

□ 1610

It also allows the network to invest in newer technology, not just what was defined over a decade ago.

Anyone who is in the fire service knows the tools change. Communications systems have to keep up, or they fall behind very quickly.

There are also real accountability measures here such as annual reports on cybersecurity, independent evaluations of the contractors, and requiring plans to restore service after disasters.

If there is an outage, departments have to be notified within 30 minutes. That is the kind of standard first responders expect.

When I first joined the fire service, we did not always have dedicated networks like this. You were dealing with radios that did not always connect across jurisdictions. You were relaying messages instead of getting them directly. A system like this would have cut through that and made the response more coordinated.

This is not complicated. Better communications lead to better coordination, and that saves lives.

This passed out of committee 51-0. This agreement shows how important it is. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this effort.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 7386, the First Responder Network Authority Reauthorization Act.

Again, this not only implements the lessons learned from 9/11, but this bill strengthens the FirstNet Authority so that ultimately a network that could not have been imagined in 2001 now will be always available, dedicated, and interoperable for our first responders so that they know they can do their job and not worry about their communication system going down.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Virginia for her support of this important legislation.

Like I said, this is a bipartisan bill, and I urge support of this bill and ask for immediate passage.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7386, 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.

MYSTIC ALERTS ACT

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7022) to provide for the transmission of emergency alerts by satellite, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7022

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 "Mystic Alerts Act".

SEC. 2. TRANSMISSION OF EMERGENCY ALERTS BY SATELLITE.

(a) SERVICE PROVIDER ELECTION.—

(1) REQUIRED FILING.—Not later than 60 days after the effective date of the final rule required to be issued under subsection (b), each covered service provider shall file an election with the Federal Communications Commission with respect to whether the provider intends to transmit emergency alerts by satellite to the subscribers of the commercial mobile service of the provider who receive such service on devices capable of receiving such alerts, in addition to the transmission of emergency alerts under the Warning Alert, and Response Network Act.

(2) NOTIFICATION; AGREEMENT.—If a provider elects to transmit emergency alerts to subscribers by satellite under paragraph (1), the provider shall—

(A) notify the Commission of that election; and

(B) agree to transmit such alerts in a manner consistent with the technical standards, protocols, procedures, and other technical requirements implemented by the Commission.

(3) ELECTION NOT TO TRANSMIT.—If a provider elects not to transmit emergency alerts by satellite under paragraph (1), the provider shall provide notice to new and existing subscribers described in such paragraph of that election in the same manner that is required under subparagraphs (B) and (C) of section 602(b)(1) of the Warning, Alert, and Response Network Act.

(4) CONSUMER CHOICE TO OPT OUT.—If a provider elects to transmit emergency alerts to subscribers of such service by satellite under paragraph (1), the provider shall prevent the device of any such subscriber that opts out of receiving emergency alerts pursuant to section 602(b)(2)(E) of the Warning, Alert, and Response Network Act, or classes of such alerts, from receiving such alerts by satellite.

(5) NO FEE FOR SERVICE.—If a provider elects to transmit emergency alerts to subscribers by satellite under paragraph (1), the provider may not impose a separate or additional charge for such transmission or capability.

(b) SATELLITE ALERT REGULATIONS.—

(1) NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall publish a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to establish any requirements necessary to facilitate the satellite alerting capability of covered service providers.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements required by paragraph (1) shall—

(A) take into account the capability of—

(i) satellites to transmit emergency alerts; and

(ii) mobile devices to receive and display such alerts; and

(B) minimize the impact of emergency alerting on other voice and data communications, including 9-1-1 communications.

(3) FINAL RULE.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, issue a final rule establishing the requirements described under paragraph (1).

(4) EFFECTIVE DATE OF RULE.—

(A) DATE.—The effective date of the final rule described under paragraph (3) shall be the later of—

(i) 36 months after publication of the final rule in the Federal Register; or

(ii) 12 months after the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Administrator of the Federal

Emergency Management Agency implement any standards, protocols, or procedures necessary to support the transmission of emergency alerts from alert originators to covered service providers, the Secretary and the Administrator shall notify the Commission of such implementation.

(B) NOTIFICATION.—The Secretary of Homeland Security and the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall notify the Commission of the implementation of any standards, protocols, or procedures described under subparagraph (A)(ii) for the purpose of determining the effective date of the final rule described under paragraph (3).

(c) LIMITATION OF LIABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Any covered service provider (including its officers, directors, employees, vendors, and agents) that transmits emergency alerts by satellite and meets its obligations under this Act shall not be liable to any subscriber to, or user of, such person's service or equipment for—

(A) any act or omission related to or any harm resulting from the transmission of, or failure to transmit, an emergency alert by satellite; or

(B) the release to a government agency or entity, public safety, fire service, law enforcement official, emergency medical service, or emergency facility of subscriber information used in connection with delivering such an alert.

(2) ELECTION NOT TO TRANSMIT ALERTS BY SATELLITE.—The election by a covered service provider under subsection (a)(3) not to transmit emergency alerts by satellite shall not, by itself, provide a basis for liability against the provider (including its officers, directors, employees, vendors, and agents).

(d) COVERED SERVICE PROVIDER.—In this Act, "covered service provider" means a provider of commercial mobile service that—

(1) voluntarily elects to transmit emergency alerts under section 602(b) of the Warning, Alert, and Response Network Act (Public Law 109-347; 42 U.S.C. 1201); and

(2) makes satellite voice and data communications service available to subscribers of the commercial mobile service of the provider.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN) and the gentleman from Virginia (Ms. MCCLELLAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill, H.R. 7022, the Mystic Alerts Act, led by Representative PFLUGER.

