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113TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2206

To streamline the collection and distribution of government information.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 3, 2014

Mr. COBURN (for himself and Mrs. MCCASKILL) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

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A BILL

To streamline the collection and distribution of government information.

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 ''Let Me Google That For You Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The National Technical Information Service (referred to in this Act as ''NTIS''), the National Archives and Records Administration, the Govern-

ment Accountability Office (referred to in this section as ''GAO''), and the Library of Congress all collect, categorize, and distribute government information.

(2) NTIS was established in 1950, more than 40 years before the creation of the Internet.

(3) NTIS is tasked with collecting and distributing government-funded scientific, technical, engineering, and business-related information and reports.

(4) GAO found that NTIS sold only 8 percent of the 2,500,000 reports in its collection between 1995 and 2000.

(5) A November 2012 GAO review of NTIS made the following conclusions:

(A) ''Of the reports added to NTIS's repository during fiscal years 1990 through 2011, GAO estimates that approximately 74 percent were readily available from other public sources.''.

(B) ''These reports were often available either from the issuing organization's website, the Federal Internet portal (http://www.USA.gov) or from another source located through a web search.''.

(C) ''The source that most often had the report [GAO] was searching for was another website located through http://www.Google.com.''.

(D) ''95 percent of the reports available from sources other than NTIS were available free of charge.''.

(6) No Federal agency should use taxpayer dollars to purchase a report from the National Technical Information Service that is available through the Internet for free.

(7) As far back as 1999, Secretary of Commerce William Daley—

(A) admitted that the National Technical Information Service would eventually outlive its usefulness and be unable to sustain its revenue-losing profit model;

(B) explained that ''declining sales revenues soon would not be sufficient to recover all of NTIS' operating costs''; and

(C) attributed this ''decline to other agencies' practice of making their research results available to the public for free through the Web''.

(8) According to the November 2012 GAO report—

(A) ''NTIS product expenditures exceeded revenues for 10 out of the past 11 fiscal years.'';

(B) ''The agency lost, on average, about $1.3 million over the last 11 years on its products.''; and

(C) ''The decline in revenue for its products continues to call into question whether NTIS's basic statutory function of acting as a self-financing repository and disseminator of scientific and technical information is still viable.''.

(9) NTIS has compensated for its lost revenue by charging other Federal agencies for various services that are not associated with NTIS's primary mission.

(10) Future technological advances will ensure that the services offered by NTIS are even more superfluous for essential government functions than they are today.

SEC. 3. NATIONAL TECHNICAL INFORMATION SERVICE.

(a) REPEAL.—Effective on the date that is 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the National

Technical Information Act of 1988 (subtitle B of title II of Public Law 100–519; 15 U.S.C. 3704b) is repealed.

(b) TRANSFER OF CRITICAL FUNCTIONS.—

(1) CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary of Commerce, the Archivist of the United States, the Comptroller General of the United States, and the Commissioner of Social Security shall consult with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to determine if any function of the National Technical Information Service is critical to the economy of the United States.

(2) GAO CERTIFICATION.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall determine which of the critical functions identified pursuant to paragraph (1) are not being carried out by any other agency or instrumentality of the Federal Government.

(3) TRANSFERS AUTHORIZED.—Before the effective date set forth in subsection (a), the Secretary of Commerce may transfer the responsibility for any critical function of NTIS (as identified under paragraph (1)) that is not otherwise being carried out (as determined under paragraph (2)) to another office within the Department of Commerce.

(c) ABOLITION OF FUNCTIONS.—Except for the functions transferred pursuant to subsection (b), all functions of the National Technical Information Service immediately before the repeal date described in subsection (a) are abolished on such repeal date.

SEC. 4. SECRETARY OF COMMERCE CERTIFICATION.

Before the effective date set forth in section 3(a), the Secretary of Commerce shall submit a written certification to the Committee on Finance of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives that all of the operations of the National Technical Information Service have been terminated.

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