

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time, and only to point out that this bill did pass in the previous Congress, in the 114th Congress, both in subcommittee and full committee, but was never enacted into law.

The author of that bill in the last Congress was our colleague, Lois Capps, on the Energy and Commerce Committee, and I know she will be grateful to see that her work has finally cleared the floor of the House and on to the Senate, and we will be successful.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I urge an "aye" vote.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 959, the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Reauthorization Act of 2018. I'd like to thank Representative DAVID JOYCE for his work on this important bill. It is one of four bipartisan public health bills the House will vote on today, each of which passed through the Energy and Commerce Committee unanimously at both the Health Subcommittee and our full committee.

H.R. 959 would reauthorize nursing workforce development programs, which support the recruitment, retention, and advanced education of skilled nursing professionals. The bill extends advanced education nursing grants to support clinical nurse specialists and clinical nurse leaders, defines nurse-managed health clinics, adds clinical nurse specialists to the National Advisory Council on Nurse Education, and reauthorizes loan repayments, scholarships, and grants for education, practice, quality, and retention.

In rural areas of the country, like my district in Oregon, nurses play an especially critical role in our health care delivery system, and they've told me about the importance of this legislation. That's why it's critical we reauthorize these programs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 959, the Nursing Workforce Reauthorization Act of 2018.

It is undeniable that nurses play a critical role in our society's function, as they are trusted healthcare professionals who are the heart and soul of the healthcare system.

H.R. 959 amends the Public Health Service Act by extending support for nursing workforce programs and grants through the fiscal year 2022.

This bill will reauthorize the Title VIII nursing workforce development programs.

Further, eligibility for advanced nursing education grants will be expanded to include education programs for clinical nurse leaders and all combined registered nurse and graduate degree programs.

The Nursing Workforce Reauthorization Act bolsters nursing education at all levels, strengthens nursing education and funds institutions educating nurses to practice in rural and medically underserved communities.

For nearly six decades, the nursing workforce development programs have helped fortify the workforce by increasing the number of students, faculty, and practicing nurses.

Unfortunately, health inequities, inflated costs, and poor health care outcomes are intensifying because of today's shortfall of appropriately prepared licensed vocational/prac-

tical nurses (LVNs/LPNs), registered nurses (RNs), advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), and nurse faculty.

This trend must be ameliorated, as the importance of nurses cannot be understated.

Nurses are extremely vital components to quality healthcare and patient education.

Nurses are the primary professionals delivering quality health care in the nation, as there are over 4.2 million Registered Nurses in practice today.

Moreover, the nurse workforce is expected to continue to grow, due to the current technological advancements for treatments, preventive care needs, and the rising demand from new health reform enrollments.

It is imperative that the nursing shortage in society be eliminated, as the need for qualified, experienced nurses is rising and will continue to do so.

Insufficient federal investments in nursing education, training, and the overall workforce will only be a detriment to our nation's quality of healthcare.

H.R. 959 ensures that nursing workforce development programs will continue to address the specific needs of the nursing and nurse faculty workforce as well as patients in our communities.

By modernizing the current nursing workforce development programs, through technical training and further financial funding, nurses will be able to fulfill the needs of their patients at the highest level.

Further funding and training for nurses at all levels ensures that all types and levels of nurses have concrete training and are able to deliver high quality healthcare.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 959, which will strengthen the future of nursing and the health of the nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 959, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ADVANCING CRITICAL CONNECTIVITY EXPANDS SERVICE, SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES, OPPORTUNITIES, ACCESS, AND DATA BASED ON ASSESSED NEED AND DEMAND ACT

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3994) to establish the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3994

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

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

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF INTERNET CONNECTIVITY AND GROWTH.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant Secretary shall establish the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth within the National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

SEC. 3. DUTIES.

(a) OUTREACH.—The Office shall—

(1) connect with communities that need access to high-speed internet and improved digital inclusion efforts through various forms of outreach and communication techniques;

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

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

(4) develop and distribute publications (including toolkits, primers, manuals, and white papers) providing guidance, strategies, and insights to communities as the communities develop strategies to expand broadband access and adoption.

