H. R. 7302

To make high-speed broadband internet service accessible and affordable to all Americans, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 24, 2020

Mr. CLYBURN (for himself, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mrs. AXNE, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BRINDISI, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. COX of California, Ms. CRAIG, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, Mr. DELGADO, Ms. ESHTO, Ms. FINKEAUER, Mr. GOLDEN, Ms. KENDRA S. HORN of Oklahoma, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. KIND, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. LUJAN, Mr. MALINOWSKI, Mr. MCEACHIN, Mr. McNERNEY, Ms. MENG, Mr. MORELLE, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. POCAN, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. SPANBERGER, Mr. TONKO, Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico, Mr. TRONE, Ms. UNDERWOOD, and Mr. WELCH) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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 make high-speed broadband internet service accessible and affordable to all Americans, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Definitions.
Sec. 3. Sense of Congress.
Sec. 4. Severability.

TITLE I—DIGITAL EQUITY

Sec. 1000. Definitions.

Subtitle A—Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth

Sec. 1101. Establishment of the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth.
Sec. 1102. Duties.
Sec. 1103. Streamlined applications for support.
Sec. 1104. Coordination of support.
Sec. 1105. Rule of construction.
Sec. 1106. Funding.

Subtitle B—Digital Equity Programs

Sec. 1201. State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program.
Sec. 1202. Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program.
Sec. 1203. Policy research, data collection, analysis and modeling, evaluation, and dissemination.
Sec. 1204. General provisions.

Subtitle C—Broadband Service for Low-Income Consumers

Sec. 1301. Additional broadband benefit.
Sec. 1302. Grants to States to strengthen National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier.
Sec. 1303. Federal coordination between Lifeline and SNAP verification.

Subtitle D—E-Rate Support for Wi-Fi Hotspots, Other Equipment, and Connected Devices

Sec. 1401. E-rate support for Wi-Fi hotspots, other equipment, and connected devices.

TITLE II—BROADBAND TRANSPARENCY

Sec. 2003. Distribution of data.
Sec. 2004. Coordination with certain other Federal agencies.
Sec. 2006. Appropriation for Broadband DATA Act.

TITLE III—BROADBAND ACCESS
Subtitle A—Expansion of Broadband Access

Sec. 3101. Expansion of broadband access in unserved areas and areas with low-tier or mid-tier service.

Subtitle B—Broadband Infrastructure Finance and Innovation

Sec. 3201. Definitions.
Sec. 3202. Determination of eligibility and project selection.
Sec. 3203. Secured loans.
Sec. 3204. Lines of credit.
Sec. 3205. Alternative prudential lending standards for small projects.
Sec. 3206. Program administration.
Sec. 3207. State and local permits.
Sec. 3208. Regulations.
Sec. 3209. Funding.
Sec. 3210. Reports to Congress.

Subtitle C—Wi-Fi on School Buses

Sec. 3301. E-rate support for school bus Wi-Fi.

TITLE IV—COMMUNITY BROADBAND

Sec. 4001. State, local, public-private partnership, and co-op broadband services.

TITLE V—BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE DEPLOYMENT

Sec. 5001. Broadband infrastructure deployment.

TITLE VI—REPEAL OF RULE AND PROHIBITION ON USE OF NPRM

Sec. 6001. Repeal of rule and prohibition on use of NPRM.

1 SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

2 In this Act:

3 (1) AGING INDIVIDUAL.—The term “aging individual” has the meaning given the term “older individual” in section 102 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3002).

4 (2) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—
(A) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

(D) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives.

(3) ASSISTANT SECRETARY.—The term “Assistant Secretary” means the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information.

(4) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission” means the Federal Communications Commission.

(5) COVERED HOUSEHOLD.—The term “covered household” means a household the income of which does not exceed 150 percent of the poverty threshold, as determined by using criteria of poverty established by the Bureau of the Census, for a household of the size involved.

(6) COVERED POPULATIONS.—The term “covered populations” means—

(A) individuals who are members of covered households;

(B) aging individuals;
(C) incarcerated individuals, other than individuals who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility (including a private facility operated under contract with the Federal Government);

(D) veterans;

(E) individuals with disabilities;

(F) individuals with a language barrier, including individuals who—

(i) are English learners; or

(ii) have low levels of literacy;

(G) individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group; and

(H) individuals who primarily reside in a rural area.

(7) DIGITAL LITERACY.—The term “digital literacy” means the skills associated with using technology to enable users to find, evaluate, organize, create, and communicate information.

(8) DISABILITY.—The term “disability” has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12102).
(9) FEDERAL AGENCY.—The term “Federal agency” has the meaning given the term “agency” in section 551 of title 5, United States Code.

(10) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe” has the meaning given the term “Indian tribe” in section 4(e) of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304(e)).

(11) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term “institution of higher education”—

(A) has the meaning given the term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001); and

(B) includes a postsecondary vocational institution.

(12) POSTSECONDARY VOCATIONAL INSTITUTION.—The term “postsecondary vocational institution” has the meaning given the term in section 102(c) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002(c)).

(13) RURAL AREA.—The term “rural area” has the meaning given the term in section 13 of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 913).

(14) STATE.—The term “State” has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 153).
(15) VETERAN.—The term “veteran” has the meaning given the term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) a broadband service connection and digital literacy are increasingly critical to how individuals—

(A) participate in the society, economy, and civic institutions of the United States; and

(B) access healthcare and essential services, obtain education, and build careers;

(2) digital exclusion—

(A) carries a high societal and economic cost;

(B) materially harms the opportunity of an individual with respect to the economic success, educational achievement, positive health outcomes, social inclusion, and civic engagement of that individual;

(C) materially harms the opportunity of areas where it is especially widespread with respect to economic success, educational achievement, positive health outcomes, social cohesion, and civic institutions; and
(D) exacerbates existing wealth and income gaps, especially those experienced by covered populations and between regions;

(3) achieving accessible and affordable access to broadband service, as well as digital literacy, for all people of the United States requires additional and sustained research efforts and investment;

(4) the Federal Government, as well as State, Tribal, and local governments, have made social, legal, and economic obligations that necessarily extend to how the citizens and residents of those governments access and use the internet; and

(5) achieving accessible and affordable access to broadband service is a matter of social and economic justice and is worth pursuing.

(b) Broadband Service Defined.—In this section, the term “broadband service” has the meaning given the term “broadband internet access service” in section 8.1(b) of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

SEC. 4. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act, an amendment made by this Act, or the application of such provision or amendment to any person or circumstance is held to be invalid, the remainder of this Act and the amendments made by
this Act, and the application of such provision or amend-
ment to any other person or circumstance, shall not be
affected thereby.

TITLE I—DIGITAL EQUITY

SEC. 1000. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) ADOPTION OF BROADBAND SERVICE.—The
term “adoption of broadband service” means the
process by which an individual obtains daily access
to broadband service—

(A) with a download speed of at least 25
megabits per second, an upload speed of at
least 3 megabits per second, and a latency that
is sufficiently low to allow real-time, interactive
applications;

(B) with the digital skills that are nec-
essary for the individual to participate online;

and

(C) on a—

(i) personal device; and

(ii) secure and convenient network.

(2) ANCHOR INSTITUTION.—The term “anchor
institution” means a public or private school, a li-
brary, a medical or healthcare provider, a museum,
a public safety entity, a public housing agency, a
community college, an institution of higher education, a religious organization, or any other community support organization or agency.

(3) Assistant Secretary.—Except in section 1101, the term “Assistant Secretary” means the Assistant Secretary, acting through the Office.

(4) Broadband Service.—The term “broadband service” has the meaning given the term “broadband internet access service” in section 8.1(b) of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

(5) Covered Programs.—The term “covered programs” means the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program established under section 1201 and the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program established under section 1202.

(6) Digital Equity.—The term “digital equity” means the condition in which individuals and communities have the information technology capacity that is needed for full participation in the society and economy of the United States.

(7) Digital Inclusion Activities.—The term “digital inclusion activities”—

(A) means the activities that are necessary to ensure that all individuals in the United
States have access to, and the use of, affordable information and communication technologies, such as—

(i) reliable broadband service;

(ii) internet-enabled devices that meet the needs of the user; and

(iii) applications and online content designed to enable and encourage self-sufficiency, participation, and collaboration; and

(B) includes—

(i) the provision of digital literacy training;

(ii) the provision of quality technical support; and

(iii) promoting basic awareness of measures to ensure online privacy and cybersecurity.

(8) ELIGIBLE STATE.—The term “eligible State” means—

(A) with respect to planning grants made available under section 1201(c)(3), a State with respect to which the Assistant Secretary has approved an application submitted to the As-
istant Secretary under section 1201(c)(3)(C); and

(B) with respect to capacity grants awarded under section 1201(d), a State with respect to which the Assistant Secretary has approved an application submitted to the Assistant Secretary under section 1201(d)(2), including approval of the State Digital Equity Plan developed by the State under section 1201(e).

(9) **Federal broadband service support program.**—The term “Federal broadband service support program” does not include any Universal Service Fund program and means any of the following programs (or any other similar Federal program) to the extent the program offers broadband service or programs for promoting access to broadband service and adoption of broadband service for various demographic communities through various media for residential, commercial, or community providers or anchor institutions:

(A) The Telecommunications and Technology Program of the Appalachian Regional Commission.

(B) The Telecommunications Infrastructure Loans and Loan Guarantees, the Rural
Broadband Access Loans and Loan Guarantees,
the Substantially Underserved Trust Areas Pro-
visions, the Community Connect Grant Pro-
gram, and the Distance Learning and Tele-
medicine Grant Program of the Rural Utilities
Service of the Department of Agriculture.

(C) The Public Works and Economic Ad-
justment Assistance Programs and the Plan-
ning and Local Technical Assistance Programs
of the Economic Development Administration of
the Department of Commerce.

(D) The Community Development Block
Grants and Section 108 Loan Guarantees, the
Funds for Public Housing Authorities: Capital
Fund and Operating Fund, the Multifamily
Housing, the Indian Community Development
Block Grant Program, the Indian Housing
Block Grant Program, the Title VI Loan Guar-
antee Program, Choice Neighborhoods, the
HOME Investment Partnerships Program, the
Housing Trust Fund, and the Housing Oppor-
tunities for Persons with AIDS of the Depart-
ment of Housing and Urban Development.
(E) The American Job Centers of the Employment and Training Administration of the Department of Labor.

(F) The Library Services and Technology Grant Programs of the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

(G) The State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program established under section 1201.

(H) The Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program established under section 1202.

(I) The program established under section 723 of the Communications Act of 1934 (relating to expansion of access to broadband service for unserved areas, areas with low-tier service, areas with mid-tier service, and unserved anchor institutions), as added by section 3101.

