To amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to modernize and implement the national integrated public alert and warning system to disseminate homeland security information and other information, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 6, 2011

Mr. BILIRAKIS (for himself and Ms. RICHARDSON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to modernize and implement the national integrated public alert and warning system to disseminate homeland security information and other information, 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 “Integrated Public Alert
5 Warning System Modernization Act of 2011”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) numerous proven and tested technologies exist to enable the Federal Government to enhance its public alert and warning system;

(2) the expected benefits of these enhancements include—

(A) greater security, reliability, and redundancy of the system;

(B) rapid alert dissemination;

(C) an improved ability to notify remote locations;

(D) the ability to geographically target and deliver alerts and warnings to multiple devices; and

(E) the ability to permit State homeland security grants to be utilized for the purposes of modernizing public alert and warning systems;

(3) there is a need to test the viability of delivering messages through diverse communications modes to effectively alert and warn the public;

(4) there is a need to modernize and improve the ability of the Federal Government to provide residents of the United States with timely and effective warnings; and
(5) although significant Federal integration ef-
fants are underway, the aggregation, dissemination, 
and reporting system necessary for effective public 
alert and warning will require an integrated national 
network for reliable, secure, and authentic dissemi-
nation of emergency alerts and warnings to and 
from all Federal, State, local, and tribal entities that 
alert the public when appropriate.

SEC. 3. NATIONAL INTEGRATED PUBLIC ALERT AND WARN-
ing system modernization.

(a) In General.—

(1) Amendment.—Title V of the Homeland 
Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 311 et seq.) is 
amended by adding at the end of the following new 
section:

“SEC. 526. NATIONAL INTEGRATED PUBLIC ALERT AND 
WARNING SYSTEM MODERNIZATION.

“(a) In General.—In order to provide timely and 
effective warnings and disseminate homeland security in-
formation and other information, the Secretary shall mod-
ernize and implement the national integrated public alert 
and warning system (in this section referred to as ‘the 
public alert and warning system’).

“(b) Implementation Requirements.—In car-
rying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall—
“(1) establish or adapt, as appropriate, common alerting and warning protocols, standards, terminology, and operating procedures for the public alert and warning system;

“(2) include in the public alert and warning system the capability to adapt the dissemination of homeland security information and other information and the content of communications on the basis of geographic location, risks, or personal user preferences, as appropriate;

“(3) include in the public alert and warning system the capability to alert, warn, and provide the equivalent amount of information to individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs;

“(4) ensure the conduct of training, tests, and exercise for the public alert and warning system, and that the system is incorporated into other training and exercise programs of the Department, as appropriate;

“(5) ensure that the public alert and warning system uses the National Terrorism Advisory System, including ensuring that the National Terrorism Advisory System participates in tests of the public alert and warning system;
“(6) conduct periodic nationwide tests of the public alert and warning system; and

“(7) consult, coordinate, and cooperate, to the extent practicable, with other Federal agencies and departments and with State, local, and tribal governments, the private sector, and other key stakeholders to leverage existing alert and warning capabilities.

“(c) System Requirements.—The Secretary shall ensure that the system—

“(1) incorporates redundant and diverse modes to disseminate homeland security information and other information in warning messages to the public so as to reach the greatest number of individuals;

“(2) can be adapted to incorporate future technologies;

“(3) is resilient, secure, and can withstand acts of terrorism and other external attacks;

“(4) promotes State, local, tribal, and regional partnerships to enhance coordination;

“(5) is designed to provide alerts that are accessible to the largest portion of the affected population feasible, including nonresident visitors and tourists and individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs, and improves the ability of remote areas to receive alerts; and
“(6) includes mechanisms to ensure the protection of individual privacy.

“(d) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date on which the system established under subsection (a) is fully functional and every six months thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, a report on the functionality and performance of the integrated public alert and warning system, including—

“(1) an assessment of the accomplishments and deficiencies of the system;

“(2) recommendations for improvements to the system;

“(3) information on the feasibility and effectiveness of disseminating homeland security information and other information, notices, and alerts prior to and following an incident requiring use of the system.

“(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section $13,400,000 for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2016.”.
(2) Clerical Amendment.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of such Act is amended by adding at the end of the items relating to such title the following:

“Sec. 526. National integrated public alert and warning system modernization.”.

(b) Limitation on Statutory Construction.—Nothing in this Act (including the amendment made by this Act) shall be construed to affect the authority of the Department of Commerce, the Federal Communications Commission, or the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.


(1) in paragraph (12), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (13) as paragraph (14); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (12) the following new paragraph:

“(13) improving public alert and warning capabilities; and”.

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