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Reported by Mr. CORKER, with an amendment

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

AN ACT

To promote Internet access in developing countries and update foreign policy toward the Internet, 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 “Digital Global Access
5 Policy Act of 2017” or the “Digital GAP Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

7 The purpose of this Act is to—

1 (1) encourage the efforts of developing coun-
2 tries to improve mobile and fixed access to the Inter-
3 net in order to catalyze innovation, spur economic
4 growth and job creation, improve health, education,
5 and financial services, reduce poverty and gender in-
6 equality, mitigate disasters, promote democracy and
7 good governance, and strengthen cybersecurity;

8 (2) promote build once policies and approaches
9 and the multi-stakeholder approach to Internet gov-
10 ernance; and

11 (3) ensure the effective use of United States
12 foreign assistance resources toward this end.

13 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

14 Congress finds the following:

15 (1) The number of Internet users worldwide
16 has more than tripled from 1 billion to 3.2 billion
17 since 2005, yet the growth rate of Internet access is
18 slowing. An estimated 4.2 billion people, or 60 per-
19 cent of the world's population, remain offline, an es-
20 timated 75 percent of the offline population lives in
21 just 20 countries, and rural, female, elderly, illit-
22 erate, and low-income populations are being left be-
23 hind.

24 (2) Studies suggest that women across the de-
25 veloping world are disproportionately affected by a

1 digital gap, and that bringing an additional 600 mil-
2 lion women online would contribute \$13 billion to
3 \$18 billion to annual GDP across 144 developing
4 countries.

5 (3) Internet access in developing countries is
6 most often hampered by a lack of infrastructure and
7 a poor regulatory environment for investment.

8 (4) Build once policies and approaches, which
9 seek to coordinate public and private sector invest-
10 ments in roads and other critical infrastructure, can
11 minimize the number and scale of excavation and
12 construction activities when installing telecommuni-
13 cations infrastructure in rights-of-way, thereby re-
14 ducing installation costs for high-speed Internet net-
15 works and serving as a development best practice.

16 **SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

17 Congress declares that it is the policy of the United
18 States to consult, partner, and coordinate with the govern-
19 ments of foreign countries, international organizations, re-
20 gional economic communities, businesses, civil society, and
21 other stakeholders in a concerted effort to close the digital
22 gap by promoting—

23 (1) first-time Internet access to mobile or
24 broadband Internet for at least 1.5 billion people in

1 developing countries by 2020 in both urban and
2 rural areas;

3 ~~(2) Internet deployment and related coordina-~~
4 ~~tion, capacity building, and build once policies and~~
5 ~~approaches in developing countries, including actions~~
6 ~~to encourage—~~

7 ~~(A) standardization of build once policies~~
8 ~~and approaches for the inclusion of broadband~~
9 ~~conduit in rights-of-way projects that are fund-~~
10 ~~ed, co-funded, or partially financed by the~~
11 ~~United States or any international organization~~
12 ~~that includes the United States as a member, in~~
13 ~~consultation with telecommunications providers,~~
14 ~~unless a cost-benefit analysis determines that~~
15 ~~the cost of such approach outweighs the bene-~~
16 ~~fits;~~

17 ~~(B) adoption and integration of build once~~
18 ~~policies and approaches into the development~~
19 ~~and investment strategies of national and local~~
20 ~~government agencies of developing countries~~
21 ~~and donor governments and organizations that~~
22 ~~will enhance coordination with the private sec-~~
23 ~~tor for road building, pipe laying, and other~~
24 ~~major infrastructure projects; and~~

1 (C) provision of increased financial support
2 by international organizations, including
3 through grants, loans, and technical assistance,
4 to expand information and communications ac-
5 cess and Internet connectivity;

6 (3) policy changes that encourage first-time af-
7 fordable access to the Internet in developing coun-
8 tries, including actions to encourage—

9 (A) integration of universal and gender-equ-
10 uitable Internet access goals, to be informed by
11 the collection of related gender disaggregated
12 data, and Internet tools into national develop-
13 ment plans and United States Government
14 country-level development strategies;