(J) The broadband infrastructure finance and innovation program established under subtitle B of title III.

(10) GENDER IDENTITY.—The term “gender identity” has the meaning given the term in section 249(c) of title 18, United States Code.

(11) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The term “local educational agency” has the meaning given the term in section 8101(30) of the Elementary and
Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801(30)).

(12) Medicaid enrollee.—The term “Medicaid enrollee” means, with respect to a State, an individual enrolled in the State plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) or a waiver of that plan.

(13) National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier.—The term “National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier” has the meaning given such term in section 54.400 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation).

(14) Office.—The term “Office” means the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth established pursuant to section 1101.

(15) Public housing agency.—The term “public housing agency” has the meaning given the term in section 3(b) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a(b)).

(16) SNAP participant.—The term “SNAP participant” means an individual who is a member of a household that participates in the supplemental nutrition assistance program under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.).
(17) **Socially and economically disadvantaged small business concern.**—The term “socially and economically disadvantaged small business concern” has the meaning given the term in section 8(a)(4) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(a)(4)).

(18) **Tribally designated entity.**—The term “tribally designated entity” means an entity designated by an Indian Tribe to carry out activities under this title.

(19) **Universal Service Fund program.**—The term “Universal Service Fund program” means any program authorized under section 254 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 254), to the extent such program provides support for broadband service deployment.

(20) **Universal service mechanism.**—The term “universal service mechanism” means any funding stream provided by a Universal Service Fund program to support broadband service deployment.

(21) **Workforce development program.**—The term “workforce development program” has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Work-

**Subtitle A—Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth**

**SEC. 1101. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF INTERNET CONNECTIVITY AND GROWTH.**

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant Secretary shall establish the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth within the National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

**SEC. 1102. DUTIES.**

(a) OUTREACH.—The Office shall—

(1) connect with communities that need access to broadband service and improved digital inclusion activities through various forms of outreach and communication techniques;

(2) hold regional workshops across the country to share best practices and effective strategies for promoting access to broadband service and adoption of broadband service;

(3) develop targeted broadband service training and presentations for various demographic communities through various media; and
(4) develop and distribute publications (including toolkits, primers, manuals, and white papers) providing guidance, strategies, and insights to communities as the communities develop strategies to expand access to broadband service and adoption of broadband service.

(b) Tracking of Federal Dollars.—

(1) Broadband Service Infrastructure.—The Office shall track the construction and use of and access to any broadband service infrastructure built using any Federal support in a central database.

(2) Accounting Mechanism.—The Office shall develop a streamlined accounting mechanism by which any Federal agency offering a Federal broadband service support program, and the Commission with respect to the Universal Service Fund programs, shall provide the information described in paragraph (1) in a standardized and efficient fashion.

(3) Report.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every year thereafter, the Office shall make public on the website of the Office and submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Rep-
resentatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report on the following:

(A) A description of the work of the Office for the previous year and the number of residents of the United States that received broadband service as result of Federal broadband service support programs and the Universal Service Fund programs.

(B) A description of how many residents of the United States were provided broadband service by which universal service mechanism or which Federal broadband service support program.

(C) An estimate of the economic impact of such broadband service deployment efforts on the local economy, including any effect on small businesses or jobs.

(D) A description of any non-economic benefits of such broadband service deployment efforts, including any effect on civic engagement.

(e) Study and Report on Affordability of Adoption of Broadband Service.—
(1) STUDY.—The Office, in consultation with
the Commission, the Department of Agriculture, the
Department of the Treasury, and such other Federal
agencies as the Office considers appropriate, shall,
not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment
of this Act, and biennially thereafter, conduct a
study that examines the following:

(A) The number of households for which
cost is a barrier to the adoption of broadband
service, the financial circumstances of such
households, and whether such households are
eligible for the broadband benefit under section
1301.

(B) The extent to which the cost of adop-
tion of broadband service is a financial burden
to households that have adopted broadband
service, the financial circumstances of such fi-
nancially burdened households, and whether
such households are receiving the broadband
benefit under section 1301.

(C) The appropriate standard to determine
whether adoption of broadband service is af-
fordable for households, given the financial cir-
cumstances of such households.
(D) The feasibility of providing additional Federal subsidies, including expanding the eligibility for or increasing the amount of the broadband benefit under section 1301, to households to cover the difference between the cost of adoption of broadband service (determined before applying such additional Federal subsidies) and the price at which adoption of broadband service would be affordable.

(E) How a program to provide additional Federal subsidies as described in subparagraph (D) should be administered to most effectively facilitate adoption of broadband service at the lowest overall expense to the Federal Government, including measures that would ensure that the availability of the subsidies does not result in providers raising the price of broadband service for households receiving subsidies.

(F) How participation in the Lifeline program of the Commission has changed in the 5 years prior to the date of the enactment of this Act, including—
(i) geographic information at the census-block level depicting the scale of change in participation in each area; and

(ii) information on changes in participation by specific types of Lifeline-supported services, including fixed voice telephony service, mobile voice telephony service, fixed broadband service, and mobile broadband service and, in the case of any Lifeline-supported services provided as part of a bundle of services to which a Lifeline discount is applied, which Lifeline-supported services are part of such bundle and whether or not each Lifeline-supported service in such bundle meets Lifeline minimum service standards.

(G) How competition impacts the price of broadband service.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and biennially thereafter, the Office shall submit to Congress a report on the results of the study conducted under paragraph (1).

(3) COST DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “cost” means, with respect to adoption of
broadband service, the cost of adoption of broadband
service to a household after applying any subsidies
that reduce such cost.

SEC. 1103. STREAMLINED APPLICATIONS FOR SUPPORT.

(a) Federal Agency Consultation.—The Office
shall consult with any Federal agency offering a Federal
broadband service support program to streamline and
standardize the application process for financial assistance
for such program.

(b) Federal Agency Streamlining.—Any Fed-
eral agency offering a Federal broadband service support
program shall amend the applications of such agency for
broadband service support, to the extent practicable and
as necessary, to streamline and standardize applications
for Federal broadband service support programs across
the Government.

(c) Single Application.—To the greatest extent
practicable, the Office shall seek to create one application
that may be submitted to apply for all, or substantially
all, Federal broadband service support programs.

(d) Website Required.—Not later than 180 days
after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Office shall
create a central website through which potential applicants
can learn about and apply for support through any Fed-
eral broadband service support program.
SEC. 1104. COORDINATION OF SUPPORT.

The Office, any Federal agency that offers a Federal broadband service support program, and the Commission with respect to the Universal Service Fund programs shall coordinate to ensure that support is being distributed in an efficient, technology-neutral, and financially sustainable manner, with the goals of achieving universal access to affordable broadband service and promoting the most job and economic growth for all residents of the United States.

SEC. 1105. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this subtitle is intended to alter or amend any provision of section 254 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 254).

SEC. 1106. FUNDING.

(a) Appropriation.—There are appropriated to the Assistant Secretary, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, $26,000,000 to carry out this subtitle for fiscal year 2021, to remain available until expended.

(b) Authorization of Appropriations.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Assistant Secretary $26,000,000 to carry out this subtitle for fiscal year 2022 and each fiscal year thereafter, to remain available until expended.
Subtitle B—Digital Equity

Programs

SEC. 1201. STATE DIGITAL EQUITY CAPACITY GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) Establishment; Purpose.—

(1) In general.—The Assistant Secretary shall establish in the Office the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program (referred to in this section as the “Program”)—

(A) the purpose of which is to promote the achievement of digital equity, support digital inclusion activities, and build capacity for efforts by States relating to the adoption of broadband service by residents of those States;

(B) through which the Assistant Secretary shall make grants to States in accordance with the requirements of this section; and

(C) which shall ensure that States have the capacity to promote the achievement of digital equity and support digital inclusion activities.

(2) Consultation with other federal agencies; no conflict.—In establishing the Program under paragraph (1), the Assistant Secretary shall—

(A) consult with—
(i) the Secretary of Agriculture;
(ii) the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development;
(iii) the Secretary of Education;
(iv) the Secretary of Labor;
(v) the Secretary of Health and Human Services;
(vi) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs;
(vii) the Secretary of the Interior;
(viii) the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior;
(ix) the Commission;
(x) the Federal Trade Commission;
(xi) the Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services;
(xii) the Administrator of the Small Business Administration;
(xiii) the Federal Cochairman of the Appalachian Regional Commission; and
(xiv) the head of any other Federal agency that the Assistant Secretary determines to be appropriate; and
(B) ensure that the Program complements and enhances, and does not conflict with, other
Federal broadband service support programs and Universal Service Fund programs.

(b) ADMINISTERING ENTITY.—

(1) SELECTION; FUNCTION.—The Governor (or equivalent official) of a State that wishes to be awarded a grant under this section shall, from among entities that are eligible under paragraph (2), select an administering entity for that State, which shall—

(A) serve as the recipient of, and administering agent for, any grant awarded to the State under this section;

(B) develop, implement, and oversee the State Digital Equity Plan for the State described in subsection (c);

(C) make subgrants to any of the entities described in clauses (i) through (xi) of subsection (c)(1)(D) that is located in the State in support of—

(i) the State Digital Equity Plan for the State; and

(ii) digital inclusion activities in the State generally; and

(D) serve as—
(i) an advocate for digital equity poli-
cies and digital inclusion activities; and
(ii) a repository of best practice mate-
rials regarding the policies and activities
described in clause (i).

(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—Any of the following
entities may serve as the administering entity for a
State for the purposes of this section if the entity
has demonstrated a capacity to administer the Pro-
gram on a statewide level:

(A) The State.

(B) A political subdivision, agency, or in-
strumentality of the State.

(C) An Indian Tribe located in the State,
a tribally designated entity located in the State,
or a Native Hawaiian organization located in
the State.

