

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1752

To amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to provide for a high-speed broadband deployment initiative.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 23, 2023

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri (for himself, Mrs. GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, Mr. GUEST, and Mr. MANN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, and the Budget, 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 Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to provide for a high-speed broadband deployment initiative.

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 “Eliminating Barriers
5 to Rural Internet Development Grant Eligibility Act” or
6 the “E-BRIDGE Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. HIGH-SPEED BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT INITIA-**
 2 **TIVE.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title II of the Public Works and
 4 Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3141 et
 5 seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

6 **“SEC. 219. HIGH-SPEED BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT INITIA-**
 7 **TIVE.**

8 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

9 “(1) BROADBAND PROJECT.—The term
 10 ‘broadband project’ means, for the purpose of pro-
 11 viding, extending, expanding, or improving high-
 12 speed broadband service to further the goals of this
 13 Act—

14 “(A) planning, technical assistance, or
 15 training;

16 “(B) the acquisition or development of
 17 land; or

18 “(C) the acquisition, design and engineer-
 19 ing, construction, rehabilitation, alteration, ex-
 20 pansion, or improvement of facilities, including
 21 related machinery, equipment, contractual
 22 rights, and intangible property.

23 “(2) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENT.—

24 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘eligible re-
 25 cipient’ means an eligible recipient.

1 “(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term ‘eligible re-
2 cipient’ includes—

3 “(i) a public-private partnership; and

4 “(ii) a consortium formed for the pur-
5 pose of providing, extending, expanding, or
6 improving high-speed broadband service
7 between 1 or more eligible recipients and 1
8 or more for-profit organizations.

9 “(3) HIGH-SPEED BROADBAND.—The term
10 ‘high-speed broadband’ means the provision of 2-way
11 data transmission with sufficient downstream and
12 upstream speeds to end users to permit effective
13 participation in the economy and to support eco-
14 nomic growth, as determined by the Secretary.

15 “(b) BROADBAND PROJECTS.—

16 “(1) IN GENERAL.—On the application of an el-
17 igible recipient, the Secretary may make grants
18 under this title for broadband projects, which shall
19 be subject to the provisions of this section.

20 “(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In reviewing applica-
21 tions submitted under paragraph (1), the Secretary
22 shall take into consideration geographic diversity of
23 grants allocated, including consideration of under-
24 served markets, in addition to data requested in
25 paragraph (3).

1 “(3) DATA REQUESTED.—In reviewing an ap-
2 plication submitted under paragraph (1), the Sec-
3 retary shall request from the Federal Communica-
4 tions Commission, the Administrator of the National
5 Telecommunications and Information Administra-
6 tion, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the Appa-
7 lachian Regional Commission data on—

8 “(A) the level and extent of broadband
9 service that exists in the area proposed to be
10 served; and

11 “(B) the level and extent of broadband
12 service that will be deployed in the area pro-
13 posed to be served pursuant to another Federal
14 program.

15 “(4) INTEREST IN REAL OR PERSONAL PROP-
16 PERTY.—For any broadband project carried out by an
17 eligible recipient that is a public-private partnership
18 or consortium, the Secretary shall require that title
19 to any real or personal property acquired or im-
20 proved with grant funds, or if the recipient will not
21 acquire title, another possessory interest acceptable
22 to the Secretary, be vested in a public partner or eli-
23 gible nonprofit organization or association for the
24 useful life of the project, after which title may be
25 transferred to any member of the public-private

1 partnership or consortium in accordance with regu-
2 lations promulgated by the Secretary.

3 “(5) PROCUREMENT.—Notwithstanding any
4 other provision of law, no person or entity shall be
5 disqualified from competing to provide goods or serv-
6 ices related to a broadband project on the basis that
7 the person or entity participated in the development
8 of the broadband project or in the drafting of speci-
9 fications, requirements, statements of work, or simi-
10 lar documents related to the goods or services to be
11 provided.

12 “(6) BROADBAND PROJECT PROPERTY.—

13 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may
14 permit a recipient of a grant for a broadband
15 project to grant an option to acquire real or
16 personal property (including contractual rights
17 and intangible property) related to that project
18 to a third party on such terms as the Secretary
19 determines to be appropriate, subject to the
20 condition that the option may only be exercised
21 after the Secretary releases the Federal interest
22 in the property.

23 “(B) TREATMENT.—The grant or exercise
24 of an option described in subparagraph (A)

1 shall not constitute a redistribution of grant
2 funds under section 217.

3 “(c) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—In determining the
4 amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of a
5 broadband project, the Secretary may provide credit to-
6 ward the non-Federal share for the present value of allow-
7 able contributions over the useful life of the broadband
8 project, subject to the condition that the Secretary may
9 require such assurances of the value of the rights and of
10 the commitment of the rights as the Secretary determines
11 to be appropriate.”.

12 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents
13 in section 1(b) of the Public Works and Economic Devel-
14 opment Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3121 note; Public Law
15 89–136) is amended by inserting after the item relating
16 to section 218 the following:

“Sec. 219. High-speed broadband deployment initiative.”.

17 **SEC. 3. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.**

18 The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of
19 complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010,
20 shall be determined by reference to the latest statement
21 titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this
22 Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record
23 by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, pro-

- 1 vided that such statement has been submitted prior to the
- 2 vote on passage.