15 (B) reforms of competition laws and spec-
16 trum allocation processes that may impede the
17 ability of companies to provide Internet serv-
18 ices; and

19 (C) efforts to improve procurement proc-
20 esses to help attract and incentivize investment
21 in Internet infrastructure;

22 (4) the removal of tax and regulatory barriers
23 to Internet access;

24 (5) the use of the Internet to increase economic
25 growth and trade, including—

1 (A) policies and strategies to remove re-
2 strictions to e-commerce, cross-border informa-
3 tion flows, and competitive marketplaces; and

4 (B) entrepreneurship and distance learning
5 enabled by access to technology;

6 (6) use of the Internet to bolster democracy,
7 government accountability, transparency, and human
8 rights, including through the establishments of poli-
9 cies, initiatives, and investments that—

10 (A) support the development of national
11 Internet plans that are consistent with United
12 States human rights goals, including freedom of
13 expression, religion, assembly, and association;

14 (B) expand online access to government in-
15 formation and services to enhance government
16 accountability and service delivery, including for
17 areas in which government may have limited
18 presence;

19 (C) advance the principles of responsible
20 Internet governance, including commitments to
21 maintain open and equitable access; and

22 (D) support programs, research, and tech-
23 nologies that safeguard human rights and fun-
24 damental freedoms online, and enable political
25 organizing and activism, free speech, and reli-

1 gious expression that are in compliance with
2 international human rights standards;

3 (7) Internet access and inclusion into Internet
4 policymaking for women, people with disabilities, mi-
5 norities, low-income and marginalized groups, and
6 underserved populations;

7 (8) cybersecurity and data protection, including
8 international use of the National Institute of Stand-
9 ards and Technology (NIST) Framework for Im-
10 proving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity, that
11 are industry-led and globally recognized cybersecu-
12 rity standards and best practices; and

13 (9) inter-agency coordination and cooperation
14 across all executive branch agencies regarding the
15 construction and promotion of Internet initiatives as
16 a greater part of United States foreign policy.

17 **SEC. 5. LEVERAGING INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT.**

18 In pursuing the policy described in section 4, the
19 President should direct United States representatives to
20 appropriate international bodies to use the influence of the
21 United States, consistent with the broad development
22 goals of the United States, to advocate that each such
23 body—

24 (1) commit to increase efforts and coordination
25 to promote affordable and gender-equitable Internet

1 access, in partnership with stakeholders and con-
2 sistent with host countries' absorptive capacity;

3 (2) integrate affordable and gender-equitable
4 Internet access data into existing economic and busi-
5 ness assessments, evaluations, and indexes such as
6 the Millennium Challenge Corporation constraints
7 analysis, the Doing Business Report, International
8 Monetary Fund Article IV assessments and country
9 reports, the Open Data Barometer, and the Afford-
10 ability Drivers Index;

11 (3) standardize inclusion of broadband conduit
12 as part of highway or comparable construction
13 projects in developing countries, in consultation with
14 telecommunications providers, unless such inclusion
15 would create an undue burden, is not necessary
16 based on the availability of existing broadband infra-
17 structure, or a cost-benefit analysis determines that
18 the cost outweighs the benefits;

19 (4) provide technical assistance to the regu-
20 latory authorities in developing countries to remove
21 unnecessary barriers to investment in otherwise com-
22 mercially viable projects and strengthen weak regu-
23 lations or develop new regulations to support market
24 growth and development;

1 (5) utilize clear, accountable, and metric-based
2 targets, including targets with gender-disaggregated
3 data, to measure the effectiveness of efforts to pro-
4 mote Internet access; and

5 (6) promote and protect human rights online,
6 such as the freedoms of expression, religion, assem-
7 bly, and association, through resolutions, public
8 statements, projects, and initiatives, and advocate
9 that other member states of such bodies are held ac-
10 countable when major violations are uncovered.

