

Union Calendar No. 191

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3385

[Report No. 118-239]

To direct the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to submit to Congress a report containing an assessment of the value, cost, and feasibility of developing a trans-Atlantic submarine fiber optic cable connecting the contiguous United States, the United States Virgin Islands, Ghana, and Nigeria, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 16, 2023

Ms. PLASKETT introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Energy and Commerce

OCTOBER 2, 2023

Additional sponsor: Mr. FULCHER

OCTOBER 2, 2023

Reported with amendments, committed to the Committee of the Whole House
on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italic*]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on May 16, 2023]

A BILL

To direct the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to submit to Congress a report containing an assessment of the value, cost, and feasibility of developing a trans-Atlantic submarine fiber optic cable connecting the contiguous United States, the United States Virgin Islands, Ghana, and Nigeria, 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. ASSESSMENT OF TRANS-ATLANTIC SUBMARINE**

4 **FIBER OPTIC CABLE.**

5 (a) *REPORT.*—*Not later than 1 year after the date of*
6 *the enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in consultation*
7 *with the heads of other Federal departments and agencies*
8 *as necessary, shall submit to the Committee on Energy and*
9 *Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Com-*
10 *mittee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the*
11 *Senate a report containing an assessment of the value, cost,*
12 *and feasibility of a trans-Atlantic submarine fiber optic*
13 *cable connecting the contiguous United States, the United*
14 *States Virgin Islands, Ghana, and Nigeria, to enhance the*
15 *national security of the United States.*

16 (b) *ELEMENTS.*—*The report required by subsection (a)*
17 *shall include an assessment of—*

18 (1) *the digital security, national security, and*
19 *economic opportunities associated with a trans-Atlan-*
20 *tic submarine fiber optic cable described in subsection*
21 *(a);*

22 (2) *the lifespan of submarine fiber optic cables*
23 *currently connecting the United States Virgin Islands*
24 *to the contiguous United States;*

1 (3) *the current security of telecommunications*
2 *between the contiguous United States and the United*
3 *States Virgin Islands;*

4 (4) *the readiness of telecommunications infra-*
5 *structure in the United States Virgin Islands to sup-*
6 *port a trans-Atlantic submarine fiber optic cable de-*
7 *scribed in subsection (a);*

8 (5) *the potential for engagement with trusted en-*
9 *tities in the deployment of a trans-Atlantic submarine*
10 *fiber optic cable described in subsection (a), and the*
11 *associated geopolitical and economic advantages;*

12 (6) *the potential connectivity opportunities to*
13 *maximize investments in the United States economy*
14 *through the use of a trans-Atlantic submarine fiber*
15 *optic cable described in subsection (a);*

16 (7) *the value, cost, and feasibility of establishing*
17 *a data center and high-security cloud services facility,*
18 *with independent power generation, in the United*
19 *States Virgin Islands for communications of the*
20 *United States Africa Command, communications of*
21 *the United States Special Operations Command, and*
22 *national security communications;*

23 (8) *the state of submarine fiber optic cables con-*
24 *ected to United States telecommunications infra-*
25 *structure; and*

1 (9) *any other related matters the Secretary deter-*
2 *mines are appropriate.*

3 (c) *NO MANDATORY DATA COLLECTION.—The Sec-*
4 *retary may not require any entity to provide data for pur-*
5 *poses of preparing the report required by subsection (a).*

6 (d) *FORM.—The report required by subsection (a) shall*
7 *be submitted in unclassified form without any designation*
8 *relating to dissemination control, but may include a classi-*
9 *fied annex.*

10 (e) *DEFINITIONS.—In this section:*

11 (1) *NOT TRUSTED.—The term “not trusted”*
12 *means, with respect to an entity, that the entity is de-*
13 *termined by the Secretary to pose an unacceptable*
14 *risk to the national security of the United States, or*
15 *the security and safety of United States persons,*
16 *based solely on one or more determination described*
17 *under paragraphs (1) through (4) of section 2(c) of*
18 *the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks*
19 *Act of 2019 (47 U.S.C. 1601(c)).*

20 (2) *SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means*
21 *the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Assist-*
22 *ant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and*
23 *Information.*

1 (3) *TRUSTED*.—*The term “trusted” means, with*
2 *respect to an entity, that the Secretary has not deter-*
3 *mined that the entity is not trusted.*

Amend the title so as to read: “A bill to direct the Secretary of Commerce to submit to Congress a report containing an assessment of the value, cost, and feasibility of a trans-Atlantic submarine fiber optic cable connecting the contiguous United States, the United States Virgin Islands, Ghana, and Nigeria.”.

Union Calendar No. 191

118TH CONGRESS
1ST Session

H. R. 3385

[Report No. 118-239]

A BILL

To direct the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to submit to Congress a report containing an assessment of the value, cost, and feasibility of developing a trans-Atlantic submarine fiber optic cable connecting the contiguous United States, the United States Virgin Islands, Ghana, and Nigeria, and for other purposes.

OCTOBER 2, 2023

Reported with amendments, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed