

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 774

To require the Comptroller General of the United States to submit a report to Congress on the effectiveness of the Federal Communications Commission's universal service reforms.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 22, 2013

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

A BILL

To require the Comptroller General of the United States to submit a report to Congress on the effectiveness of the Federal Communications Commission's universal service reforms.

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. GAO REPORT ON UNIVERSAL SERVICE RE-**
4 **FORMS.**

5 (a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the report required
6 under subsection (b) is to aid Congress in monitoring and
7 measuring the effects of a series of reforms by the Federal
8 Communications Commission (in this Act referred to as

1 the “FCC”) intended to promote the availability and af-
 2 fordability of broadband service throughout the United
 3 States.

4 (b) REPORT.—The Comptroller General of the
 5 United States shall prepare a report providing detailed
 6 measurements, statistics, and metrics with respect to—

7 (1) the progress of implementation of the re-
 8 forms adopted in the FCC’s Report and Order and
 9 Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking adopted on
 10 October 27, 2011 (FCC 11–161) (in this Act re-
 11 ferred to as the “Order”);

12 (2) the effects, if any, of such reforms on retail
 13 end user rates during the applicable calendar year
 14 for—

15 (A) local voice telephony services (including
 16 any subscriber line charges and access recovery
 17 charges assessed by carriers upon purchasers of
 18 such services);

19 (B) interconnected VoIP services;

20 (C) long distance voice services;

21 (D) mobile wireless voice services;

22 (E) bundles of voice telephony or VoIP
 23 services (such as local and long distance voice
 24 packages);

1 (F) fixed broadband Internet access serv-
2 ices; and

3 (G) mobile broadband Internet access serv-
4 ices;

5 (3) any disparities or trends detectable during
6 the applicable calendar year with respect to the rel-
7 ative average (such as per-consumer) retail rates
8 charged for each of the services listed in paragraph
9 (2) to consumers (including both residential and
10 business users) located in rural areas and urban
11 areas;

12 (4) any disparities or trends detectable during
13 the applicable calendar year with respect to the rel-
14 ative average (such as per-consumer) retail rates
15 charged for each of the services listed in paragraph
16 (2) as between incumbent local exchange carriers
17 subject to price cap regulation and those subject to
18 rate-of-return regulation;

19 (5) the effects, if any, of those reforms adopted
20 in the Order on average fixed and mobile broadband
21 Internet access speeds, respectively, available to resi-
22 dential and business consumers, respectively, during
23 the applicable calendar year;

24 (6) any disparities or trends detectable during
25 the applicable calendar year with respect to the rel-

1 ative average fixed and mobile broadband Internet
2 access speeds, respectively, available to residential
3 and business consumers, respectively, in rural areas
4 and urban areas;

5 (7) the effects, if any, of those reforms adopted
6 in the Order on the magnitude and pace of invest-
7 ments in broadband-capable networks in rural areas,
8 including such investments financed by the Depart-
9 ment of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service under
10 the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 901
11 et seq.);

12 (8) any disparities or trends detectable during
13 the applicable calendar year with respect to the rel-
14 ative magnitude and pace of investments in
15 broadband-capable networks in rural areas and
16 urban areas;

17 (9) any disparities or trends detectable during
18 the applicable calendar year with respect to the mag-
19 nitude and pace of investments in broadband-capable
20 networks in areas served by carriers subject to price
21 cap regulation and areas served by carriers subject
22 to rate-of-return regulation;

23 (10) the effects, if any, of those reforms adopt-
24 ed in the Order on adoption of broadband Internet
25 access services by end users; and

1 (11) the effects, if any, of such reforms on
 2 State universal service funds or other State uni-
 3 versal service initiatives, including carrier-of-last-re-
 4 sort requirements that may be enforced by any
 5 State.

6 (c) TIMING.—On or before December 31, 2013, and
 7 annually thereafter for the following 5 calendar years, the
 8 Comptroller General shall submit the report required
 9 under subsection (b) to the following:

10 (1) The Committee on Commerce, Science, and
 11 Transportation of the Senate.

12 (2) The Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,
 13 and Forestry of the Senate.

14 (3) The Committee on Energy and Commerce
 15 of the House of Representatives.

16 (4) The Committee on Agriculture of the House
 17 of Representatives.

18 (d) DATA INCLUSION.—The report required under
 19 subsection (b) shall include all data that the Comptroller
 20 General deems relevant to and supportive of any conclu-
 21 sions drawn with respect to the effects of the FCC's re-
 22 forms and any disparities or trends detected in the items
 23 subject to the report.

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