11 **SEC. 6. DEPARTMENT OF STATE ORGANIZATION.**

12 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
13 gress that the Secretary of State should seek to enhance
14 the efficiency and effectiveness of United States foreign
15 assistance efforts to carry out the policies and objectives
16 established by this Act, including by redesignating an ex-
17 isting Assistant Secretary position in the Department of
18 State to be the Assistant Secretary for Cyberspace to lead
19 the Department’s diplomatic cyberspace policy generally,
20 including for cybersecurity, Internet access, Internet free-
21 dom, and to promote an open, secure, and reliable infor-
22 mation and communications technology infrastructure.

23 (b) ACTIVITIES.—In recognition of the added value
24 of technical knowledge and expertise in the policymaking
25 and diplomatic channels, the Secretary of State shall—

1 (1) update existing training programs relevant
2 to policy discussions;

3 (2) promote the recruitment of candidates with
4 technical expertise into the Civil Service and the
5 Foreign Service; and

6 (3) work to improve inter-agency coordination
7 and cooperation on cybersecurity and Internet initia-
8 tives.

9 (c) OFFSET.—To offset any costs incurred by the De-
10 partment of State to carry out the designation of an As-
11 sistant Secretary for Cyberspace in accordance with sub-
12 section (a), the Secretary of State shall eliminate such po-
13 sitions within the Department of State, unless otherwise
14 authorized or required by law, as the Secretary determines
15 to be necessary to fully offset such costs.

16 (d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The redesignation of
17 the Assistant Secretary position in the Department of
18 State described in subsection (a) may not be construed
19 as increasing the number of Assistant Secretary positions
20 at the Department above the current level of 24 as author-
21 ized in section 1(c)(1) of the State Department Basic Au-
22 thorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a(c)(1)).

1 **SEC. 7. USAID.**

2 It is the sense of Congress that the Administrator
3 of the United States Agency for International Develop-
4 ment should—

5 (1) integrate efforts to expand Internet access;
6 develop appropriate technologies; and enhance digital
7 literacy into the education, development, and eco-
8 nomic growth programs of the agency; where appro-
9 priate;

10 (2) expand the utilization of information and
11 communications technologies in humanitarian aid
12 and disaster relief responses and United States oper-
13 ations involving stabilization and security to improve
14 donor coordination; reduce duplication and waste;
15 capture and share lessons learned; and augment dis-
16 aster preparedness and risk mitigation strategies;
17 and

18 (3) establish and promote guidelines for the
19 protection of personal information of individuals
20 served by humanitarian, disaster, and development
21 programs implemented directly through the United
22 States Government, through contracts funded by the
23 United States Government, and by international or-
24 ganizations.

1 **SEC. 8. PEACE CORPS.**

2 Section 3 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2502)
3 is amended by—

4 (1) redesignating subsection (h) as subsection
5 (e); and

6 (2) adding at the end the following new sub-
7 sections:

8 “(f) It is the sense of Congress that access to tech-
9 nology can transform agriculture, community economic de-
10 velopment, education, environment, health, and youth de-
11 velopment which are the sectors in which Peace Corps cur-
12 rently develops positions for Volunteers.

13 “(g) In giving attention to the programs, projects,
14 training, and other activities referred to in subsection (f),
15 the Peace Corps should develop positions for Volunteers
16 that are focused on leveraging technology for development,
17 education, and social and economic mobility.”.

18 **SEC. 9. PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK.**

19 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
20 ment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the Com-
21 mittee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives
22 and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate
23 plans to promote partnerships by United States develop-
24 ment agencies, including the United States Agency for
25 International Development and the Millennium Challenge
26 Corporation, and international agencies funded by the

1 United States Government with the private sector and
2 other stakeholders to expand affordable and gender equi-
3 table access to the Internet in developing countries, includ-
4 ing the following elements:

5 (1) Methods for stakeholders to partner with
6 such agencies in order to provide Internet access or
7 Internet infrastructure in developing countries.

8 (2) Methods of outreach to stakeholders to ex-
9 plore partnership opportunities for expanding Inter-
10 net access or Internet infrastructure, including co-
11 ordination with the private sector, when financing
12 roads and telecommunications infrastructure.

