

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6491

To amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to provide for a high-speed broadband deployment initiative.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 14, 2020

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri (for himself and Mr. KATKO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to provide for a high-speed broadband deployment initiative.

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 “Eliminating Barriers
5 to Rural Internet Development Grant Eligibility Act” or
6 the “E-BRIDGE Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. HIGH-SPEED BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT INITIA-**
2 **TIVE.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title II of the Public Works and
4 Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3141 et
5 seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

6 **“SEC. 219. HIGH-SPEED BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT INITIA-**
7 **TIVE.**

8 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—

9 “(1) BROADBAND PROJECT.—The term ‘broad-
10 band project’ means—

11 “(A) planning, technical assistance, or
12 training;

13 “(B) the acquisition or development of
14 land; or

15 “(C) the acquisition, design and engineer-
16 ing, construction, rehabilitation, alteration, ex-
17 pansion, or improvement of facilities, including
18 related machinery, equipment, contractual
19 rights, and intangible property, for the purpose
20 of providing, extending, expanding, or improv-
21 ing high-speed broadband service to further the
22 goals of this Act.

23 “(2) HIGH-SPEED BROADBAND.—The term
24 ‘high-speed broadband’ means the provision of two-
25 way data transmission with sufficient downstream
26 and upstream speeds to end users to permit effective

1 participation in the economy and to support eco-
2 nomic growth, as determined by the Secretary.

3 “(b) BROADBAND PROJECTS.—

4 “(1) IN GENERAL.—On the application of an el-
5 igible recipient, the Secretary may make grants
6 under this title for broadband projects. Any such
7 grant shall be subject to the provisions of this sec-
8 tion.

9 “(2) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS FOR BROADBAND
10 PROJECTS.—

11 “(A) DEFINITION.—In the case of grants
12 for broadband projects, the term ‘eligible recipi-
13 ent’ includes, in addition to the eligible recipi-
14 ents identified in section 3—

15 “(i) a public-private partnership; and

16 “(ii) a consortium formed for the pur-
17 pose of providing, extending, expanding, or
18 improving high-speed broadband service
19 between one or more eligible recipients, as
20 defined in section 3, and one or more for-
21 profit organizations.

22 “(B) INTEREST IN REAL OR PERSONAL
23 PROPERTY.—For any broadband project of a
24 public-private partnership or consortium, the
25 Secretary shall require that title to any real or

1 personal property acquired or improved with
2 grant funds, or if the recipient will not acquire
3 title another possessory interest acceptable to
4 the Secretary, be vested in a public partner or
5 eligible nonprofit organization or association for
6 the useful life of the project, after which title
7 may be transferred to any member of the pub-
8 lic-private partnership or consortium in accord-
9 ance with regulations promulgated by the Sec-
10 retary.

11 “(3) PROCUREMENT.—Notwithstanding any
12 other provision of law, no person or entity shall be
13 disqualified from competing to provide goods or serv-
14 ices related to a broadband project on the basis that
15 the person or entity participated in the development
16 of the broadband project or in the drafting of speci-
17 fications, requirements, statements of work, or simi-
18 lar documents related to the goods or services to be
19 provided.

20 “(4) BROADBAND PROJECT PROPERTY.—The
21 Secretary may permit a recipient of a grant for a
22 broadband project to grant an option to acquire real
23 or personal property (including contractual rights
24 and intangible property) related to that project to a
25 third party on such terms as the Secretary deter-

1 mines to be appropriate, provided that such option
2 may only be exercised after the Secretary releases
3 the Federal interest in the property. The grant or
4 exercise of any such option shall not constitute a re-
5 distribution of grant funds within the meaning of
6 section 217 of this title.

7 “(c) SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE.—A grant provided
8 under this section may be provided from amounts made
9 available to carry out this title in combination with
10 amounts made available under any other Federal program.

11 “(d) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—In determining the
12 amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of a
13 broadband project, the Secretary may provide credit to-
14 ward the non-Federal share for the present value of allow-
15 able contributions over the useful life of the broadband
16 project, provided that the Secretary may require such as-
17 surances of the value of the rights and of the commitment
18 of the rights as the Secretary determines to be appro-
19 priate.”.

20 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents
21 in section 1(b) of such Act is amended by inserting after
22 the item relating to section 218 the following new item:

“Sec. 219. High-speed broadband deployment initiative.”.

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