

broadband infrastructure to the rural and remote areas that are still most in need.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. EVANS) to speak on the bill.

Mr. EVANS of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today I rise in strong support of my bipartisan bill, the Expediting Federal Broadband Deployment Reviews Act. This legislation, which I am proud to lead with my colleague from Minnesota, will help streamline broadband permitting to help deliver fast, reliable internet to the communities that need it most by creating a new system for prioritizing broadband deployment requests on or across Federal land.

It is a commonsense piece of legislation that, as we have heard, directs the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to establish a strike force to support Federal land management agencies' review of requests to deploy broadband across and through Federal land.

My home State of Colorado is the heart of the Rocky Mountain West with more than 24 million acres of Federal land, which is about the size of Indiana. Roughly 36 percent of the total acreage of Colorado is Federal land, and it serves countless roles, from conservation and recreation to other activities. These diverse uses also mean that multiple agencies have jurisdiction over these 24 million acres from the National Park Service to the United States Forest Service to the Bureau of Land Management. These agencies often have duplicative or redundant permitting processes which can delay what should be a simple permit.

In all parts of Colorado, from the Front Range to the Western Slope, rural communities are often surrounded by Federal lands which means they face greater difficulty building out infrastructure, including broadband. These are the communities that are often left behind when it comes to critical service such as internet access and easy communication.

It is 2026. Reliable, high-speed internet should not be considered a luxury. It is a necessity. Families, students, and small businesses need to be able to easily access this important service.

As a cop for 10 years, I also know that law enforcement and public safety rely on broadband access to promptly identify and interdict threats in our communities and respond to natural disasters. Without these reliable services, public safety operations are going to be less coordinated, which causes first responders to face delays and disorganization.

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By law, Federal agencies are required to grant or deny broadband applications within 270 days, but these dead-

lines are often missed. The U.S. Government Accountability Office recently reported that roughly half of the communications use applications submitted to BLM and the United States Forest Service from 2018 to 2022 either exceeded the 270-day deadline or didn't have enough information to reveal whether the deadline had even been met.

As a result, broadband developers report that deploying fiber in rural areas can take an average of 5 to 10 years to complete. This is completely unacceptable, and it is a complete slap in the face to rural communities that are already underserved.

I am proud to serve as a leading voice for permitting reform in this Congress, not just for broadband but for many other types of permits, such as energy generation and distribution, that rely on broadband.

Madam Speaker, this legislation is key to fixing our broken permitting process. I am proud that it is bipartisan. I am proud that it is common sense. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

Ms. McCLELLAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 1681, the Expediting Federal Broadband Deployment Reviews Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. McCLELLAN) for her support of this important legislation. I, too, urge a "yes" vote on this important bill, H.R. 1681, for immediate approval.

Madam 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. 1681.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### FEDERAL BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT TRACKING ACT

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1343) to require the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to submit to Congress a plan for the Assistant Secretary to track the acceptance, processing, and disposal of certain Form 299s, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1343

*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 "Federal Broadband Deployment Tracking Act".

#### SEC. 2. PLAN FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY TO TRACK THE ACCEPTANCE, PROCESSING, AND DISPOSAL OF CERTAIN FORM 299S.

(a) PLAN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a plan containing a description of—

(1) the process by which the Assistant Secretary proposes to—

(A) track the acceptance, processing, and disposal of each Form 299 for communications use authorization;

(B) provide applicants additional transparency with respect to the status of the applicable Form 299 for communications use authorization; and

(C) most expeditiously implement the plan; and

(2) any potential barriers to implementing the plan that are identified by the Assistant Secretary.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(A) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

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

(3) COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY.—The term "communications facility" has the meaning given the term communications facility installation in section 6409(d) of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (47 U.S.C. 1455(d)).

(4) COMMUNICATIONS USE.—The term "communications use" means the placement and operation of a communications facility.

(5) COMMUNICATIONS USE AUTHORIZATION.—The term "communications use authorization" means an easement, right-of-way, lease, license, or other authorization—

(A) provided by the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture;

(B) to locate or modify a communications facility on covered land; and

(C) for the primary purpose of authorizing the occupancy and use of such covered land for communications use.

(6) COVERED LAND.—The term "covered land" means—

(A) public lands; and

(B) National Forest System land.

(7) FORM 299.—The term "Form 299" means the form established under section 6409(b)(2)(A) of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (47 U.S.C. 1455(b)(2)(A)), or any successor form.

(8) NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—The term "National Forest System" has the meaning given the term in section 11(a) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1609(a)).

(9) PUBLIC LANDS.—The term "public lands" means land under the management of—

(A) the Bureau of Land Management;

(B) the National Park Service;

(C) the United States Fish and Wildlife Service; or

(D) the Bureau of Reclamation.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous materials 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. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1343, the Federal Broadband Deployment Tracking Act, sponsored by Representatives PFLUGER and SOTO.

This bill requires the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to develop a plan for tracking the broadband permitting application on Federal lands.