13 (3) Methods for early consultation with stake-
14 holders concerning projects in telecommunications
15 and road construction to provide Internet access or
16 Internet infrastructure.

17 **SEC. 10. REPORTING REQUIREMENT ON IMPLEMENTATION**
18 **EFFORTS.**

19 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
20 ment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the Com-
21 mittee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives
22 and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate
23 a report on efforts to implement the policies specified in
24 this Act and a discussion of the plans and existing efforts

1 by the United States Government in developing countries
2 to accomplish the following:

3 (1) Developing a technical and regulatory road
4 map for promoting Internet access in developing
5 countries and a path to implementing such road
6 map.

7 (2) Identifying the regulatory barriers that may
8 unduly impede Internet access, including regulation
9 of wireline broadband deployment or the infrastruc-
10 ture to augment wireless broadband deployment.

11 (3) Strengthening and supporting development
12 of regulations that incentivize market growth and
13 sector development.

14 (4) Encouraging further public and private in-
15 vestment in Internet infrastructure, including
16 broadband networks and services.

17 (5) Increasing gender-equitable Internet access
18 and otherwise encourage or support Internet deploy-
19 ment, competition, and adoption.

20 (6) Improving the affordability of Internet ac-
21 cess.

22 (7) Promoting technology and cybersecurity ca-
23 pacity building efforts and consult technical experts
24 for advice regarding options to accelerate the ad-

1 vancement of Internet deployment, adoption, and
2 usage.

3 (8) Promoting Internet freedom globally and in-
4 clude civil society and the private sector in the for-
5 mulation of policies, projects, and advocacy efforts
6 to protect human rights online.

7 (9) Promoting and strengthening the multi-
8 stakeholder model of Internet governance and ac-
9 tively participate in multi-stakeholder international
10 fora, such as the Internet Governance Forum.

11 (10) Advancing a strategy to promote—

12 (A) global cybersecurity policy consistent
13 with the National Institute of Standards and
14 Technology (NIST) Framework for Improving
15 Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity;

16 (B) global Internet freedom principles,
17 such as the freedoms of expression, religion, as-
18 sembly, and association, while combating efforts
19 to impose restrictions on such freedoms; and

20 (C) improved inter-agency coordination
21 and cooperation on cybersecurity and Internet
22 initiatives.

23 **SEC. 11. DEFINITIONS.**

24 In this Act:

1 (1) BROADBAND.—The term “broadband”
2 means an Internet Protocol-based transmission serv-
3 ice that enables users to send and receive voice,
4 video, data, graphics, or a combination thereof.

5 (2) BROADBAND CONDUIT.—The term
6 “broadband conduit” means a conduit for fiber optic
7 cables that support broadband or wireless facilities
8 for broadband service.

9 (3) BUILD ONCE POLICIES AND APPROACHES.—
10 The term “build once policies and approaches”
11 means policies or practices that minimize the num-
12 ber and scale of excavation and construction activi-
13 ties when installing telecommunications infrastruc-
14 ture in rights-of-way.

15 (4) CYBERSPACE.—The term “cyberspace”
16 means the interdependent network of information
17 technology infrastructures, and includes the Inter-
18 net, telecommunications networks, computer sys-
19 tems, and embedded processors and controllers in
20 critical industries, and includes the virtual environ-
21 ment of information and interactions between peo-
22 ple.

23 (5) STAKEHOLDERS.—The term “stakeholders”
24 means the private sector, the public sector, coopera-
25 tives, civil society, the technical community that de-

1 velops Internet technologies, standards, implementa-
2 tion, operations, and applications, and other groups
3 that are working to increase Internet access or are
4 impacted by the lack of Internet access in their com-
5 munities.

