

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2101

To amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop and implement the READICall emergency alert system.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 4, 2005

Mr. MEEK of Florida (for himself, Mrs. MCCARTHY, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. FORD, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. GONZALEZ, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. NORTON, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mrs. LOWEY, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security, 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 develop and implement the READICall emergency alert system.

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. READICALL EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title V of the Homeland Security
5 Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–296; 6 U.S.C. 311 et seq.)
6 is amended by adding at the end the following:

1 **“SEC. 510. READICALL EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM.**

2 “(a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as is practicable, but not
3 later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this
4 section, the Secretary, working in coordination with appro-
5 priate Federal agencies, State, and local domestic security
6 agencies, and national private sector networks and infra-
7 structure, shall develop and implement an emergency tele-
8 phonic alert notification system which shall be known as
9 the Responsive Emergency Alert and Dissemination of In-
10 formation Call System or READICall System.

11 “(b) FUNCTIONS.—The System shall be designed—

12 “(1) to alert persons in the United States of
13 imminent or current hazardous events caused by an
14 act of terrorism, any other man-made disaster, any
15 natural disaster, or any combination of the fore-
16 going; and

17 “(2) to provide information to individuals re-
18 garding appropriate measures that may be under-
19 taken to alleviate or minimize threats to their safety
20 and welfare posed by such events.

21 “(c) COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION.—In im-
22 plementing this section, the Secretary shall—

23 “(1) to the maximum extent possible, make use
24 of national private sector networks, technology, per-
25 sonnel, and infrastructure to develop and implement
26 the System;

1 “(2) develop coordinated infrastructure for the
2 System, in collaboration with the Assistant Secretary
3 of Commerce for Communications and Information,
4 the national telecommunications and teleservices in-
5 dustries, and other Federal, State, and local govern-
6 mental agencies as may be necessary, that—

7 “(A) uses the full range of available
8 telecommunications technology; and

9 “(B) will be able to—

10 “(i) provide immediate notification
11 and warning upon approval by the Sec-
12 retary, via telephone to all telephone sub-
13 scribers within the United States and its
14 territories in the event of an act of ter-
15 rorism, any other man-made disaster, any
16 natural disaster, or any combination of the
17 foregoing;

18 “(ii) target specific regions, commu-
19 nities, neighborhoods, or locations of emer-
20 gent local crises and provide notification
21 and warning to just the affected areas if
22 appropriate;

23 “(iii) to the extent possible, provide
24 for a distinct ring so that telephone sub-

1 scribers are immediately aware of the
2 emergency nature of the call; and

3 “(iv) disseminate necessary informa-
4 tion to a telephone subscriber related to
5 the emergency situation and appropriate
6 courses of action to take; and

7 “(3) in developing the System, undertake a col-
8 laborative effort between the Department and other
9 Federal agencies, State, and local domestic security
10 agencies, and organizations of first responders, so
11 that—

12 “(A) the System will allow for necessary
13 interoperability between different sources of ter-
14 rorist threat information;

15 “(B) the System will allow for the imme-
16 diate dissemination of information both laterally
17 and horizontally, such that information can be
18 provided from all levels of governmental
19 sources; and

20 “(C) appropriate standards, protocols, pro-
21 cedures, and terminology are determined to
22 minimize inconsistencies and miscommunication
23 with intelligence information, including appro-
24 priate definitions for situations that would con-

1 stitute a threat for which the System would be
2 used.

3 “(d) AUTHORITIES.—The Secretary may conduct re-
4 search and pilot programs as may be necessary to deter-
5 mine and improve the effectiveness of the System.

6 “(e) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall
7 submit a report to the Congress on the status of the Sys-
8 tem—

9 “(1) by not later than 6 months after the date
10 of enactment of this Act; and

11 “(2) yearly thereafter.

12 “(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

13 “(1) SYSTEM.—The term ‘System’ means the
14 Responsive Emergency Alert and Dissemination of
15 Information Call System or READICall System es-
16 tablished under this section.

17 “(2) TELEPHONE SUBSCRIBER.—The term
18 ‘telephone subscriber’ means any residents of the
19 United States (including territories of the United
20 States) who receives telephone service via a tradi-
21 tional residential telephone, business telephone, or
22 wireless telephone.”.

1 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents
2 in section 1(b) of such Act is amended by inserting after
3 the item relating to section 509 the following:

“510. READICall emergency alert system.”.

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