(b) TRACKING OF FEDERAL DOLLARS.—

(1) BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE.—The Office shall track the construction and use of and access to any broadband infrastructure built using any Federal support in a central database.

(2) ACCOUNTING MECHANISM.—The Office shall develop a streamlined accounting mechanism by which any agency offering a Federal broadband support program and the Commission through the Universal Service Fund shall provide the information described in paragraph (1) in a standardized and efficient fashion.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every year thereafter, the Office shall make public on the website of the Office and submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report on the following:

(A) A description of the work of the Office for the previous year and the number of residents of the United States that received broadband as result of Federal broadband support programs and the Universal Service Fund program.

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

(C) An estimate of the economic impact of such broadband deployment efforts on the local economy, including any effect on small businesses or jobs.

SEC. 4. STREAMLINED APPLICATIONS FOR SUPPORT.

(a) AGENCY CONSULTATION.—The Office shall consult with any agency offering a Federal broadband support program to streamline and standardize the applications process for financial assistance or grants for such program.

(b) AGENCY STREAMLINING.—Any agency offering a Federal broadband support program shall amend their applications for broadband support, to the extent practicable and as necessary, to streamline and standardize applications for Federal broadband support programs across the Government.

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

(d) WEBSITE REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this

Act, the Office shall create a central website through which potential applicants can learn about and apply for support through any Federal broadband support program.

SEC. 5. COORDINATION OF SUPPORT.

The Office, any agency that offers a Federal broadband support program, and the Commission through the Universal Service Fund shall coordinate with the Office to ensure that support is being distributed in an efficient, technology-neutral, and financially sustainable manner, with the goal of serving the largest number of persons in the United States while avoiding overbuilding and promoting the most job and economic growth for all residents of the United States.

SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

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

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

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

(4) FEDERAL BROADBAND SUPPORT PROGRAM.—The term “Federal broadband support program” does not include any Universal Service Fund program and means any of the following programs (or any other similar Federal program) to the extent the program offers broadband internet service or programs for promoting broadband access and adoption for various demographic communities through various media for residential, commercial, community providers, or academic establishments:

(A) The Telecommunications and Technology Program of the Appalachian Regional Commission.

(B) The Telecommunications Infrastructure Loans and Loan Guarantees, the Rural Broadband Access Loans and Loan Guarantees, the Substantially Underserved Trust Areas Provisions, the Community Connect Grant Program, and the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program of the Rural Utilities Service of the Department of Agriculture.

(C) The Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs and the Planning and Local Technical Assistance Programs of the Economic Development Administration of the Department of Commerce.

(D) The Community Development Block Grants and Section 108 Loan Guarantees, the Funds for Public Housing Authorities: Capital Fund and Operating Fund, the Multifamily Housing, the Indian Community Development Block Grant Program, the Indian Housing Block Grant Program, the Title VI Loan Guarantee Program, Choice Neighborhoods, the HOME Investment Partnerships Program, the Housing Trust Fund, and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

(E) The American Job Centers of the Employment and Training Administration of the Department of Labor.

(F) The Library Services and Technology Grant Programs of the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

(5) OFFICE.—The term “Office” means the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth established pursuant to section 2.

(6) UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND PROGRAM.—The term “Universal Service Fund program” means any program authorized under section 254 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 254) to help deploy broadband.

(7) UNIVERSAL SERVICE MECHANISM.—The term “universal service mechanism” means any funding stream provided by a Universal

Service Fund program to support broadband access.

SEC. 7. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act. This Act shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the ACCESS BROADBAND Act, which Congressman TONKO and I introduced last year. This bill would streamline the Federal grant programs related to broadband deployment, and track how Federal funds are used to a greater extent than is now the case. I thank Congressman TONKO for his leadership on this important issue.

Broadband internet is the lifeblood of the American economy, a critical tool for students, and an incubator for the next great innovation. This bill takes the right steps to ensure Federal broadband resources are working to expand access in underserved areas.

Being able to have access to the internet means being able to unlock tremendous potential, and we have to make sure that all Americans share in this success. Many local economies are relying on Congress to get this right.

In many areas of the country, the cost to deploy broadband infrastructure is prohibitive, which creates a need for Federal funding in cases where a market solution is not possible.