6 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

7 *This Act may be cited as the “Digital Global Access*
8 *Policy Act of 2018” or the “Digital GAP Act”.*

9 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

10 *The purpose of this Act is to—*

11 *(1) encourage the efforts of developing countries*
12 *to improve mobile and fixed access to the Internet in*
13 *order to catalyze innovation, spur economic growth*
14 *and job creation, improve health, education, and fi-*
15 *nancial services, reduce poverty and gender inequal-*
16 *ity, mitigate disasters, and promote democracy and*
17 *good governance;*

18 *(2) promote build-once policies and approaches*
19 *and the multi-stakeholder approach to Internet gov-*
20 *ernance; and*

21 *(3) ensure the effective use of United States for-*
22 *oreign assistance resources toward that end.*

23 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

24 *Congress makes the following findings:*

1 (1) *Internet access has been a driver of economic*
2 *activity around the world. Bringing internet access to*
3 *the more than 4,000,000,000 people who do not have*
4 *it could increase global economic output by*
5 *\$6,700,000,000,000 and raise 500,000,000 people out*
6 *of poverty.*

7 (2) *The number of Internet users has more than*
8 *tripled from 1,000,000,000 to over 3,000,000,000 since*
9 *2005, including 2,000,000,000 living in the devel-*
10 *oping world, yet more than half of the world's popu-*
11 *lation remains offline, living without the economic*
12 *and social benefits of the Internet. By the end of 2016,*
13 *over 80 percent of households in the developed world*
14 *had Internet access, compared with just 40 percent of*
15 *households in developing countries and just 11 per-*
16 *cent in the world's least developed countries. Of the*
17 *world's offline population, an estimated 75 percent*
18 *live in just 20 countries, and rural, female, elderly,*
19 *illiterate, and low-income populations are being left*
20 *behind.*

21 (3) *Studies suggest that women are dispro-*
22 *portionately affected by a digital gap in developing coun-*
23 *tries, where there are on average 23 percent fewer*
24 *women online than men. Bringing an additional*
25 *600,000,000 women online could contribute*

1 \$13,000,000,000 to \$18,000,000,000 to annual GDP
2 across 144 developing countries.

3 (4) *The United States has been a leader in pro-*
4 *moting access to an open, interoperable Internet*
5 *around the world. Recognizing that support for ex-*
6 *panded Internet access furthers United States eco-*
7 *nomical and foreign policy interests, including efforts*
8 *to end extreme global poverty and enabling resilient,*
9 *democratic societies, the Department of State*
10 *launched a diplomatic effort called “Global Connect”.*

11 (5) *Internet access in developing countries is*
12 *hampered, in part, by a lack of infrastructure and a*
13 *poor regulatory environment for investment. Build-*
14 *once policies and approaches, which seek to coordinate*
15 *public and private sector investments in roads and*
16 *other critical infrastructure, can reduce the number*
17 *and scale of excavation and construction activities*
18 *when installing telecommunications infrastructure in*
19 *rights-of-way, thereby reducing installation costs for*
20 *high-speed Internet networks and serving as a devel-*
21 *opment best practice.*

22 **SEC. 4. EXPANDING INTERNET ACCESS IN DEVELOPING**
23 **COUNTRIES.**

24 (a) *DEFINITIONS.—In this section:*

1 (1) *APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-*
2 *TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional commit-*
3 *tees” means—*

4 (A) *the Committee on Foreign Relations*
5 *and the Committee on Appropriations of the*
6 *Senate; and*

7 (B) *the Committee on Foreign Affairs and*
8 *the Committee on Appropriations of the House of*
9 *Representatives.*

10 (2) *BROADBAND.—The term “broadband” means*
11 *an Internet Protocol-based transmission service that*
12 *enables users to send and receive voice, video, data,*
13 *graphics, or a combination thereof, using technologies*
14 *including fiber optic, mobile, satellite, and Wi-Fi.*

15 (3) *BROADBAND CONDUIT.—The term*
16 *“broadband conduit” means a conduit for fiber optic*
17 *cables and other connectivity technologies that sup-*
18 *port broadband or wireless facilities for broadband*
19 *service.*

20 (4) *BUILD-ONCE POLICIES AND APPROACHES.—*
21 *The term “build-once policies and approaches” means*
22 *policies or practices that encourage the integration of*
23 *Internet infrastructure into traditional infrastructure*
24 *projects that minimize the number and scale of exca-*
25 *vation and construction activities when installing*