Broadband is essential to participate in everyday activities. Most Americans rely on their broadband connection for their work, healthcare, education, and more.

Congress has provided billions of dollars to close the digital divide. Indeed, NTIA is in the process of administering the BEAD Program to connect every unserved and underserved American.

Too often, broadband deployment is delayed or prevented due to unnecessary red tape in the form of burdensome permitting requirements. Federal agencies are some of the biggest culprits behind this red tape, delaying the deployment of broadband to the communities that most need it.

The process of application and approval for some of these permits has, unfortunately, become duplicative, ineffective, and time-consuming. Worse, there is no transparency in this process.

Opaque Federal permitting review processes leave applicants in the dark on whether their application is complete, where it is in the review process, and when they can expect a final decision. This uncertainty is not good for the planning of projects.

The Federal Broadband Deployment Tracking Act addresses these concerns by requiring NTIA to develop a plan to improve the tracking of Federal broadband permit applications. This plan would include a process to give applicants transparency into the status of their reviews, which would improve the speed and disposition of applications. This is essential to provide clarity into the Federal permitting process.

This is an important moment in time, and we must do all that we can to ensure that every American can access reliable broadband.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I thank the sponsors for their work on this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1343, the Federal Broadband Deployment Tracking Act.

It should come as no surprise that many of the communities lacking internet access are rural, remote, and in sparsely populated areas. Bringing this critical infrastructure to them will, in many cases, require crossing large geographic areas. This is especially true in many of our Western States, where significant amounts of territory are owned and managed by the Federal Government.

In recent years, the Energy and Commerce Committee has heard testimony about inefficiencies in Federal permitting. Specifically, witnesses acknowledge difficulty accessing information about the status and progress of applications to deploy communications infrastructure on publicly owned and managed lands.

To help address these issues, H.R. 1343 requires NTIA, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, to develop and implement a plan to assist communication providers in navigating the burdens of deploying communications infrastructure on public lands.

Ultimately, this bill should lead to more robust collaboration between those responsible for reviewing permit applications for Federal lands and the communication providers that are trying to bring high-speed internet to all of our constituents.

I thank Representatives SOTO and PFLUGER for their leadership on this issue. This bipartisan legislation is a product of regular order, and I am pleased to see it taken up by the full House today.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill, H.R. 1343, the Federal Broadband Deployment Tracking Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Virginia for her support for H.R. 1343, and I urge a "yes" vote on this bill. 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. 1343.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## EMERGENCY REPORTING ACT

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5200) to direct the Federal Communications Commission to issue reports after activation of the Disaster Information Reporting System and to make improvements to network outage reporting, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5200

*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 "Emergency Reporting Act".

## SEC. 2. REPORTS AFTER ACTIVATION OF DISASTER INFORMATION REPORTING SYSTEM; IMPROVEMENTS TO NETWORK OUTAGE REPORTING.

(a) REPORTS AFTER ACTIVATION OF DISASTER INFORMATION REPORTING SYSTEM.—

(1) PUBLIC HEARINGS.—

(A) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Commission shall hold not less than 1 public hearing relating to all events during the preceding 1-year period for which the System was activated for not less than 7 days.

(B) INCLUSION OF CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS IN HEARINGS.—For each public hearing held under subparagraph (A), the Commission shall consider including—

- (i) representatives of State governments, local governments, or Indian tribal governments in areas affected by such events;
- (ii) residents of the areas affected by such events, or consumer advocates;
- (iii) providers of communications services affected by such events;
- (iv) faculty of institutions of higher education;
- (v) representatives of other Federal agencies;
- (vi) electric utility providers;
- (vii) communications infrastructure companies; and
- (viii) first responders, emergency managers, or 9-1-1 directors in areas affected by such events.

(2) REPORTS.—Not later than 120 days after the date on which a public hearing held under paragraph (1) concludes, the Commission shall issue a report that includes, with respect to the events to which such hearing relates and to the extent known without requiring the collection of additional information—

- (A) the number and duration of any outages of—
  - (i) broadband internet access service;
  - (ii) interconnected VoIP service;
  - (iii) commercial mobile service; and
  - (iv) commercial mobile data service;

(B) the approximate number of users and the amount of communications infrastructure potentially affected by an outage described in subparagraph (A);

(C) the number and duration of any outages that prevent emergency communications centers from receiving caller location or number information or receiving emergency calls and routing such calls to emergency service personnel; and

(D) any recommendations of the Commission on how to improve the resiliency of affected communications services or networks.

(3) DEVELOPMENT OF REPORTS.—In developing a report required by paragraph (2), the Commission shall consider information collected by the Commission with respect to the events to which such report relates, including information collected through the System and the relevant public hearing.

(4) PUBLICATION OF REPORTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the Commission shall publish each report required by paragraph (2) on the website of the Commission upon the issuance of such report.

(B) EXCLUSION.—In publishing a report under subparagraph (A), the Commission shall exclude information that is otherwise exempt from public disclosure under the