With several different broadband support programs across several Federal agencies, there is no single, comprehensive system tracking where and how Federal funds are being spent.

Access broadband creates an office within the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, with the task of simplifying the application process for the various support programs, coordinating between the various agencies, and tracking the use and effectiveness of Federal broadband funding.

By ensuring coordination, the office will help prevent overbuilding of broadband and make sure Federal funds are going where they are needed most, which should be unserved and underserved areas of the country.

This bill and the other bills we have been considering reflect the broad and encompassing jurisdiction of the Energy and Commerce Committee and the

important day-to-day work and oversight we maintain over a significant portion of the Federal Government.

This type of work counts and these bills are important. Energy and Commerce accomplishments like reauthorizing the successful CHIP program, the Ray Baums Act, safely disposing of nuclear waste, and improving consumer protections, have been the pillars of our accomplishments this Congress, and this has occurred in a bipartisan capacity.

Bills like the ones we are considering today, keep the wheels of many critical government functions moving. The ACCESS BROADBAND bill is excellent legislation and will improve broadband for many Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a “yes” vote, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support H.R. 3994, the Advancing Critical Connectivity Expands Service, Small Business Resources, Opportunities, Access, and Data Based on Assessed Need and Demand Act, or in short, ACCESS BROADBAND Act.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chair and ranking member for moving this measure forward, and offer special thanks to my friend, Representative LANCE, for partnering with me on this legislation. I also thank the bipartisan group of Members who have cosponsored this legislation, including 14 members of the Energy and Commerce Committee who have worked together and who agree that these are vital steps worth taking.

This bill is about serving the people. My own constituents continue to reach out about their limitations of access to broadband internet throughout the capital region. Some of these areas are rural and many are underserved and unserved entirely.

Other areas are underserved with a few houses having access, while many others are left with no affordable options in sight.

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Constituents ask: When will we get access? What about western Schenectady County? What about Amsterdam? What about Berne? What about Fort Johnson? What about western Saratoga County in the 20th Congressional District?

I have heard from doctors who depend on broadband internet to read X-rays when they are on call. I hear from librarians who find students sitting in the library parking lot after hours so that they can access the internet and finish their homework assignments. I hear from workers who are forced to leave home to find high enough internet speed that they can upload or download large files. They all ask: When will we have access?

As a Congress, we owe these folk an answer. A lack of access to broadband internet in the capital region is one of many reasons I pushed to join the Energy and Commerce Committee and

why I have worked to advance this legislation.

This bill is the first part of that answer. H.R. 3994, the Advancing Critical Connectivity Expands Service, Small Business Resources, Opportunities, Access, and Data Based on Assessed Need and Demand Act, the ACCESS BROADBAND Act, would establish a coordinating office for Federal broadband resources.

It would use existing resources to streamline management of Federal broadband resources across multiple agencies and simplify the process for small businesses and local economic developers to access them.

Currently, there is no comprehensive system that tracks where Federal dollars are going and how the funding is impacting communities. Investments are made with little accountability and oversight on behalf of the taxpayer.

ACCESS BROADBAND, as an act, would begin to address the issues. This bill would track Federal broadband dollars and streamline management of Federal broadband resources across multiple agencies. Most notably, it would simplify the process for small businesses and local economic developers to access them.

There is still much more work to be done on this issue. I do hope that this can serve as a starting place for us to open doors of opportunity and access for the millions of Americans who require the better and improved outcomes by investing in broadband expansion.

I thank all of the members and staff working together on ACCESS BROADBAND, helping ensure that our communities can access the broadband resources they need to grow and to prosper.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote on this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER), who is a member of our committee.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my colleague's bill, the ACCESS BROADBAND Act.

Mr. TONKO's legislation would move to establish an office of Internet Connectivity and Growth at the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to coordinate and track Federal funding for broadband across every agency.

This is important because the Federal Government's grant system can oftentimes be confusing and disjointed, making it difficult for communities and organizations to find grants they may be eligible for. As a result, they may be losing out on opportunities, especially when it comes to broadband needs.