1 *telecommunications infrastructure in rights-of-way to*
2 *reduce costs, such as by laying fiber optic cable simul-*
3 *taneously with road construction.*

4 (5) *STAKEHOLDERS.—The term “stakeholders”*
5 *means the private sector, the public sector, coopera-*
6 *tives, civil society, the technical community that de-*
7 *velops Internet technologies, standards, implementa-*
8 *tion, operations, and applications, and other groups*
9 *that are working to increase Internet access or are*
10 *impacted by the lack of Internet access in their com-*
11 *munities.*

12 (b) *POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States to*
13 *consult, partner, and coordinate with the governments of*
14 *foreign countries, international organizations, regional eco-*
15 *nomie communities, businesses, civil society, and other*
16 *stakeholders in a concerted effort to close the digital gap*
17 *by increasing public and private investments in Internet*
18 *infrastructure and creating conditions for universal Inter-*
19 *net access and usage worldwide by promoting—*

20 (1) *first-time access to fixed or mobile broadband*
21 *Internet by 2026 for at least 1,500,000,000 people liv-*
22 *ing in urban and rural areas in developing countries;*

23 (2) *Internet deployment and related coordina-*
24 *tion, capacity building, and build-once policies and*

1 *approaches in developing countries, including actions*
2 *to encourage—*

3 *(A) standardization of build-once policies*
4 *and approaches for the inclusion of broadband*
5 *conduit in rights-of-way projects that are funded,*
6 *co-funded, or partially financed by the United*
7 *States or any international organization that in-*
8 *cludes the United States as a member, in con-*
9 *sultation with telecommunications providers, un-*
10 *less a cost-benefit analysis determines that the*
11 *cost of such approach outweighs the benefits;*

12 *(B) adoption and integration of build-once*
13 *policies and approaches into the development*
14 *and investment strategies of national and local*
15 *government agencies of developing countries and*
16 *donor governments and organizations that will*
17 *enhance coordination with the private sector for*
18 *road building, pipe laying, major infrastructure*
19 *projects, and development-related construction*
20 *such as schools, clinics, and civic buildings; and*

21 *(C) provision of increased financial support*
22 *by international organizations, including*
23 *through grants, loans, technical assistance, and*
24 *partnerships to expand information and commu-*
25 *nications access and Internet connectivity;*

1 (3) *policy and regulatory approaches that pro-*
2 *mote a competitive market for investment and inno-*
3 *vation in Internet infrastructure and service to en-*
4 *courage first-time, affordable access to the Internet in*
5 *developing countries, including actions to encourage,*
6 *as appropriate—*

7 (A) *the integration of universal and gender-*
8 *equitable Internet access and adoption goals, to*
9 *be informed by the collection of related gender*
10 *disaggregated data and research on social norms*
11 *that often limit women’s and girls’ use of the*
12 *Internet, into national development plans and*
13 *United States Government country-level strate-*
14 *gies;*

15 (B) *effective, transparent, and efficient spec-*
16 *trum allocation processes and reforms of com-*
17 *petition laws that may impede the ability of*
18 *companies to provide Internet services; and*

19 (C) *efforts to improve procurement processes*
20 *to help attract and incentivize investment in*
21 *Internet infrastructure;*

22 (4) *the removal of tax and regulatory barriers to*
23 *Internet access, as appropriate;*

24 (5) *the use of the Internet to increase economic*
25 *growth and trade, including, as appropriate—*

1 (A) policies and strategies to remove restric-
2 tions to e-commerce, cross-border information
3 flows, and competitive marketplaces; and

4 (B) entrepreneurship and distance learning
5 enabled by access to technology;

6 (6) the use of the Internet to bolster democracy,
7 government accountability, transparency, gender eq-
8 uity, and human rights, including through the estab-
9 lishment of policies, initiatives, and investments
10 that—

11 (A) support the development of national
12 broadband plans or information and commu-
13 nication technologies strategies that are con-
14 sistent with fundamental civil and political
15 rights, including freedom of expression, religion,
16 belief, assembly, and association;

