

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 454

To direct the Federal Communications Commission to establish the Office of Rural Broadband, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 12, 2019

Mr. CRAMER (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. WYDEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To direct the Federal Communications Commission to establish the Office of Rural Broadband, 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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Office of Rural
5 Broadband Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. OFFICE OF RURAL BROADBAND.**

7 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

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

4 (2) BROADBAND.—The term “broadband” has
5 the meaning given the term “advanced telecommuni-
6 cations capability” in section 706 of the Telecommu-
7 nications Act of 1996 (47 U.S.C. 1302).

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

10 (4) OFFICE.—The term “Office” means the Of-
11 fice of Rural Broadband established under sub-
12 section (b).

13 (5) RURAL.—The term “rural” has the mean-
14 ing given the term in section 54.505(b)(3) of title
15 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor
16 regulation.

17 (b) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after
18 the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall
19 establish an Office of Rural Broadband.

20 (c) DUTIES.—The Office shall have the following du-
21 ties:

22 (1) Coordinate efforts with the Rural Utilities
23 Service of the Department of Agriculture and the
24 National Telecommunications and Information Ad-

1 ministration to ensure the mutual and complemen-
2 tary success of—

3 (A) the initiatives of the Commission; and

4 (B) the programs overseen by the other
5 agencies described in this paragraph.

6 (2) Coordinate with the Universal Service Ad-
7 ministrative Company to maintain updated informa-
8 tion regarding programs that deploy rural broad-
9 band.

10 (3) Coordinate with other agencies to remove
11 barriers to broadband deployment.

12 (4) Assess, and publish the assessment of, the
13 impact of proposed actions of the Commission on
14 rural consumers before the actions are voted upon or
15 taken.

16 (5) Track broadband subscription rates in rural
17 areas, using data collected by the Bureau of the
18 Census under section 103(d) of the Broadband Data
19 Improvement Act (47 U.S.C. 1303(d)).

20 (6) Coordinate with other bureaus and offices
21 of the Commission and other agencies to ensure con-
22 sistency and updating of broadband mapping in
23 rural areas.

24 (7) Include in the Communications Marketplace
25 Report required under section 13 of the Communica-

1 tions Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 163) a report on the
2 efforts of the Office to promote and sustain quality
3 and affordable rural communications services, in-
4 cluding voice service and broadband.

5 (8) Dedicate a representative to address stake-
6 holder questions and concerns.

7 (d) NO ADDITIONAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—
8 Nothing in this section shall create any additional report-
9 ing requirement for a broadband provider.

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