Our rural communities continue to struggle, and one area that has been proven to be a boon is access to high-speed internet. By encompassing all of

these grants into one area, we can help assist communities and organizations across the country in their search for Federal grant funding.

Access to broadband is a recipe for growth, allowing people to take and create new opportunities that may not have been there before. That is why I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers on my side. If the other side is ready to close, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3994, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS PROTECTION ACT OF 2017

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1689) to protect private property rights.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1689

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Private Property Rights Protection Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON EMINENT DOMAIN ABUSE BY STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—No State or political subdivision of a State shall exercise its power of eminent domain, or allow the exercise of such power by any person or entity to which such power has been delegated, over property to be used for economic development or over property that is used for economic development within 7 years after that exercise, if that State or political subdivision receives Federal economic development funds during any fiscal year in which the property is so used or intended to be used.

(b) INELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL FUNDS.—A violation of subsection (a) by a State or political subdivision shall render such State or political subdivision ineligible for any Federal economic development funds for a period of 2 fiscal years following a final judgment on the merits by a court of competent jurisdiction that such subsection has been violated, and any Federal agency charged with distributing those funds shall withhold them for such 2-year period, and any such funds distributed to such State or political subdivision shall be returned or reimbursed by such State or political subdivision to the appropriate Federal agency or authority of the Federal Government, or component thereof.

(c) OPPORTUNITY TO CURE VIOLATION.—A State or political subdivision shall not be ineligible for any Federal economic development funds under subsection (b) if such State or political subdivision returns all real prop-

erty the taking of which was found by a court of competent jurisdiction to have constituted a violation of subsection (a) and replaces any other property destroyed and repairs any other property damaged as a result of such violation. In addition, the State or political subdivision must pay any applicable penalties and interest to regain eligibility.

SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON EMINENT DOMAIN ABUSE BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

The Federal Government or any authority of the Federal Government shall not exercise its power of eminent domain to be used for economic development.

SEC. 4. PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.

(a) CAUSE OF ACTION.—Any—(1) owner of private property whose property is subject to eminent domain who suffers injury as a result of a violation of any provision of this Act with respect to that property; or (2) any tenant of property that is subject to eminent domain who suffers injury as a result of a violation of any provision of this Act with respect to that property, may bring an action to enforce any provision of this Act in the appropriate Federal or State court. A State shall not be immune under the 11th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States from any such action in a Federal or State court of competent jurisdiction. In such action, the defendant has the burden to show by clear and convincing evidence that the taking is not for economic development. Any such property owner or tenant may also seek an appropriate relief through a preliminary injunction or a temporary restraining order.

(b) LIMITATION ON BRINGING ACTION.—An action brought by a property owner or tenant under this Act may be brought if the property is used for economic development following the conclusion of any condemnation proceedings condemning the property of such property owner or tenant, but shall not be brought later than seven years following the conclusion of any such proceedings.

(c) ATTORNEYS' FEE AND OTHER COSTS.—In any action or proceeding under this Act, the court shall allow a prevailing plaintiff a reasonable attorneys' fee as part of the costs, and include expert fees as part of the attorneys' fee.

SEC. 5. REPORTING OF VIOLATIONS TO ATTORNEY GENERAL.

(a) SUBMISSION OF REPORT TO ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Any—(1) owner of private property whose property is subject to eminent domain who suffers injury as a result of a violation of any provision of this Act with respect to that property; or (2) any tenant of property that is subject to eminent domain who suffers injury as a result of a violation of any provision of this Act with respect to that property, may report a violation by the Federal Government, any authority of the Federal Government, State, or political subdivision of a State to the Attorney General.

(b) INVESTIGATION BY ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Upon receiving a report of an alleged violation, the Attorney General shall conduct an investigation to determine whether a violation exists.

(c) NOTIFICATION OF VIOLATION.—If the Attorney General concludes that a violation does exist, then the Attorney General shall notify the Federal Government, authority of the Federal Government, State, or political subdivision of a State that the Attorney General has determined that it is in violation of the Act. The notification shall further provide that the Federal Government, State, or political subdivision of a State has 90 days from the date of the notification to demonstrate to the Attorney General either that: (1) it is not in violation of the Act; or