17 (B) expand online access to government in-
18 formation and services to enhance government
19 accountability and service delivery, including for
20 areas in which government may have limited
21 presence;

22 (C) advance the principles of responsible
23 Internet governance, including commitments to
24 maintain open access; and

1 (D) support expression of free speech and
2 enable political organizing and activism in sup-
3 port of human rights and democracy through ac-
4 tivities that expand access to independent sources
5 of news and information and safeguard human
6 rights and fundamental freedoms online, in com-
7 pliance with international human rights stand-
8 ards;

9 (7) programs and mechanisms that actively pro-
10 mote and advance access to and adoption of Internet
11 and other information and communications tech-
12 nologies by women, people with disabilities, minori-
13 ties, low-income and marginalized groups, and under-
14 served populations, such as programs that address so-
15 cial norms and barriers to women's active participa-
16 tion in the digital economy or Internet policymaking;

17 (8) mechanisms for public and private financing
18 of rural broadband connectivity and digital inclusion;

19 (9) public Internet access facilities and Wi-Fi
20 networks in places such as libraries, government
21 buildings, community centers, and schools;

22 (10) the creation and support of research and
23 educational networks;

24 (11) cybersecurity, data protection, and privacy,
25 including international use of the latest version of the

1 *National Institute of Standards and Technology*
2 *Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cy-*
3 *bersecurity; and*

4 *(12) interagency coordination and cooperation*
5 *across all executive branch agencies regarding the*
6 *promotion of Internet initiatives as a part of United*
7 *States foreign policy.*

8 *(c) DEPARTMENT OF STATE.—The Secretary of State,*
9 *in coordination with other agencies, multilateral institu-*
10 *tions, foreign countries, and stakeholders, shall advance the*
11 *policy articulated in this Act and promote expanded Inter-*
12 *net connectivity worldwide, as appropriate, by—*

13 *(1) encouraging foreign countries to prioritize*
14 *Internet connectivity in development plans;*

15 *(2) promoting the formation of region-specific*
16 *multi-sector working groups to ensure technical and*
17 *regulatory best practices; and*

18 *(3) encouraging the development of digital lit-*
19 *eracy programs in developing countries.*

20 *(d) USAID.—The Administrator of the United States*
21 *Agency for International Development (USAID) should ad-*
22 *vance the policy articulated in this Act and support ex-*
23 *panded Internet connectivity worldwide, as appropriate,*
24 *by—*

1 (1) *supporting efforts to expand Internet infra-*
2 *structure and improve digital literacy, and other ap-*
3 *propriate measures to improve Internet connectivity*
4 *and usage, in close coordination with the Secretary of*
5 *State;*

6 (2) *encouraging public and private investment*
7 *in Internet infrastructure and services of developing*
8 *countries;*

9 (3) *integrating efforts to expand Internet access,*
10 *develop appropriate, sustainable, and gender-equitable*
11 *technologies, and enhance digital literacy and the*
12 *availability of relevant local content across develop-*
13 *ment sectors, such as USAID health, education, agri-*
14 *culture, and economic development programs;*

15 (4) *expanding the utilization of information and*
16 *communications technologies in humanitarian aid*
17 *and disaster relief responses and United States oper-*
18 *ations involving reconstruction and stabilization to*
19 *improve donor coordination, reduce duplication and*
20 *waste, capture and share lessons learned, and aug-*
21 *ment disaster preparedness and risk mitigation strat-*
22 *egies;*

23 (5) *establishing and promoting guidelines for the*
24 *protection of personal information of individuals*
25 *served by humanitarian, disaster, and development*

1 *programs directly through the United States Govern-*
2 *ment, and through contracts funded by the United*
3 *States Government and by international organiza-*
4 *tions; and*

5 *(6) establishing programs that directly address*
6 *and seek to close gaps in access, adoption, and use of*
7 *the Internet and other information and communica-*
8 *tions technologies by women, minorities, and other*
9 *marginalized groups.*

10 *(e) PEACE CORPS.—Section 3 of the Peace Corps Act*
11 *(22 U.S.C. 2502) is amended—*