(c) STATE DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN.—

(1) DEVELOPMENT; CONTENTS.—A State that
wishes to be awarded a grant under subsection (d)
shall develop a State Digital Equity Plan for the
State, which shall include—

(A) an identification of the barriers to dig-
ital equity faced by covered populations in the
State;
(B) measurable objectives for documenting and promoting, among each group described in subparagraphs (A) through (H) of section 2(6) located in that State—

(i) the availability of, and affordability of access to, broadband service and technology needed for the use of broadband service;

(ii) public awareness of such availability and affordability and of subsidies available to increase such affordability (including subsidies available through the Lifeline program of the Commission), including objectives to—

(I) inform Medicaid enrollees and SNAP participants, and organizations that serve Medicaid enrollees and SNAP participants, of potential eligibility for the Lifeline program; and

(II) provide Medicaid enrollees and SNAP participants with information about the Lifeline program, including—

(aa) how to apply for the Lifeline program; and
(bb) a description of the
prohibition on more than one
subscriber in each household re-
ceiving a service provided under
the Lifeline program;

(iii) the online accessibility and
inclusivity of public resources and services;

(iv) digital literacy;

(v) awareness of, and the use of,
measures to secure the online privacy of,
and cybersecurity with respect to, an indi-
vidual; and

(vi) the availability and affordability
of consumer devices and technical support
for those devices;

(C) an assessment of how the objectives
described in subparagraph (B) will impact and
interact with the State's—

(i) economic and workforce develop-
ment goals, plans, and outcomes;

(ii) educational outcomes;

(iii) health outcomes;

(iv) civic and social engagement; and

(v) delivery of other essential services;
(D) in order to achieve the objectives described in subparagraph (B), a description of how the State plans to collaborate with key stakeholders in the State, which may include—

(i) anchor institutions;

(ii) county and municipal governments;

(iii) local educational agencies;

(iv) where applicable, Indian Tribes, tribally designated entities, or Native Hawaiian organizations;

(v) nonprofit organizations;

(vi) organizations that represent—

(I) individuals with disabilities, including organizations that represent children with disabilities;

(II) aging individuals;

(III) individuals with a language barrier, including individuals who—

(aa) are English learners; or

(bb) have low levels of literacy;

(IV) veterans;

(V) individuals residing in rural areas; and
(VI) incarcerated individuals in that State, other than individuals who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility (including a private facility operated under contract with the Federal Government);

(vii) civil rights organizations;

(viii) entities that carry out workforce development programs;

(ix) agencies of the State that are responsible for administering or supervising adult education and literacy activities in the State;

(x) public housing agencies whose jurisdictions are located in the State; and

(xi) a consortium of any of the entities described in clauses (i) through (x);

and

(E) a list of organizations with which the administering entity for the State collaborated in developing and implementing the Plan.

(2) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The administering entity for a State shall make the State Digital Equity Plan of the State available for public com-
ment for a period of not less than 30 days be-
before the date on which the State submits an ap-
plication to the Assistant Secretary under sub-
section (d)(2).

(B) CONSIDERATION OF COMMENTS RE-
CEIVED.—The administering entity for a State
shall, with respect to an application submitted
to the Assistant Secretary under subsection
(d)(2)—

(i) before submitting the application—

(I) consider all comments re-
ceived during the comment period de-
scribed in subparagraph (A) with re-
spect to the application (referred to in
this subparagraph as the “comment
period”); and

(II) make any changes to the
plan that the administering entity de-
termines to be appropriate; and

(ii) when submitting the application—

(I) describe any changes pursued
by the administering entity in re-
sponse to comments received during
the comment period; and
(II) include a written response to each comment received during the comment period.

(3) PLANNING GRANTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning in the first fiscal year that begins after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant Secretary shall, in accordance with the requirements of this paragraph, award planning grants to States for the purpose of developing the State Digital Equity Plans of those States under this subsection.

(B) ELIGIBILITY.—In order to be awarded a planning grant under this paragraph, a State—

(i) shall submit to the Assistant Secretary an application under subparagraph (C); and

(ii) may not have been awarded, at any time, a planning grant under this paragraph.

(C) APPLICATION.—A State that wishes to be awarded a planning grant under this paragraph shall, not later than 60 days after the date on which the notice of funding availability
with respect to the grant is released, submit to
the Assistant Secretary an application, in a for-
mat to be determined by the Assistant Sec-
retary, that contains the following materials:

(i) A description of the entity selected
to serve as the administering entity for the
State, as described in subsection (b).

(ii) A certification from the State
that, not later than 1 year after the date
on which the Assistant Secretary awards
the planning grant to the State, the ad-
ministering entity for that State will sub-
mit to the Assistant Secretary a State Dig-
ital Equity Plan developed under this sub-
section, which will comply with the require-
ments of this subsection, including the re-
quirements of paragraph (2).

(iii) The assurances required under
subsection (e).

(D) AWARDS.—

(i) AMOUNT OF GRANT.—The amount
of a planning grant awarded to an eligible
State under this paragraph shall be deter-
mined according to the formula under sub-
(ii) **Duration.**—

(I) **In General.**—Except as provided in subclause (II), with respect to a planning grant awarded to an eligible State under this paragraph, the State shall expend the grant funds during the 1-year period beginning on the date on which the State is awarded the grant funds.

(II) **Exception.**—The Assistant Secretary may grant an extension of not longer than 180 days with respect to the requirement under subclause (I).

(iii) **Challenge Mechanism.**—The Assistant Secretary shall ensure that any eligible State to which a planning grant is awarded under this paragraph may appeal or otherwise challenge in a timely fashion the amount of the grant awarded to the State, as determined under clause (i).

(E) **Use of Funds.**—An eligible State to which a planning grant is awarded under this paragraph shall, through the administering en-
entity for that State, use the grant funds only for
the following purposes:

(i) To develop the State Digital Eq-

uity Plan of the State under this sub-

section.

(ii)(I) Subject to subclause (II), to

make subgrants to any of the entities de-

scribed in clauses (i) through (xi) of par-

tographic (1)(D) to assist in the development

of the State Digital Equity Plan of the

State under this subsection.

(II) If the administering entity for a

State makes a subgrant described in sub-

clause (I), the administering entity shall,

with respect to the subgrant, provide to the

State the assurances required under sub-

section (e).

(d) STATE CAPACITY GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning not later than 2

years after the date on which the Assistant Sec-

retary begins awarding planning grants under sub-

section (c)(3), the Assistant Secretary shall each

year award grants to eligible States to support—

(A) the implementation of the State Dig-

ital Equity Plans of those States; and
(B) digital inclusion activities in those States.

(2) APPLICATION.—A State that wishes to be awarded a grant under this subsection shall, not later than 60 days after the date on which the notice of funding availability with respect to the grant is released, submit to the Assistant Secretary an application, in a format to be determined by the Assistant Secretary, that contains the following materials:

(A) A description of the entity selected to serve as the administering entity for the State, as described in subsection (b).

(B) The State Digital Equity Plan of that State, as described in subsection (c).

(C) A certification that the State, acting through the administering entity for the State, shall—

(i) implement the State Digital Equity Plan of the State; and

(ii) make grants in a manner that is consistent with the aims of the Plan described in clause (i).

(D) The assurances required under subsection (e).
(E) In the case of a State to which the Assistant Secretary has previously awarded a grant under this subsection, any amendments to the State Digital Equity Plan of that State, as compared with the State Digital Equity Plan of the State previously submitted.

(3) AWARDS.—

(A) AMOUNT OF GRANT.—

(i) Formula.—Subject to clauses (ii), (iii), and (iv), the Assistant Secretary shall calculate the amount of a grant awarded to an eligible State under this subsection in accordance with the following criteria, using the best available data for all States for the fiscal year in which the grant is awarded:

(II) 50 percent of the total grant amount shall be based on the population of the eligible State in proportion to the total population of all eligible States.

(II) 25 percent of the total grant amount shall be based on the number of individuals in the eligible State who are members of covered populations in
proportion to the total number of individuals in all eligible States who are members of covered populations.

(III) 25 percent of the total grant amount shall be based on the lack of availability of broadband service and lack of adoption of broadband service in the eligible State in proportion to the lack of availability of broadband service and lack of adoption of broadband service in all eligible States, which shall be determined according to data collected—

(aa) from the annual inquiry of the Commission conducted under section 706(b) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (47 U.S.C. 1302(b));

(bb) from the American Community Survey or, if necessary, other data collected by the Bureau of the Census;

(ce) from the Internet and Computer Use Supplement to the
Current Population Survey of the
Bureau of the Census;

(dd) by the Commission pursuant to the rules issued under
section 802 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 642); and

(ee) from any other source
that the Assistant Secretary, after appropriate notice and opportuni-
ty for public comment, determines to be appropriate.

(ii) MINIMUM AWARD.—The amount
of a grant awarded to an eligible State under this subsection in a fiscal year shall be not less than 0.5 percent of the total amount made available to award grants to eligible States for that fiscal year.

(iii) ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS.—If, after awarding planning grants to States under subsection (c)(3) and capacity grants to eligible States under this subsection in a fiscal year, there are amounts remaining to carry out this section, the Assistant Sec-
retary shall distribute those amounts—
(I) to eligible States to which the
Assistant Secretary has awarded
grants under this subsection for that
fiscal year; and

(II) in accordance with the for-
mula described in clause (i).

(iv) DATA UNAVAILABLE.—If, in a fis-
cal year, the Commonwealth of Puerto
Rico (referred to in this clause as “Puerto
Rico”) is an eligible State and specific data
for Puerto Rico is unavailable for a factor
described in subclause (I), (II), or (III) of
clause (i), the Assistant Secretary shall use
the median data point with respect to that
factor among all eligible States and assign
it to Puerto Rico for the purposes of mak-
ing any calculation under that clause for
that fiscal year.

(B) DURATION.—With respect to a grant
awarded to an eligible State under this sub-
section, the eligible State shall expend the grant
funds during the 5-year period beginning on the
date on which the eligible State is awarded the
grant funds.
(C) CHALLENGE MECHANISM.—The Assistant Secretary shall ensure that any eligible State to which a grant is awarded under this subsection may appeal or otherwise challenge in a timely fashion the amount of the grant awarded to the State, as determined under subparagraph (A).

(D) USE OF FUNDS.—The administering entity for an eligible State to which a grant is awarded under this subsection shall use the grant amounts for the following purposes:

(i)(I) Subject to subclause (II), to update or maintain the State Digital Equity Plan of the State.

(II) An administering entity for an eligible State to which a grant is awarded under this subsection may use not more than 20 percent of the amount of the grant for the purpose described in subclause (I).

(ii) To implement the State Digital Equity Plan of the State.

(iii)(I) Subject to subclause (II), to award a grant to any entity that is de-
scribed in section 1202(b) and is located in the eligible State in order to—

(aa) assist in the implementation of the State Digital Equity Plan of the State;

(bb) pursue digital inclusion activities in the State consistent with the State Digital Equity Plan of the State; and

(cc) report to the State regarding the digital inclusion activities of the entity.

(II) Before an administering entity for an eligible State may award a grant under subclause (I), the administering entity shall require the entity to which the grant is awarded to certify that—

(aa) the entity shall carry out the activities required under items (aa), (bb), and (cc) of that subclause;

(bb) the receipt of the grant shall not result in unjust enrichment of the entity; and

(cc) the entity shall cooperate with any evaluation—
(AA) of any program that relates to a grant awarded to the entity; and

(BB) that is carried out by or for the administering entity, the Assistant Secretary, or another Federal official.

