
5 Loan and Loan Guarantee Program.

6 (iii) The Substantially Underserved
7 Trust Area Initiative.

8 (iv) The Community Connect Grant
9 Program.

10 (v) The Distance Learning and Tele-
11 medicine Grant Program.

12 (C) The following programs of the Eco-
13 nomic Development Administration of the De-
14 partment of Commerce:

15 (i) The Public Works and Economic
16 Adjustment Assistance Programs.

17 (ii) The Planning and Local Technical
18 Assistance Programs.

19 (D) The following programs of the Depart-
20 ment of Housing and Urban Development:

21 (i) The Community Development
22 Block Grant Program.

23 (ii) The Section 108 Loan Guarantee
24 Program.

1 (iii) The Public Housing Capital
2 Fund.

3 (iv) The Public Housing Operating
4 Fund.

5 (v) The Multifamily Housing Pro-
6 grams.

7 (vi) The Indian Community Develop-
8 ment Block Grant Program.

9 (vii) The Indian Housing Block Grant
10 Program.

11 (viii) The Title VI Loan Guarantee
12 Program.

13 (ix) The Choice Neighborhoods Pro-
14 gram.

15 (x) The HOME Investment Partner-
16 ships Program.

17 (xi) The Housing Trust Fund.

18 (xii) The Housing Opportunities for
19 Persons With AIDS Program.

20 (E) The American Job Centers of the Em-
21 ployment and Training Administration of the
22 Department of Labor.

23 (F) The Library Services and Technology
24 Grant Programs of the Institute of Museum
25 and Library Services.

1 (5) OFFICE.—The term “Office” means the Of-
 2 fice of Internet Connectivity and Growth established
 3 under section 3.

4 (6) UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND PROGRAM.—The
 5 term “Universal Service Fund program” means any
 6 program authorized under section 254 of the Com-
 7 munications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 254) to help de-
 8 ploy broadband.

9 (7) UNIVERSAL SERVICE MECHANISM.—The
 10 term “universal service mechanism” means any
 11 funding stream provided by a Universal Service
 12 Fund program to support broadband access.

13 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICE OF INTERNET**
 14 **CONNECTIVITY AND GROWTH.**

15 Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment
 16 of this Act, the Assistant Secretary shall establish the Of-
 17 fice of Internet Connectivity and Growth within the Na-
 18 tional Telecommunications and Information Administra-
 19 tion.

20 **SEC. 4. DUTIES.**

21 (a) OUTREACH.—The Office shall—

22 (1) connect with communities that need access
 23 to high-speed internet and improved digital inclusion
 24 efforts through various forms of outreach and com-
 25 munication techniques;

1 (2) hold regional workshops across the United
2 States to share best practices and effective strategies
3 for promoting broadband access and adoption;

4 (3) develop targeted broadband training and
5 presentations for various demographic communities
6 through various media; and

7 (4) develop and distribute publications (includ-
8 ing toolkits, primers, manuals, and white papers)
9 providing guidance, strategies, and insights to com-
10 munities as the communities develop strategies to
11 expand broadband access and adoption.

12 (b) TRACKING OF FEDERAL DOLLARS.—

13 (1) BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE.—The Of-
14 fice shall track the construction and use of and ac-
15 cess to any broadband infrastructure built using any
16 Federal support in a central database.

17 (2) ACCOUNTING MECHANISM.—The Office
18 shall develop a streamlined accounting mechanism
19 by which any agency offering a Federal broadband
20 support program, and the Commission through the
21 Universal Service Fund, shall provide the informa-
22 tion described in paragraph (1) in a standardized
23 and efficient fashion.

24 (3) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the
25 date of enactment of this Act, and every year there-

1 after, the Office shall make public on the website of
2 the Office and submit to the Committee on Com-
3 merce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate
4 and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the
5 House of Representatives a report on the following:

6 (A) A description of the work of the Office
7 for the previous year and the number of resi-
8 dents of the United States who received
9 broadband access as a result of a Federal
10 broadband support program or a Universal
11 Service Fund program.

12 (B) The number of residents of the United
13 States described in subparagraph (A), broken
14 down by the Federal broadband support pro-
15 gram or universal service mechanism to which
16 the broadband access was attributable.

17 (C) An estimate of the economic impact of
18 the broadband deployment efforts described in
19 subparagraphs (A) and (B) on local economies,
20 including any effect on small businesses or jobs.

21 **SEC. 5. STREAMLINED APPLICATIONS FOR SUPPORT.**

22 (a) AGENCY CONSULTATION.—The Office shall con-
23 sult with any agency offering a Federal broadband support
24 program to streamline and standardize the application

1 process for grants or other financial assistance from the
2 program.

3 (b) AGENCY STREAMLINING.—Any agency offering a
4 Federal broadband support program shall amend the ap-
5 plication for broadband support from that program, to the
6 extent practicable and as necessary, to streamline and
7 standardize applications for Federal broadband support
8 programs across the Federal Government.

9 (c) SINGLE APPLICATION.—To the greatest extent
10 practicable, the Office shall seek to create 1 application
11 that may be submitted to apply for all, or substantially
12 all, Federal broadband support programs.

13 (d) WEBSITE REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days
14 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Office shall
15 create a central website through which a potential appli-
16 cant can learn about and apply for support through any
17 Federal broadband support program.

18 **SEC. 6. COORDINATION OF SUPPORT.**

19 The Office, any agency that offers a Federal
20 broadband support program, and the Commission,
21 through the Universal Service Fund, shall coordinate with
22 each other to ensure that Federal support for broadband
23 is being distributed in an efficient, technology-neutral, and
24 financially sustainable manner, with the goal of serving
25 the largest number of persons in the United States while

1 avoiding overbuilding and promoting the most job and eco-
2 nomic growth for all residents of the United States.

3 **SEC. 7. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**

4 Nothing in this Act is intended to alter or amend any
5 provision of section 254 of the Communications Act of
6 1934 (47 U.S.C. 254).

7 **SEC. 8. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.**

8 No additional funds are authorized to be appro-
9 priated to carry out this Act. This Act shall be carried
10 out using amounts otherwise authorized.

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