12 *(1) by redesignating subsection (h) as subsection*
13 *(e); and*

14 *(2) by adding at the end the following:*

15 *“(f) It is the sense of Congress that access to the Inter-*
16 *net can transform agriculture, community economic devel-*
17 *opment, education, environment, health, and youth develop-*
18 *ment, which are the sectors in which Peace Corps develops*
19 *positions for volunteers.*

20 *“(g) In giving attention to the programs, projects,*
21 *training, and other activities referred to in subsection (f),*
22 *the Peace Corps should develop positions for volunteers that*
23 *include leveraging the Internet, as appropriate, for develop-*
24 *ment, education, and social and economic mobility.”.*

1 (f) *LEVERAGING INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT.*—*In pur-*
2 *su*ing the policy described in this Act, the President should
3 *direct United States representatives to appropriate inter-*
4 *national bodies to use the influence of the United States,*
5 *consistent with the broad development goals of the United*
6 *States, to advocate that each such body—*

7 (1) *commit to increase efforts and coordination*
8 *to promote affordable, open, and gender-equitable*
9 *Internet access, in partnership with stakeholders and*
10 *consistent with host countries’ absorptive capacity;*

11 (2) *integrate affordable and gender-equitable*
12 *Internet access data into existing economic and busi-*
13 *ness assessments, evaluations, and indexes such as the*
14 *Millennium Challenge Corporation constraints anal-*
15 *ysis, the Doing Business reports, International Mone-*
16 *tary Fund Article IV assessments and country re-*
17 *ports, and the Affordability Drivers Index;*

18 (3) *standardize the inclusion of broadband con-*
19 *duit as part of highway or comparable construction*
20 *projects in developing countries, in consultation with*
21 *telecommunications providers, unless—*

22 (A) *such inclusion would create an undue*
23 *burden;*

1 (B) such inclusion is not necessary based on
2 the availability of existing broadband infrastruc-
3 ture; or

4 (C) a cost-benefit analysis determines that
5 the cost of such inclusion outweighs the benefits;

6 (4) provide technical assistance to the regulatory
7 authorities in developing countries to remove unneces-
8 sary barriers to investment and develop regulations to
9 support market growth and development;

10 (5) utilize clear, accountable, and metric-based
11 targets, including targets with gender-disaggregated
12 data, to measure the effectiveness of efforts to promote
13 Internet access; and

14 (6) promote and protect human rights online,
15 such as the freedoms of expression, religion, belief, as-
16 sembly, and association, through resolutions, public
17 statements, projects, and initiatives, and advocating
18 that member states of such bodies are held accountable
19 for violations.

20 (g) *REPORTING REQUIREMENT ON IMPLEMENTATION*

21 *EFFORTS.*—Not later than one year after the date of the
22 enactment of this Act, the President shall submit a report
23 to the appropriate congressional committees on efforts to
24 implement the policy described in this Act and, to the extent

1 *practicable, describe efforts by the United States Govern-*
2 *ment to—*

3 (1) *provide technical and regulatory assistance*
4 *to promote Internet access in developing countries;*

5 (2) *strengthen and support development of regu-*
6 *lations that incentivize market growth that contrib-*
7 *utes to increased Internet access in developing coun-*
8 *tries;*

9 (3) *encourage public and private investment in*
10 *Internet infrastructure, including broadband networks*
11 *and services, in developing countries;*

12 (4) *increase gender-equitable Internet access and*
13 *close gender gaps in Internet and other information*
14 *and communications technology adoption and use, es-*
15 *pecially in countries where social norms limit such*
16 *adoption and use by women and girls, and otherwise*
17 *encourage or support Internet deployment, competi-*
18 *tion, and adoption; and*

19 (5) *conduct outreach and explore partnership op-*
20 *portunities with the private sector on activities that*
21 *advance the policy described in this Act.*

Calendar No. 624

115TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 600

AN ACT

To promote Internet access in developing countries and update foreign policy toward the Internet, and for other purposes.

OCTOBER 5, 2018

Reported with an amendment