(iv)(I) Subject to subclause (II), to evaluate the efficacy of the efforts funded by grants made under clause (iii).

(II) An administering entity for an eligible State to which a grant is awarded under this subsection may use not more than 5 percent of the amount of the grant for a purpose described in subclause (I).

(v)(I) Subject to subclause (II), for the administrative costs incurred in carrying out the activities described in clauses (i) through (iv).

(II) An administering entity for an eligible State to which a grant is awarded under this subsection may use not more than 3 percent of the amount of the grant for the purpose described in subclause (I).
(c) ASSURANCES.—When applying for a grant under this section, a State shall include in the application for that grant assurances that—

(1) if any of the entities described in clauses (i) through (xi) of subsection (c)(1)(D) or section 1202(b) is awarded grant funds under this section (referred to in this subsection as a "covered recipient"), provide that—

(A) the covered recipient shall use the grant funds in accordance with any applicable statute, regulation, or application procedure;

(B) the administering entity for that State shall adopt and use proper methods of administering any grant that the covered recipient is awarded, including by—

(i) enforcing any obligation imposed under law on any agency, institution, organization, or other entity that is responsible for carrying out the program to which the grant relates;

(ii) correcting any deficiency in the operation of a program to which the grant relates, as identified through an audit or another monitoring or evaluation procedure; and
(iii) adopting written procedures for
the receipt and resolution of complaints al-
leging a violation of law with respect to a
program to which the grant relates; and

(C) the administering entity for that State
shall cooperate in carrying out any evaluation—

(i) of any program that relates to a
grant awarded to the covered recipient; and

(ii) that is carried out by or for the
Assistant Secretary or another Federal of-
ficial;

(2) the administering entity for that State
shall—

(A) use fiscal control and fund accounting
procedures that ensure the proper disbursement
of, and accounting for, any Federal funds that
the State is awarded under this section;

(B) submit to the Assistant Secretary any
reports that may be necessary to enable the As-
sistant Secretary to perform the duties of the
Assistant Secretary under this section;

(C) maintain any records and provide any
information to the Assistant Secretary, includ-
ing those records, that the Assistant Secretary
determines is necessary to enable the Assistant Secretary to perform the duties of the Assistant Secretary under this section; and

(D) with respect to any significant proposed change or amendment to the State Digital Equity Plan for the State, make the change or amendment available for public comment in accordance with subsection (c)(2); and

(3) the State, before submitting to the Assistant Secretary the State Digital Equity Plan of the State, has complied with the requirements of subsection (c)(2).

(f) TERMINATION OF GRANT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to other authority under applicable law, the Assistant Secretary shall terminate a grant awarded to an eligible State under this section if, after notice to the State and opportunity for a hearing, the Assistant Secretary determines, and presents to the State a rationale and supporting information that clearly demonstrates, that—

(A) the grant funds are not contributing to the development or implementation of the State Digital Equity Plan of the State, as applicable;
(B) the State is not upholding assurances made by the State to the Assistant Secretary under subsection (e); or

(C) the grant is no longer necessary to achieve the original purpose for which the Assistant Secretary awarded the grant.

(2) REDISTRIBUTION.—If the Assistant Secretary, in a fiscal year, terminates a grant under paragraph (1) or under other authority under applicable law, the Assistant Secretary shall redistribute the unspent grant amounts—

(A) to eligible States to which the Assistant Secretary has awarded grants under subsection (d) for that fiscal year; and

(B) in accordance with the formula described in subsection (d)(3)(A)(i).

(g) REPORTING AND INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS;

INTERNET DISCLOSURE.—The Assistant Secretary—

(1) shall—

(A) require any entity to which a grant, including a subgrant, is awarded under this section to publicly report, for each year during the period described in subsection (e)(3)(D)(ii) or (d)(3)(B), as applicable, with respect to the
grant, and in a format specified by the Assistant Secretary, on—

(i) the use of that grant by the entity;

(ii) the progress of the entity towards fulfilling the objectives for which the grant was awarded; and

(iii) the implementation of the State Digital Equity Plan of the State;

(B) establish appropriate mechanisms to ensure that any entity to which a grant, including a subgrant, is awarded under this section—

(i) uses the grant amounts in an appropriate manner; and

(ii) complies with all terms with respect to the use of the grant amounts; and

(C) create and maintain a fully searchable database, which shall be accessible on the internet at no cost to the public, that contains, at a minimum—

(i) the application of each State that has applied for a grant under this section;

(ii) the status of each application described in clause (i);

(iii) each report submitted by an entity under subparagraph (A);
(iv) a record of public comments received during the comment period described in subsection (c)(2)(A) regarding the State Digital Equity Plan of a State, as well as any written responses to or actions taken as a result of those comments; and

(v) any other information that the Assistant Secretary considers appropriate to ensure that the public has sufficient information to understand and monitor grants awarded under this section; and

(2) may establish additional reporting and information requirements for any recipient of a grant under this section.

(h) **SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.**—A grant or subgrant awarded under this section shall supplement, not supplant, other Federal or State funds that have been made available to carry out activities described in this section.

(i) **SET ASIDES.**—From amounts made available in a fiscal year to carry out the Program, the Assistant Secretary shall reserve—
(1) not more than 5 percent for the implementation and administration of the Program, which shall include—

(A) providing technical support and assistance, including ensuring consistency in data reporting;

(B) providing assistance to—

(i) States, or administering entities for States, to prepare the applications of those States; and

(ii) administering entities with respect to grants awarded under this section; and

(C) developing the report required under section 1203(a); and

(2) not less than 5 percent to award grants directly to Indian Tribes, tribally designated entities, and Native Hawaiian organizations to allow those Tribes, entities, and organizations to carry out the activities described in this section.

(j) RULES.—The Assistant Secretary may prescribe such rules as may be necessary to carry out this section.

(k) APPROPRIATION.—There are appropriated to the Assistant Secretary, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated—
(1) for the award of grants under subsection (e)(3), $60,000,000 for fiscal year 2021, to remain available until expended; and

(2) for the award of grants under subsection (d)—

(A) $125,000,000 for fiscal year 2021, to remain available until expended;

(B) $125,000,000 for fiscal year 2022, to remain available until expended;

(C) $125,000,000 for fiscal year 2023, to remain available until expended;

(D) $125,000,000 for fiscal year 2024, to remain available until expended; and

(E) $125,000,000 for fiscal year 2025, to remain available until expended.

SEC. 1202. DIGITAL EQUITY COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) Establishment.—

(1) In general.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Assistant Secretary begins awarding grants under section 1201(d), and not before that date, the Assistant Secretary shall establish in the Office the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program (referred to in this section as the “Program”), the purpose of which is to award
grants to support efforts to achieve digital equity,
promote digital inclusion activities, and spur greater
adoption of broadband service among covered popu-
lations.

(2) CONSULTATION; NO CONFLICT.—In estab-
lishing the Program under paragraph (1), the As-
sistant Secretary—

(A) may consult a State with respect to—

(i) the identification of groups de-
scribed in subparagraphs (A) through (H)
of section 2(6) located in that State; and

(ii) the allocation of grant funds with-
in that State for projects in or affecting
the State; and

(B) shall—

(i) consult with—

(I) the Secretary of Agriculture;

(II) the Secretary of Housing
and Urban Development;

(III) the Secretary of Education;

(IV) the Secretary of Labor;

(V) the Secretary of Health and
Human Services;

(VI) the Secretary of Veterans
Affairs;
(VII) the Secretary of the Interior;

(VIII) the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior;

(IX) the Commission;

(X) the Federal Trade Commission;

(XI) the Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services;

(XII) the Administrator of the Small Business Administration;

(XIII) the Federal Cochairman of the Appalachian Regional Commission; and

(XIV) the head of any other Federal agency that the Assistant Secretary determines to be appropriate; and

(ii) ensure that the Program complements and enhances, and does not conflict with, other Federal broadband service support programs and Universal Service Fund programs.
(b) **Eligibility.**—The Assistant Secretary may award a grant under the Program to any of the following entities if the entity is not serving, and has not served, as the administering entity for a State under section 1201(b):

1. A political subdivision, agency, or instrumentality of a State, including an agency of a State that is responsible for administering or supervising adult education and literacy activities in the State.

2. An Indian Tribe, a tribally designated entity, or a Native Hawaiian organization.

3. An entity that is—
   (A) a not-for-profit entity; and
   (B) not a school.

4. An anchor institution.

5. A local educational agency.

6. An entity that carries out a workforce development program.

7. A consortium of any of the entities described in paragraphs (1) through (6).

8. A consortium of—
   (A) an entity described in any of paragraphs (1) through (6); and
   (B) an entity that—
(i) the Assistant Secretary, by rule, determines to be in the public interest; and
(ii) is not a school.
(c) APPLICATION.—An entity that wishes to be awarded a grant under the Program shall submit to the Assistant Secretary an application—
(1) at such time, in such form, and containing such information as the Assistant Secretary may require; and
(2) that—
(A) provides a detailed explanation of how the entity will use any grant amounts awarded under the Program to carry out the purposes of the Program in an efficient and expeditious manner;
(B) identifies the period in which the applicant will expend the grant funds awarded under the Program;
(C) includes—
(i) a justification for the amount of the grant that the applicant is requesting; and
(ii) for each fiscal year in which the applicant will expend the grant funds, a
budget for the activities that the grant funds will support;

(D) demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Assistant Secretary that the entity—

(i) is capable of carrying out the project or function to which the application relates and the activities described in subsection (h)—

(I) in a competent manner; and

(II) in compliance with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws;

and

(ii) if the applicant is an entity described in subsection (b)(1), will appropriate or otherwise unconditionally obligate from non-Federal sources funds that are necessary to meet the requirements of subsection (e);

(E) discloses to the Assistant Secretary the source and amount of other Federal, State, or outside funding sources from which the entity receives, or has applied for, funding for activities or projects to which the application relates; and

(F) provides—
(i) the assurances that are required
under subsection (f); and

(ii) an assurance that the entity shall
follow such additional procedures as the
Assistant Secretary may require to ensure
that grant funds are used and accounted
for in an appropriate manner.

(d) AWARD OF GRANTS.—

(1) FACTORS CONSIDERED IN AWARD OF
GRANTS.—In deciding whether to award a grant
under the Program, the Assistant Secretary shall, to
the extent practicable, consider—

(A) whether—

(i) an application will, if approved—

(I) increase access to broadband
service and the adoption of broadband
service among covered populations to
be served by the applicant; and

(II) not result in unjust enrich-
ment; and

(ii) the applicant is, or plans to sub-
contract with, a socially and economically
disadvantaged small business concern;
(B) the comparative geographic diversity of
the application in relation to other eligible ap-
plications; and

(C) the extent to which an application may
duplicate or conflict with another program.