While we work to increase cell phone connectivity across the country, there are and may always be certain areas of this country that do not have access to that connectivity.

That can be a problem in times of natural disasters or other emergencies. If you don't have a connection, you may not be able to receive a wireless emergency alert or other emergency notifications. Satellite technology is beginning to bridge that gap with our

cell phones, and it could bring a huge benefit for public safety.

This legislation would kick-start the process for mobile service providers to utilize satellite connectivity to send alert messages in areas that may not have access to terrestrial cell network coverage.

This legislation has strong bipartisan support. I encourage my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7022, the Mystic Alerts Act.

Emergency alerting capabilities have come a long way in recent decades as a direct byproduct of innovation and breakthroughs in wireless technology.

Not long ago, 911 calls predominantly were made from landline phones, and emergency alerts were received primarily over broadcast television and radio channels.

Both capabilities still exist and have an important role in emergency communications, but I expect for most Americans, they make their 911 calls and receive their emergency alerts on their cell phone, a smartphone.

The creation of the Wireless Emergency Alert, or WEA, in 2012 marked a significant leap forward in our ability to disseminate warning and alert messages to the public.

Prior to 2012, Americans needed to already be tuned into broadcast programming to receive an alert being distributed for any number of important situations. In the case of a hurricane or a winter storm that was forecasted in advance, for instance, the Emergency Alert System was critical for broadly distributing public safety updates and instructions to viewers. But we know that not all emergencies announce themselves days in advance.

All across the country, natural disasters like tornadoes, wildfires, and flash floods show up with little or no advance warning. One tragedy after another has demonstrated that when a wildfire spreads or floodwaters rise rapidly without warning, being able to push emergency warning information out directly to cell phones in a danger zone is one of the most powerful tools we have to save lives.

The WEA system allows alerting authorities at nearly every level of government the ability to reach Americans where they are. Cell phones are ubiquitous today, and if we avoid falling into the traps of unclear and over-alerting, it will only continue to be more effective as wireless providers and alerting authorities take steps forward to improve geotargeting and location accuracy.

H.R. 7022 directs the FCC to take steps that will open up the WEA system so that satellite communication providers can leverage direct-to-cell capabilities to deliver wireless emergency alerts to cell phones in terrestrial dead zones where mobile carriers don't have coverage.

This is incredibly important for Americans who enjoy spending time in our beautiful national parks and forests, skiing in the mountains, and exploring other natural areas where connectivity is limited but where being without emergency information can be deadly, as we saw with Mystic this summer.

I thank Representatives FLETCHER and PFLUGER for their leadership on this effort to not only expand the reach of lifesaving emergency alerts but to turn tragedy into a victory to ensure more families don't suffer the same tragedy.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7022, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER), my good friend.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the bipartisan H.R. 7022, the Mystic Alerts Act introduced by Congressman PFLUGER.

Public safety is one of Congress' most serious responsibilities, and this bill addresses a clear and urgent gap in our emergency communication system. Recent disasters have reminded us that when lives are on the line, emergency alerts must work immediately, reliably, and everywhere.

But too often, that is not guaranteed. In moments of crisis, terrestrial communication networks can be damaged, overloaded, or simply unavailable. When that happens, families may not receive the warnings they need until it is too late.

□ 1620

Like Congressman PFLUGER, my family was directly impacted by the Camp Mystic flooding in Texas. As we all know, I had two granddaughters who were there. They lost one of their cousins, Janie Hunt.

That tragedy showed in the clearest possible terms how fast conditions can deteriorate and how devastating the consequences can be when warnings do not reach people in time.

The Mystic Alerts Act takes an important step forward by directing the FCC to establish standards and requirements for delivering emergency alerts through satellite connectivity. That means building redundancy into the system so that when traditional networks fail, alerts can still get through.

That matters for rural communities. It matters for disaster zones. It matters for places where geography, infrastructure damage, or network congestion can leave people isolated at the worst possible moment. It matters for every American who expects that, in an emergency, the government will do everything it can to get critical warnings into their hands.

This legislation will help modernize our emergency alerting framework, strengthen resilience, and improve our

ability to save lives during floods, wildfires, hurricanes, and other disasters. It also honors the victims of the Camp Mystic flood by ensuring that we will not simply mourn tragedy but learn from it and act.

I commend Congressman PFLUGER for his leadership and for bringing forward a practical, bipartisan solution. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7022, the Mystic Alerts Act.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Madam Speaker, in closing, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 7022, the Mystic Alerts Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Virginia for her support of this bill. I, too, encourage all Members to vote for H.R. 7022 for immediate passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BICE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7022, 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Matthew Hanley, one of his secretaries.

EXPEDITING FEDERAL BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT REVIEWS ACT

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1681) to require the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to establish an interagency strike force to ensure that certain Federal land management agencies, including the organizational units of such agencies, prioritize the review of requests for communications use authorizations, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1681

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 "Expediting Federal Broadband Deployment Reviews Act".

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERAGENCY STRIKE FORCE.

(a) INTERAGENCY STRIKE FORCE.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant Secretary shall establish an interagency strike force to ensure that each Federal land management agency, including each organizational unit of the agency, prioritizes the review of requests for communications use authorizations.

(2) MEMBERS.—The strike force shall be composed of—