

110TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 3893

To promote the deployment and adoption of telecommunications services and information technologies, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 18, 2007

Mr. ALLEN (for himself and Mr. MICHAUD) introduced the following bill;  
which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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## A BILL

To promote the deployment and adoption of telecommunications services and information technologies, 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 “Connect America Now  
5       Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7       Congress finds the following:

8               (1) The deployment and adoption of broadband  
9       services and information technology has resulted in  
10      enhanced economic development and public safety

1 for communities across the Nation, improved health  
2 care and educational opportunities, and a better  
3 quality of life for all Americans.

4 (2) Continued progress in the deployment and  
5 adoption of broadband services is vital to ensuring  
6 that our Nation remains competitive and continues  
7 to create business and job growth.

8 (3) The Federal Government should also recog-  
9 nize and encourage complementary State efforts to  
10 improve the quality and usefulness of data about  
11 broadband service and its deployment and should en-  
12 courage and support the partnership of the public  
13 and private sectors in the continued growth of  
14 broadband services and information technology for  
15 the residents and businesses of the Nation.

16 **SEC. 3. ENCOURAGING STATE INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE  
17 BROADBAND.**

18 (a) PURPOSES.—The purposes of any grant under  
19 subsection (b) are—

20 (1) to ensure that all citizens and businesses in  
21 a State have access to affordable, reliable broadband  
22 service;

23 (2) to achieve improved technology literacy, in-  
24 creased computer ownership, and home broadband  
25 use among such citizens and businesses;

5 (4) to establish and sustain an environment  
6 ripe for broadband services and information tech-  
7 nology investment.

8 (b) ESTABLISHMENT OF STATE BROADBAND DATA  
9 AND DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM.—

17 (2) COMPETITIVE BASIS.—Any grant under this  
18 subsection shall be awarded on a competitive basis.

19 (c) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a grant  
20 under subsection (b), an eligible entity shall—

#### 4 (d) PEER REVIEW.—

12 (A) be provided a written description of  
13 the grant to be reviewed;

14 (B) provide the results of any review by  
15 such group to the Secretary of Commerce; and

16 (C) certify that such group will enter into  
17 voluntary nondisclosure agreements as nec-  
18 essary to prevent the unauthorized disclosure of  
19 confidential and propriety information provided  
20 by broadband service providers in connection  
21 with projects funded by any such grant.

22 (e) USE OF FUNDS.—A grant awarded to an eligible  
23 entity under subsection (b) shall be used to the maximum  
24 extent possible—

1 (1) to provide a baseline assessment of  
2 broadband service deployment in each State;

3 (2) to identify and track—

(A) areas in each State that have low levels of broadband service deployment;

6 (B) the rate at which residential and busi-  
7 ness adopt broadband service and other related  
8 information technology services; and

9 (C) possible suppliers of such services;

10 (3) to identify barriers to the adoption by indi-  
11 viduals and businesses of broadband service and re-  
12 lated information technology services, including  
13 whether or not—

14 (A) the demand for such services is absent;  
15 and

16 (B) the supply for such services is capable  
17 of meeting the demand for such services:

18 (4) to create and facilitate, in each county or  
19 designated region in a State, a local technology plan-  
20 ning team—

21 (A) with members representing a cross sec-  
22 tion of the community, including representatives  
23 of business, telecommunications labor organiza-  
24 tions, elementary and secondary education,  
25 health care, libraries, higher education, commu-

1              nity-based organizations, local government,  
2              tourism, parks and recreation, and agriculture;  
3              and

4 (B) which shall—

5 (i) measure, against relevant bench-  
6 marks, technology use across relevant com-  
7 munity sectors;

10 (iii) develop a tactical business plan  
11 for achieving its goals, with specific rec-  
12 ommendations for online application devel-  
13 opment and demand creation;

14 (5) to work collaboratively with broadband serv-  
15 ice providers and information technology companies  
16 to encourage deployment and use, especially in  
17 unserved and underserved areas, through the use of  
18 local demand aggregation, mapping analysis, and the  
19 creation of market intelligence to improve the busi-  
20 ness case for providers to deploy;

21 (6) to establish programs to improve computer  
22 ownership and Internet access for unserved and un-  
23 derserved populations;

4 (8) to facilitate information exchange regarding  
5 the use and demand for broadband services between  
6 public and private sectors; and

9 (A) identify gaps in such service through a  
10 method of geographic information system map-  
11 ping of service availability at the census block  
12 level; and

13 (B) provide a baseline assessment of state-  
14 wide broadband deployment in terms of house-  
15 holds with high-speed availability.

16 (f) PARTICIPATION LIMIT.—For each State, an eligible  
17 entity may not receive a new grant under this section  
18 to fund the activities described in subsection (d) within  
19 such State if such organization obtained prior grant  
20 awards under this section to fund the same activities in  
21 that State in each of the previous 4 consecutive years.

22 (g) REPORT.—Each recipient of a grant under sub-  
23 section (b) shall submit a report on the use of the funds  
24 provided by the grant to the Secretary of Commerce.

25 (h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(A) described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from tax under section 501(a) of such Code;

12 (B) no part of the net earnings of which  
13 inures to the benefit of any member, founder,  
14 contributor, or individual;

15 (C) that has an established competency  
16 and proven record of working with public and  
17 private sectors to accomplish widespread deploy-  
18 ment and adoption of broadband services and  
19 information technology; and

20 (D) the board of directors of which is not  
21 composed of a majority of individuals who are  
22 also employed by, or otherwise associated with,  
23 any Federal, State, or local government or any  
24 Federal, State, or local agency.

11 (j) NO REGULATORY AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this  
12 Act shall be construed as giving any public or private enti-  
13 ty established or affected by this Act any additional regu-  
14 latory jurisdiction or oversight authority over providers of  
15 broadband services or information technology.