(2) USE OF FUNDS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the ac-
tivities required under subparagraph (B), an
entity to which the Assistant Secretary awards
a grant under the Program shall use the grant
amounts to support not less than 1 of the fol-
lowering activities:

(i) To develop and implement digital
inclusion activities that benefit covered
populations.

(ii) To facilitate the adoption of
broadband service by covered populations,
including by raising awareness of subsidies
available to increase affordability of such
service (including subsidies available
through the Lifeline program of the Com-
mission), in order to provide educational
and employment opportunities to those
populations.
(iii) To implement, consistent with the purposes of this subtitle—

(I) training programs for covered populations that cover basic, advanced, and applied skills; or

(II) other workforce development programs.

(iv) To make available equipment, instrumentation, networking capability, hardware and software, or digital network technology for broadband service to covered populations at low or no cost.

(v) To construct, upgrade, expend, or operate new or existing public access computing centers for covered populations through anchor institutions.

(vi) To undertake any other project or activity that the Assistant Secretary finds to be consistent with the purposes for which the Program is established.

(B) EVALUATION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—An entity to which the Assistant Secretary awards a grant under the Program shall use not more than 10 percent of the grant amounts to
measure and evaluate the activities supported with the grant amounts.

(ii) Submission to Assistant Secretary.—An entity to which the Assistant Secretary awards a grant under the Program shall submit to the Assistant Secretary each measurement and evaluation performed under clause (i)—

(I) in a manner specified by the Assistant Secretary;

(II) not later than 15 months after the date on which the entity is awarded the grant amounts; and

(III) annually after the submission described in subclause (II) for any year in which the entity expends grant amounts.

(C) Administrative Costs.—An entity to which the Assistant Secretary awards a grant under the Program may use not more than 10 percent of the amount of the grant for administrative costs in carrying out any of the activities described in subparagraph (A).
(D) Time Limitations.—With respect to a grant awarded to an entity under the Program, the entity—

(i) except as provided in clause (ii), shall expend the grant amounts during the 4-year period beginning on the date on which the entity is awarded the grant amounts; and

(ii) during the 1-year period beginning on the date that is 4 years after the date on which the entity is awarded the grant amounts, may continue to measure and evaluate the activities supported with the grant amounts, as required under subparagraph (B).

(E) Contracting Requirements.—All laborers and mechanics employed by contractors or subcontractors in the performance of construction, alteration, or repair work carried out, in whole or in part, with a grant under the Program shall be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on projects of a similar character in the locality as determined by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States
Code. With respect to the labor standards in this subparagraph, the Secretary of Labor shall have the authority and functions set forth in Reorganization Plan Numbered 14 of 1950 (64 Stat. 1267; 5 U.S.C. App.) and section 3145 of title 40, United States Code.

(F) NEUTRALITY REQUIREMENT.—An employer to which the Assistant Secretary awards a grant under the Program shall remain neutral with respect to the exercise of employees and labor organizations of the right to organize and bargain under the National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C. 151 et seq.).

(G) REFERRAL OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF APPLICABLE FEDERAL LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAWS.—The Assistant Secretary shall refer any alleged violation of an applicable labor and employment law to the appropriate Federal agency for investigation and enforcement, any alleged violation of subparagraph (E) or (F) to the National Labor Relations Board for investigation and enforcement, utilizing all appropriate remedies up to and including debarment from the Program.

(e) FEDERAL SHARE.—
(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Federal share of any project for which the Assistant Secretary awards a grant under the Program may not exceed 90 percent.

(2) EXCEPTION.—The Assistant Secretary may grant a waiver with respect to the limitation on the Federal share of a project described in paragraph (1) if—

(A) the applicant with respect to the project petitions the Assistant Secretary for the waiver; and

(B) the Assistant Secretary determines that the petition described in subparagraph (A) demonstrates financial need.

(f) ASSURANCES.—When applying for a grant under this section, an entity shall include in the application for that grant assurances that the entity will—

(1) use any grant funds that the entity is awarded in accordance with any applicable statute, regulation, or application procedure;

(2) adopt and use proper methods of administering any grant that the entity is awarded, including by—

(A) enforcing any obligation imposed under law on any agency, institution, organization, or
other entity that is responsible for carrying out
a program to which the grant relates;

(B) correcting any deficiency in the oper-
ation of a program to which the grant relates,
as identified through an audit or another moni-
toring or evaluation procedure; and

(C) adopting written procedures for the re-
cceipt and resolution of complaints alleging a
violation of law with respect to a program to
which the grant relates;

(3) cooperate with respect to any evaluation—

(A) of any program that relates to a grant
awarded to the entity; and

(B) that is carried out by or for the Assist-
ant Secretary or another Federal official;

(4) use fiscal control and fund accounting pro-
cedures that ensure the proper disbursement of, and
accounting for, any Federal funds that the entity is
awarded under the Program;

(5) submit to the Assistant Secretary any re-
ports that may be necessary to enable the Assistant
Secretary to perform the duties of the Assistant Sec-
retary under the Program; and

(6) maintain any records and provide any infor-
mation to the Assistant Secretary, including those
records, that the Assistant Secretary determines is
necessary to enable the Assistant Secretary to per-
form the duties of the Assistant Secretary under the
Program.

(g) TERMINATION OF GRANT.—In addition to other
authority under applicable law, the Assistant Secretary
shall—

(1) terminate a grant awarded to an entity
under this section if, after notice to the entity and
opportunity for a hearing, the Assistant Secretary
determines, and presents to the entity a rationale
and supporting information that clearly dem-
strates, that—

(A) the grant funds are not being used in
a manner that is consistent with the application
with respect to the grant submitted by the enti-
ty under subsection (c);

(B) the entity is not upholding assurances
made by the entity to the Assistant Secretary
under subsection (f); or

(C) the grant is no longer necessary to
achieve the original purpose for which the As-
sistant Secretary awarded the grant; and

(2) with respect to any grant funds that the As-
sistant Secretary terminates under paragraph (1) or
under other authority under applicable law, competitively award the grant funds to another applicant (if such an applicant exists), consistent with the requirements of this section.

(h) REPORTING AND INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS; INTERNET DISCLOSURE.—The Assistant Secretary—

(1) shall—

(A) require any entity to which the Assistant Secretary awards a grant under the Program to, for each year during the period described in clause (i) of subsection (d)(2)(D) with respect to the grant and during the period described in clause (ii) of such subsection with respect to the grant if the entity continues to measure and evaluate the activities supported with the grant amounts during such period, submit to the Assistant Secretary a report, in a format specified by the Assistant Secretary, regarding—

(i) the use by the entity of the grant amounts; and

(ii) the progress of the entity towards fulfilling the objectives for which the grant was awarded;
(B) establish mechanisms to ensure appropriate use of, and compliance with respect to all terms regarding, grant funds awarded under the Program;

(C) create and maintain a fully searchable database, which shall be accessible on the internet at no cost to the public, that contains, at a minimum—

(i) a list of each entity that has applied for a grant under the Program;

(ii) a description of each application described in clause (i), including the proposed purpose of each grant described in that clause;

(iii) the status of each application described in clause (i), including whether the Assistant Secretary has awarded a grant with respect to the application and, if so, the amount of the grant;

(iv) each report submitted by an entity under subparagraph (A); and

(v) any other information that the Assistant Secretary considers appropriate to ensure that the public has sufficient infor-
information to understand and monitor grants awarded under the Program; and

(D) ensure that any entity with respect to which an award is terminated under subsection (g) may, in a timely manner, appeal or otherwise challenge that termination; and

(2) may establish additional reporting and information requirements for any recipient of a grant under the Program.

(i) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—A grant awarded to an entity under the Program shall supplement, not supplant, other Federal or State funds that have been made available to the entity to carry out activities described in this section.

(j) SET ASIDES.—From amounts made available in a fiscal year to carry out the Program, the Assistant Secretary shall reserve—

(1) not more than 5 percent for the implementation and administration of the Program, which shall include—

(A) providing technical support and assistance, including ensuring consistency in data reporting;
(B) providing assistance to entities to prepare the applications of those entities with respect to grants awarded under this section;

(C) developing the report required under section 1203(a); and

(D) conducting outreach to entities that may be eligible to be awarded a grant under the Program regarding opportunities to apply for such a grant; and

(2) not less than 5 percent to award grants directly to Indian Tribes, tribally designated entities, and Native Hawaiian organizations to allow those Tribes, entities, and organizations to carry out the activities described in this section.

(k) RULES.—The Assistant Secretary may prescribe such rules as may be necessary to carry out this section.

(l) APPROPRIATION.—There are appropriated to the Assistant Secretary, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, $625,000,000 to carry out this section for fiscal year 2021, to remain available until expended.

SEC. 1203. POLICY RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND MODELING, EVALUATION, AND DISSEMINATION.

(a) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—
(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
the date on which the Assistant Secretary begins
awarding grants under section 1201(d), and annu-
ally thereafter, the Assistant Secretary shall—

(A) submit to the appropriate committees
of Congress a report that documents, for the
year covered by the report—

(i) the findings of each evaluation
conducted under subparagraph (B);  

(ii) a list of each grant awarded under
each covered program, which shall in-
clude—

(I) the amount of each such
grant;  

(II) the recipient of each such
grant; and  

(III) the purpose for which each
such grant was awarded;  

(iii) any termination or modification
of a grant awarded under the covered pro-
grams, which shall include a description of
the subsequent usage of any funds to
which such an action applies; and  

(iv) each challenge made by an appli-
cant for, or a recipient of, a grant under
the covered programs and the outcome of each such challenge; and

(B) conduct evaluations of the activities carried out under the covered programs, which shall include an evaluation of—

(i) whether eligible States to which grants are awarded under the program established under section 1201 are—

(I) abiding by the assurances made by those States under subsection (e) of that section;

(II) meeting, or have met, the stated goals of the State Digital Equity Plans developed by the States under subsection (e) of that section;

(III) satisfying the requirements imposed by the Assistant Secretary on those States under subsection (g) of that section; and

(IV) in compliance with any other rules, requirements, or regulations promulgated by the Assistant Secretary in implementing that program; and
(ii) whether entities to which grants are awarded under the program established under section 1202 are—

(I) abiding by the assurances made by those entities under subsection (f) of that section;

(II) meeting, or have met, the stated goals of those entities with respect to the use of the grant amounts;

(III) satisfying the requirements imposed by the Assistant Secretary on those entities under subsection (h) of that section; and

(IV) in compliance with any other rules, requirements, or regulations promulgated by the Assistant Secretary in implementing that program.

