

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 3994

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 24, 2018

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science,
and Transportation

AN ACT

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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

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

6 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF INTERNET**
7 **CONNECTIVITY AND GROWTH.**

8 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
9 ment of this Act, the Assistant Secretary shall establish
10 the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth within the
11 National Telecommunications and Information Adminis-
12 tration.

13 **SEC. 3. DUTIES.**

14 (a) OUTREACH.—The Office shall—

15 (1) connect with communities that need access
16 to high-speed internet and improved digital inclusion
17 efforts through various forms of outreach and com-
18 munication techniques;

19 (2) hold regional workshops across the country
20 to share best practices and effective strategies for
21 promoting broadband access and adoption;

22 (3) develop targeted broadband training and
23 presentations for various demographic communities
24 through various media; and

25 (4) develop and distribute publications (includ-
26 ing toolkits, primers, manuals, and white papers)

1 providing guidance, strategies, and insights to com-
2 munities as the communities develop strategies to
3 expand broadband access and adoption.

4 (b) TRACKING OF FEDERAL DOLLARS.—

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

9 (2) ACCOUNTING MECHANISM.—The Office
10 shall develop a streamlined accounting mechanism
11 by which any agency offering a Federal broadband
12 support program and the Commission through the
13 Universal Service Fund shall provide the information
14 described in paragraph (1) in a standardized and ef-
15 ficient fashion.

16 (3) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the
17 date of the enactment of this Act, and every year
18 thereafter, the Office shall make public on the
19 website of the Office and submit to the Committee
20 on Energy and Commerce of the House of Rep-
21 resentatives and the Committee on Commerce,
22 Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report
23 on the following:

24 (A) A description of the work of the Office
25 for the previous year and the number of resi-

1 dents of the United States that received
2 broadband as result of Federal broadband sup-
3 port programs and the Universal Service Fund
4 program.

5 (B) A description of how many residents of
6 the United States were provided broadband by
7 which universal service mechanism or which
8 Federal broadband support program.

9 (C) An estimate of the economic impact of
10 such broadband deployment efforts on the local
11 economy, including any effect on small busi-
12 nesses or jobs.

13 **SEC. 4. STREAMLINED APPLICATIONS FOR SUPPORT.**

14 (a) AGENCY CONSULTATION.—The Office shall con-
15 sult with any agency offering a Federal broadband support
16 program to streamline and standardize the applications
17 process for financial assistance or grants for such pro-
18 gram.

19 (b) AGENCY STREAMLINING.—Any agency offering a
20 Federal broadband support program shall amend their ap-
21 plications for broadband support, to the extent practicable
22 and as necessary, to streamline and standardize applica-
23 tions for Federal broadband support programs across the
24 Government.

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

5 (d) WEBSITE REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days
6 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Office shall
7 create a central website through which potential applicants
8 can learn about and apply for support through any Fed-
9 eral broadband support program.

10 **SEC. 5. COORDINATION OF SUPPORT.**

11 The Office, any agency that offers a Federal
12 broadband support program, and the Commission through
13 the Universal Service Fund shall coordinate with the Of-
14 fice to ensure that support is being distributed in an effi-
15 cient, technology-neutral, and financially sustainable man-
16 ner, with the goal of serving the largest number of persons
17 in the United States while avoiding overbuilding and pro-
18 moting the most job and economic growth for all residents
19 of the United States.

20 **SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.**

21 In this Act:

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

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

4 (3) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission”
5 means the Federal Communications Commission.

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

16 (A) The Telecommunications and Tech-
17 nology Program of the Appalachian Regional
18 Commission.

19 (B) The Telecommunications Infrastruc-
20 ture Loans and Loan Guarantees, the Rural
21 Broadband Access Loans and Loan Guarantees,
22 the Substantially Underserved Trust Areas Pro-
23 visions, the Community Connect Grant Pro-
24 gram, and the Distance Learning and Tele-

1 medicine Grant Program of the Rural Utilities
2 Service of the Department of Agriculture.

3 (C) The Public Works and Economic Ad-
4 justment Assistance Programs and the Plan-
5 ning and Local Technical Assistance Programs
6 of the Economic Development Administration of
7 the Department of Commerce.

8 (D) The Community Development Block
9 Grants and Section 108 Loan Guarantees, the
10 Funds for Public Housing Authorities: Capital
11 Fund and Operating Fund, the Multifamily
12 Housing, the Indian Community Development
13 Block Grant Program, the Indian Housing
14 Block Grant Program, the Title VI Loan Guar-
15 antee Program, Choice Neighborhoods, the
16 HOME Investment Partnerships Program, the
17 Housing Trust Fund, and the Housing Oppor-
18 tunities for Persons with AIDS of the Depart-
19 ment of Housing and Urban Development.

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 pursuant to section 2.

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. 7. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.**

14 No additional funds are authorized to be appro-
15 priated to carry out this Act. This Act shall be carried
16 out using amounts otherwise authorized.

Passed the House of Representatives July 23, 2018.

Attest:

KAREN L. HAAS,

Clerk.