(2) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The Assistant Secretary shall make each report submitted under paragraph (1)(A) publicly available in an online format that—

(A) facilitates access and ease of use;

(B) is searchable; and

(C) is accessible—
(i) to individuals with disabilities; and
(ii) in languages other than English.

(b) Authority To Contract and Enter Into Other Arrangements.—The Assistant Secretary may award grants and enter into contracts, cooperative agreements, and other arrangements with Federal agencies, public and private organizations, and other entities with expertise that the Assistant Secretary determines appropriate in order to—

(1) evaluate the impact and efficacy of activities supported by grants awarded under the covered programs; and

(2) develop, catalog, disseminate, and promote the exchange of best practices, both with respect to and independent of the covered programs, in order to achieve digital equity.

(c) Consultation and Public Engagement.—In carrying out subsection (a), and to further the objectives described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (b), the Assistant Secretary shall conduct ongoing collaboration and consult with—

(1) the Secretary of Agriculture;
(2) the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development;
(3) the Secretary of Education;
(4) the Secretary of Labor;

(5) the Secretary of Health and Human Services;

(6) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs;

(7) the Secretary of the Interior;

(8) the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior;

(9) the Commission;

(10) the Federal Trade Commission;

(11) the Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services;

(12) the Administrator of the Small Business Administration;

(13) the Federal Cochairman of the Appalachian Regional Commission;

(14) State agencies and Governors of States (or equivalent officials);

(15) entities serving as administering entities for States under section 1201(b);

(16) national, State, Tribal, and local organizations that conduct digital inclusion activities, promote digital equity, or provide digital literacy services;

(17) researchers, academics, and philanthropic organizations; and
(18) other agencies, organizations (including international organizations), entities (including entities with expertise in the fields of data collection, analysis and modeling, and evaluation), and community stakeholders, as determined appropriate by the Assistant Secretary.

(d) TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE.—The Assistant Secretary shall provide technical support and assistance to potential applicants for the covered programs and entities awarded grants under the covered programs, to ensure consistency in data reporting and to meet the objectives of this section.

SEC. 1204. GENERAL PROVISIONS.

(a) NONDISCRIMINATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—No individual in the United States may, on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity that is funded in whole or in part with funds made available under this subtitle.

(2) ENFORCEMENT.—The Assistant Secretary shall effectuate paragraph (1) with respect to any program or activity described in that paragraph by
issuing regulations and taking actions consistent
with section 602 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42

(3) Judicial Review.—Judicial review of an
action taken by the Assistant Secretary under para-
graph (2) shall be available to the extent provided in
section 603 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42

(b) Technological Neutrality.—The Assistant
Secretary shall, to the extent practicable, carry out this
subtitle in a technologically neutral manner.

(c) Audit and Oversight.—There are appropriated
to the Office of Inspector General of the Department of
Commerce, out of any money in the Treasury not other-
wise appropriated, for audits and oversight of funds made
available to carry out this subtitle, $5,000,000 for fiscal
year 2021, to remain available until expended.

Subtitle C—Broadband Service for
Low-Income Consumers

Sec. 1301. Additional Broadband Benefit.

(a) Promulgation of Regulations Required.—
Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment
of this Act, the Commission shall promulgate regulations
implementing this section.
(b) Requirements.—The regulations promulgated pursuant to subsection (a) shall establish the following:

(1) Broadband Benefit.—A provider shall provide an eligible household with an internet service offering, upon request by a member of such household. Such provider shall discount the price charged to such household for such internet service offering in an amount equal to the broadband benefit for such household.

(2) Verification of Eligibility.—To verify whether a household is an eligible household, a provider shall either—

(A) use the National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier; or

(B) rely upon an alternative verification process of the provider, if the Commission finds such process to be sufficient to avoid waste, fraud, and abuse.

(3) Use of National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier.—The Commission shall—

(A) expedite the ability of all providers to access the National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier for purposes of determining whether a household is an eligible household; and
(B) ensure that the National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier approves an eligible household to receive the broadband benefit not later than ten days after the date of the submission of information necessary to determine if such household is an eligible household.

(4) Reimbursement.—From the Broadband Connectivity Fund established in subsection (g), the Commission shall reimburse a provider in an amount equal to the broadband benefit with respect to an eligible household that receives such benefit from such provider.

(5) Reimbursement for Connected Device.—A provider that, in addition to providing the broadband benefit to an eligible household, supplies such household with a connected device may be reimbursed up to $100 from the Broadband Connectivity Fund established in subsection (g) for such connected device, if the charge to such eligible household is more than $10 but less than $50 for such connected device, except that a provider may receive reimbursement for no more than one connected device per eligible household.
(6) Certification Required.—To receive a reimbursement under paragraph (4) or (5), a provider shall certify to the Commission the following:

(A) That the amount for which the provider is seeking reimbursement from the Broadband Connectivity Fund for an internet service offering to an eligible household is not more than the normal rate.

(B) That each eligible household for which the provider is seeking reimbursement for providing an internet service offering discounted by the broadband benefit—

(i) has not been and will not be charged—

(I) for such offering, if the normal rate for such offering is less than or equal to the amount of the broadband benefit for such household;

or

(II) more for such offering than the difference between the normal rate for such offering and the amount of the broadband benefit for such household;
(ii) will not be required to pay an early termination fee if such eligible household elects to enter into a contract to receive such internet service offering if such household later terminates such contract; and

(iii) was not subject to a mandatory waiting period for such internet service offering based on having previously received broadband service from such provider.

(C) That each eligible household for which the provider is seeking reimbursement for supplying such household with a connected device has not been and will not be charged $10 or less or $50 or more for such device.

(D) A description of the process used by the provider to verify that a household is an eligible household, if the provider elects an alternative verification process under paragraph (2)(B), and that such verification process was designed to avoid waste, fraud, and abuse.

(7) AUDIT REQUIREMENTS.—The Commission shall adopt audit requirements to ensure that providers are in compliance with the requirements of this section and to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.
in the broadband benefit program established under this section.

(c) ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS.—Notwithstanding subsection (e) of this section, the Commission shall provide a reimbursement to a provider under this section without requiring such provider to be designated as an eligible telecommunications carrier under section 214(e) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 214(e)).

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall affect the collection, distribution, or administration of the Lifeline Assistance Program governed by the rules set forth in subpart E of part 54 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation).

(e) PART 54 REGULATIONS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the Commission from providing that the regulations in part 54 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation), shall apply in whole or in part to support provided under the regulations required by subsection (a), shall not apply in whole or in part to such support, or shall be modified in whole or in part for purposes of application to such support.

(f) ENFORCEMENT.—A violation of this section or a regulation promulgated under this section, including the knowing or reckless denial of an internet service offering
discounted by the broadband benefit to an eligible house-
hold that requests such an offering, shall be treated as
a violation of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C.
151 et seq.) or a regulation promulgated under such Act.
The Commission shall enforce this section and the regula-
tions promulgated under this section in the same manner,
by the same means, and with the same jurisdiction, pow-
ers, and duties as though all applicable terms and provi-
sions of the Communications Act of 1934 were incor-
porated into and made a part of this section.

(g) BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY FUND.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in
the Treasury of the United States a fund to be
known as the Broadband Connectivity Fund.

(2) APPROPRIATION.—There are appropriated
to the Broadband Connectivity Fund, out of any
money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated,
$9,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2021, to remain
available until expended.

(3) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts in the
Broadband Connectivity Fund shall be available to
the Commission for reimbursements to providers
under the regulations required by subsection (a).

(4) RELATIONSHIP TO UNIVERSAL SERVICE
CONTRIBUTIONS.—Reimbursements provided under
the regulations required by subsection (a) shall be
provided from amounts made available under this
subsection and not from contributions under section
254(d) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47
U.S.C. 254(d)), except the Commission may use
such contributions if needed to offset expenses asso-
ciated with the reliance on the National Lifeline Eli-
gibility Verifier to determine eligibility of households
to receive the broadband benefit.

(5) LACK OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—The
regulations required by subsection (a) shall provide
that a provider is not required to provide an eligible
household with an internet service offering under
subsection (b)(1) for any month for which there are
insufficient amounts in the Broadband Connectivity
Fund to reimburse the provider under subsection
(b)(4) for providing the broadband benefit to such
eligible household.

(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) BROADBAND BENEFIT.—The term
“broadband benefit” means a monthly discount for
an eligible household applied to the normal rate for
an internet service offering, in an amount equal to
such rate, but not more than $50, or, if an internet
service offering is provided to an eligible household on Tribal land, not more than $75.

(2) CONNECTED DEVICE.—The term “connected device” means a laptop or desktop computer or a tablet.

(3) ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLD.—The term “eligible household” means, regardless of whether the household or any member of the household receives support under subpart E of part 54 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation), and regardless of whether any member of the household has any past or present arrearages with a provider, a household in which—

(A) at least one member of the household meets the qualifications in subsection (a) or (b) of section 54.409 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation);

(B) at least one member of the household has applied for and been approved to receive benefits under the free and reduced price lunch program under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) or the school breakfast program under section 4 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1773); or
(C) at least one member of the household has experienced a substantial loss of income for at least the two consecutive months immediately preceding the month for which eligibility for the broadband benefit is being determined, documented by layoff or furlough notice, application for unemployment insurance benefits, or similar documentation.

(4) INTERNET SERVICE OFFERING.—The term “internet service offering” means, with respect to a provider, broadband service provided by such provider to a household, offered in the same manner, and on the same terms, as described in any of such provider’s advertisements for broadband service to such household, on May 1, 2020 (or such later date as the Commission may by rule determine, if the Commission considers it necessary).

(5) NORMAL RATE.—The term “normal rate” means, with respect to an internet service offering by a provider, the advertised monthly retail rate, on May 1, 2020 (or such later date as the Commission may by rule determine, if the Commission considers it necessary), including any applicable promotions and excluding any taxes or other governmental fees.
SEC. 1302. GRANTS TO STATES TO STRENGTHEN NATIONAL LIFELINE ELIGIBILITY VERIFIER.

(a) In General.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (d), the Commission shall, not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, make a grant to each State, in an amount in proportion to the population of such State, for the purpose of connecting the database used by such State for purposes of the supplemental nutrition assistance program under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) to the National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier, so that the receipt by a household of benefits under such program is reflected in the National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier.

(b) Disbursement of Grant Funds.—Funds under each grant made under subsection (a) shall be disbursed to the State receiving such grant not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) Certification to Congress.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall certify to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate that the grants required by subsection (a) have
been made and that funds have been disbursed as required
by subsection (b).

(d) APPROPRIATION.—There are appropriated to the
Commission, out of any money in the Treasury not other-
wise appropriated, $200,000,000 to carry out this section
for fiscal year 2021, to remain available until expended.

SEC. 1303. FEDERAL COORDINATION BETWEEN LIFELINE
AND SNAP VERIFICATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall,
in coordination with the Secretary of Agriculture, establish
an automated connection between the National Lifeline
Eligibility Verifier and the National Accuracy Clearing-
house established under section 11(x) of the Food and Nu-
trition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2020(x)) for the supple-
mental nutrition assistance program.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “auto-
mated connection” means a connection between two or
more information systems where the manual input of in-
formation in one system leads to the automatic input of
the same information any other connected system.
Subtitle D—E-Rate Support for Wi-Fi Hotspots, Other Equipment, and Connected Devices

SEC. 1401. E-RATE SUPPORT FOR WI-FI HOTSPOTS, OTHER EQUIPMENT, AND CONNECTED DEVICES.

(a) Regulations Required.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall promulgate regulations providing for the provision, from amounts made available from the Connectivity Fund established under subsection (h)(1), of support under section 254(h)(1)(B) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 254(h)(1)(B)) to an elementary school, secondary school, or library (including a Tribal elementary school, Tribal secondary school, or Tribal library) eligible for support under such section, for the purchase of equipment described in subsection (c), advanced telecommunications and information services, or equipment described in such subsection and advanced telecommunications and information services, for use by—

(1) in the case of a school, students and staff of such school at locations that include locations other than such school; and

(2) in the case of a library, patrons of such library at locations that include locations other than such library.
(b) TRIBAL ISSUES.—

(1) SET ASIDE FOR TRIBAL LANDS.—The Commission shall reserve not less than 5 percent of the amounts available to the Commission under subsection (h)(3) to provide support under the regulations required by subsection (a) to schools and libraries that serve persons who are located on Tribal lands.

(2) ELIGIBILITY OF TRIBAL LIBRARIES.—For purposes of determining the eligibility of a Tribal library for support under the regulations required by subsection (a), the portion of paragraph (4) of section 254(h) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 254(h)) relating to eligibility for assistance from a State library administrative agency under the Library Services and Technology Act shall not apply.

(c) EQUIPMENT DESCRIBED.—The equipment described in this subsection is the following:

(1) Wi-Fi hotspots.

(2) Modems.

(3) Routers.

(4) Devices that combine a modem and router.

(5) Connected devices.

(d) PRIORITIZATION OF SUPPORT.—The Commission shall provide in the regulations required by subsection (a)
for a mechanism to require a school or library to prioritize
the provision of equipment described in subsection (c), ad-
vanced telecommunications and information services, or
equipment described in such subsection and advanced tele-
communications and information services, for which sup-
port is received under such regulations, to students and
staff or patrons (as the case may be) that the school or
library believes do not have access to equipment described
in subsection (c), do not have access to advanced tele-
communications and information services, or have access
to neither equipment described in subsection (c) nor ad-
vanced telecommunications and information services, at
the residences of such students and staff or patrons.

(e) PERMISSIBLE USES OF EQUIPMENT.—The Com-
mission shall provide in the regulations required by sub-
section (a) that, in the case of a school or library that
purchases equipment described in subsection (c) using
support received under such regulations, such school or
library—

(1) may use such equipment for such purposes
as such school or library considers appropriate, sub-
ject to any restrictions provided in such regulations
(or any successor regulation); and

(2) may not sell or otherwise transfer such
equipment in exchange for any thing (including a
service) of value, except that such school or library
may exchange such equipment for upgraded equip-
ment of the same type.

(f) Rule of Construction.—Nothing in this sec-
tion shall be construed to affect any authority the Com-
mission may have under section 254(h)(1)(B) of the Com-
munications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 254(h)(1)(B)) to
allow support under such section to be used for the pur-
poses described in subsection (a) other than as required
by such subsection.

(g) Part 54 Regulations.—Nothing in this section
shall be construed to prevent the Commission from pro-
viding that the regulations in part 54 of title 47, Code
of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation), shall
apply in whole or in part to support provided under the
regulations required by subsection (a), shall not apply in
whole or in part to such support, or shall be modified in
whole or in part for purposes of application to such sup-
port.

(h) Connectivity Fund.—

(1) Establishment.—There is established in
the Treasury of the United States a fund to be
known as the Connectivity Fund.

(2) Appropriation.—There are appropriated
to the Connectivity Fund, out of any money in the
Treasury not otherwise appropriated, $5,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2021, to remain available until expended.

(3) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts in the Connectivity Fund shall be available to the Commission to provide support under the regulations required by subsection (a).

(4) RELATIONSHIP TO UNIVERSAL SERVICE CONTRIBUTIONS.—Support provided under the regulations required by subsection (a) shall be provided from amounts made available under paragraph (3) and not from contributions under section 254(d) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 254(d)).

(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADVANCED TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION SERVICES.—The term “advanced telecommunications and information services” means advanced telecommunications and information services, as such term is used in section 254(h) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 254(h)).

(2) CONNECTED DEVICE.—The term “connected device” means a laptop computer, tablet computer, or similar device that is capable of connecting
to advanced telecommunications and information services.

(3) **LIBRARY.**—The term “library” includes a library consortium.

(4) **TRIBAL LAND.**—The term “Tribal land” means—

(A) any land located within the boundaries of—

(i) an Indian reservation, pueblo, or rancheria; or

(ii) a former reservation within Oklahoma;

(B) any land not located within the boundaries of an Indian reservation, pueblo, or rancheria, the title to which is held—

(i) in trust by the United States for the benefit of an Indian Tribe or an individual Indian;

(ii) by an Indian Tribe or an individual Indian, subject to restriction against alienation under laws of the United States; or

(iii) by a dependent Indian community;
(C) any land located within a region established pursuant to section 7(a) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1606(a));

(D) Hawaiian Home Lands, as defined in section 801 of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4221); or

(E) those areas or communities designated by the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior that are near, adjacent, or contiguous to reservations where financial assistance and social service programs are provided to Indians because of their status as Indians.

(5) Wi-Fi.—The term “Wi-Fi” means a wireless networking protocol based on Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers standard 802.11 (or any successor standard).

(6) Wi-Fi hotspot.—The term “Wi-Fi hotspot” means a device that is capable of—

(A) receiving mobile advanced telecommunications and information services; and

(B) sharing such services with another device through the use of Wi-Fi.
TITLE II—BROADBAND
TRANSPARENCY

SEC. 2001. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) Broadband internet access service.—The term “broadband internet access service” has the meaning given the term in section 8.1(b) of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

(2) Fixed wireless broadband.—The term “fixed wireless broadband” means broadband internet access service that serves end users primarily at fixed endpoints through stationary equipment connected by the use of radio, such as by the use of unlicensed spectrum.

(3) Mobile broadband.—The term “mobile broadband”—

(A) means broadband internet access service that serves end users primarily using mobile stations;

(B) includes services that use smartphones or mobile network-enabled tablets as the primary endpoints for connection to the internet; and
(C) includes mobile satellite broadband
internet access services.

(4) PROVIDER.—The term “provider” means a
provider of fixed or mobile broadband internet access
service.

(5) SATELLITE BROADBAND.—The term “sat-
ellite broadband” means broadband internet access
service that serves end users primarily at fixed
endpoints through stationary equipment connected
by the use of orbital satellites.

(6) TERRESTRIAL FIXED BROADBAND.—The
term “terrestrial fixed broadband” means broadband
internet access service that serves end users pri-
marily at fixed endpoints through stationary equip-
ment connected by wired technology such as cable,
DSL, and fiber.

SEC. 2002. BROADBAND TRANSPARENCY.

(a) RULES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commis-
sion shall issue final rules that include a require-
ment for the annual collection by the Commission of
data relating to the price and subscription rates of
terrestrial fixed broadband, fixed wireless
broadband, satellite broadband, and mobile broadband.

(2) UPDATES.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which rules are issued under paragraph (1), and when determined to be necessary by the Commission thereafter, the Commission shall revise such rules to verify the accuracy of data submitted pursuant to such rules.

(3) REDUNDANCY AVOIDANCE.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require the Commission, in order to meet a requirement of this section, to duplicate an activity that the Commission is undertaking as of the date of the enactment of this Act, if the Commission refers to such activity in the rules issued under paragraph (1), such activity meets the requirements of this section, and the Commission discloses such activity to the public.

(b) CONTENT OF RULES.—The rules issued by the Commission under subsection (a)(1) shall require the Commission to collect from each provider of terrestrial fixed broadband, fixed wireless broadband, mobile broadband, or satellite broadband, data that includes—

(1) either the weighted average of the monthly prices charged to subscribed households within each census block for each distinct broadband internet ac-
cess service plan or tier of standalone broadband internet access service, including mandatory equipment charges, usage-based fees, and fees for early termination of required contracts, or the monthly price charged to each subscribed household, including such charges and fees;

(2) either the mean monthly price within the duration of subscription contracts offered within each census block for each distinct broadband internet access service plan or tier of standalone broadband internet access service, including mandatory equipment charges, usage-based fees, and fees for early termination of required contracts, or the mean monthly price within the duration of subscription contracts offered to each household, including such charges and fees;

(3) either the subscription rate within each census block for each distinct broadband internet access service plan or tier of standalone broadband internet access service, or information regarding the subscription status of each household to which a subscription is offered;

(4) data necessary to demonstrate the actual price paid by subscribers of broadband internet ac-
cess service at each tier for such service in a manner that—

(A) takes into account any discounts (or similar price concessions); and

(B) identifies any additional taxes and fees (including for the use of equipment related to the use of a subscription for such service), any monthly data usage limitation at the stated price, and the extent to which the price of the service reflects inclusion within a product bundle; and

(5) data necessary to assess the resiliency of the broadband internet access service network in the event of a natural disaster or emergency.

(c) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Commission shall provide technical assistance to small providers (as defined by the Commission) of broadband internet access service, to ensure such providers can fulfill the requirements of this section.

SEC. 2003. DISTRIBUTION OF DATA.

(a) AVAILABILITY OF DATA.—Subject to subsection (b), the Commission shall make all data relating to broadband internet access service collected under rules required by this title available in a commonly used electronic format to—
(1) other Federal agencies, including the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, to assist that agency in conducting the study required by section 1102(c);

(2) a broadband office, public utility commission, broadband mapping program, or other broadband program of a State, in the case of data pertaining to the needs of that State;

(3) a unit of local government, in the case of data pertaining to the needs of that locality; and

(4) an individual or organization conducting research for noncommercial purposes or public interest purposes.

(b) Protection of Data.—

(1) In general.—The Commission may not share any data described in subsection (a) with an entity or individual described in that subsection unless the Commission has determined that the receiving entity or individual has the capability and intent to protect any personally identifiable information contained in the data.

(2) Determination of personally identifiable information.—The Commission—

(A) shall define the term “personally identifiable information”, for purposes of paragraph
(1), through notice and comment rulemaking; and

(B) may not share any data under subsection (a) before completing the rulemaking under subparagraph (A).

(c) BALANCING ACCESS AND PROTECTION.—If the Commission is unable to determine under subsection (b)(1) that an entity or individual requesting access to data under subsection (a) has the capability to protect personally identifiable information contained in the data, the Commission shall make as much of the data available as possible in a format that does not compromise personally identifiable information, through methods such as anonymization.

SEC. 2004. COORDINATION WITH CERTAIN OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.

Section 804(b)(2) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 644(b)(2)), as added by the Broadband DATA Act (Public Law 116–130), is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)(ii), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting “; and”;

(2) by amending subparagraph (B) to read as follows:

“(B) coordinate with the Postmaster General, the heads of other Federal agencies that
operate delivery fleet vehicles, and the Director
of the Bureau of the Census for assistance with
data collection whenever coordination could fea-
sibly yield more specific geographic data.”; and
(3) by striking subparagraph (C).

SEC. 2005. BROADBAND CONSUMER LABELS.

(a) RULES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of
the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall issue final
rules to promote and incentivize widespread adoption of
the broadband consumer labels referred to in the Public
Notice of the Commission released on April 4, 2016 (DA
16–357).

(b) HEARINGS.—The Commission shall conduct a se-
ries of public hearings in the rulemaking proceeding re-
quired by subsection (a) to assess how consumers cur-
rently evaluate internet service plans and whether existing
disclosures are available, effective, and sufficient.

SEC. 2006. APPROPRIATION FOR BROADBAND DATA ACT.

There are appropriated to the Commission, out of any
money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated,
$24,000,000 to carry out title VIII of the Communications
Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 641 et seq.), as added by the
Broadband DATA Act (Public Law 116–130), for fiscal
year 2021, to remain available until expended.
TITLE III—BROADBAND ACCESS
Subtitle A—Expansion of Broadband Access

SEC. 3101. EXPANSION OF BROADBAND ACCESS IN UNSERVED AREAS AND AREAS WITH LOW-TIER OR MID-TIER SERVICE.

Title VII of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“SEC. 723. EXPANSION OF BROADBAND ACCESS IN UNSERVED AREAS AND AREAS WITH LOW-TIER OR MID-TIER SERVICE.

“(a) Program Established.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Commission, in consultation with the Assistant Secretary, shall establish a program to expand access to broadband service for unserved areas, areas with low-tier service, areas with mid-tier service, and unserved anchor institutions in accordance with the requirements of this section that—

“(1) is separate from any universal service program established pursuant to section 254; and

“(2) does not require funding recipients to be designated as eligible telecommunications carriers under section 214(e).
“(b) Use of Program Funds.—

“(1) Expanding access to broadband service through national system of competitive bidding.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this section, the Commission shall award 75 percent of the amounts appropriated under subsection (g) through national systems of competitive bidding to funding recipients only to expand access to broadband service in unserved areas and areas with low-tier service.

“(2) Expanding access to broadband service through states.—

“(A) Distribution of funds to states.—Not later than 255 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Commission shall distribute 25 percent of the amounts appropriated under subsection (g) among the States, in direct proportion to the population of each State.

“(B) Public notice.—Not later than 195 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Commission shall issue a public notice informing each State and the public of the amounts to be distributed under this paragraph. The notice shall include—
“(i) the manner in which a State shall inform the Commission of that State’s acceptance or acceptance in part of the amounts to be distributed under this paragraph;

“(ii) the date (which is 30 days after the date on which the public notice is issued) by which such acceptance or acceptance in part is due; and

“(iii) the requirements as set forth under this section and as may be further prescribed by the Commission.

“(C) Acceptance by States.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which a public notice is issued under subparagraph (B), each State accepting amounts to be distributed under this paragraph shall inform the Commission of the acceptance or acceptance in part by the State of the amounts to be distributed under this paragraph in the manner described by the Commission in the public notice.

“(D) Requirements for state receipt of amounts distributed.—Each State accepting amounts distributed under this paragraph—
“(i) shall only award such amounts through statewide systems of competitive bidding, in the manner prescribed by the State but subject to the requirements as set forth under this section and as may be further prescribed by the Commission;

“(ii) shall make such awards only—

“(I) to funding recipients to expand access to broadband service in unserved areas and areas with low-tier service;

“(II) to funding recipients to expand access to broadband service to unserved anchor institutions; or

“(III) to funding recipients to expand access to broadband service in areas with mid-tier service, but only if a State does not have, or no longer has, any unserved areas or areas with low-tier service;

“(iii) shall conduct separate systems of competitive bidding for awards made to unserved anchor institutions under clause (ii)(II), if a State awards any amounts dis-
tributed under this paragraph to unserved anchor institutions;

“(iv) shall return any unused portion of amounts distributed under this paragraph to the Commission within 10 years after the date of the enactment of this section and shall submit a certification to the Commission before receiving such amounts that the State will return such amounts; and

“(v) may not use more than 5 percent of the amounts distributed under this paragraph to administer a system or systems of competitive bidding authorized by this paragraph.

“(3) COORDINATION OF FEDERAL AND STATE FUNDING.—The Commission, in consultation with the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth, shall establish processes through the rulemaking under subsection (e) to—

“(A) enable States to conduct statewide systems of competitive bidding as part of, or in coordination with, national systems of competitive bidding;
“(B) assist States in conducting statewide systems of competitive bidding;

“(C) ensure that program funds awarded by the Commission and program funds awarded by the States are not used in the same areas; and

“(D) ensure that program funds and funds awarded through other Federal programs to expand broadband service with a download speed of at least 100 megabits per second, an upload speed of at least 100 megabits per second, and a latency that is sufficiently low to allow real-time, interactive applications, are not used in the same areas.

“(c) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—

“(1) TECHNOLOGY NEUTRALITY REQUIRED.—The entity administering a system of competitive bidding (either a State or the Commission) in making awards may not favor a project using any particular technology.

“(2) GIGABIT PERFORMANCE FUNDING.—The Commission shall reserve 20 percent of the amounts to be awarded by the Commission under subsection (b)(1), and each State shall reserve 20 percent of the amounts distributed to such State under sub-
section (b)(2), for bidders committing (with respect to any particular project by such a bidder) to offer, not later than the date that is 5 years after the date on which funding is provided under this section for such project, broadband service with a download speed of at least 1 gigabit per second and an upload speed of at least 1 gigabit per second or, in the case of a project to provide broadband service to an unserved anchor institution, broadband service with a download speed of at least 10 gigabits per second per 1,000 users and an upload speed of at least 10 gigabits per second per 1,000 users.

“(3) System of competitive bidding process.—The entity administering a system of competitive bidding (either a State or the Commission) shall structure the system of competitive bidding process to—

“(A) first hold a system of competitive bidding only for bidders committing (with respect to any particular project by such a bidder) to offer, not later than the date that is 5 years after the date on which funding is provided under this section for such project, broadband service with a download speed of at least 1 gigabit per second and an upload speed of at least 1 gigabit per second and an upload speed of at least
1 gigabit per second or, in the case of a project
to provide broadband service to an unserved an-
chor institution, broadband service with a
download speed of at least 10 gigabits per sec-
ond per 1,000 users and an upload speed of at
least 10 gigabits per second per 1,000 users;
and
“(B) after holding the system of competi-
tive bidding required by subparagraph (A), hold
one or more systems of competitive bidding, in
areas not receiving awards under subparagraph
(A), to award funds for projects in areas that
are estimated to remain unserved areas, areas
with low-tier service, or (to the extent permitted
under this section) areas with mid-tier service,
or (to the extent permitted under this section)
for projects to offer broadband service to an-
chor institutions that are estimated to remain
unserved anchor institutions, after the comple-
tion of the projects for which funding is award-
ed under the system of competitive bidding re-
quired by subparagraph (A) or any previous
system of competitive bidding under this sub-
paragraph.
“(4) FUNDS PRIORITY PREFERENCE.—There shall be a preference, as determined by the entity administering a system of competitive bidding (either a State or the Commission), which shall take priority over any preference under paragraph (5), for bidders in such system of competitive bidding proposing projects that would expand access to broadband service in areas where at least 90 percent of the population has no access to broadband service or does not have access to broadband service offered—

“(A) with a download speed of at least 25 megabits per second; and

“(B) with an upload speed of at least 3 megabits per second.

“(5) FUNDS PREFERENCE.—There shall be a preference, as determined by the entity administering a system of competitive bidding (either a State or the Commission), for bidders in such system of competitive bidding proposing projects—

“(A) with at least 20 percent matching funds from non-Federal sources;

“(B) that would expand access to broadband service on Tribal lands, as defined by the Commission;
“(C) that would provide broadband service with higher speeds than those specified in subsection (d)(2), except in the case of funds awarded under subparagraph (A) of paragraph (3);

“(D) that would expand access to broadband service in advance of the time specified in subsection (e)(5), except in the case of funds awarded under subparagraph (A) of paragraph (3);

“(E) that would expand access to broadband service to persistent poverty counties or high-poverty areas at subsidized rates;

“(F) that, at least until the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of this section, would provide broadband service with comparable speeds to those provided in areas that, on the day before such date of enactment, were not unserved areas, areas with low-tier service, or areas with mid-tier service, with minimal future investment;

“(G) that would provide broadband service consistent with consumer preferences based on data and analysis conducted by the Commission; and
“(I) that would provide for the deployment of open-access broadband service networks.

“(6) Unserved areas and areas with low-tier or mid-tier service.—In determining whether an area is an unserved area, an area with low-tier service, or an area with mid-tier service or whether an anchor institution is an unserved anchor institution for any system of competitive bidding authorized under this section, the Commission shall implement the following requirements through the rulemaking described in subsection (e):

“(A) Data for initial determination.—To make an initial determination as to whether an area is an unserved area, an area with low-tier service, or an area with mid-tier service or whether an anchor institution is an unserved anchor institution, the Commission shall—

“(i) use the most accurate and granular data on the map created by the Commission under section 802(c)(1)(B);

“(ii) refine the data described in clause (i) by using—
“(I) other data on access to broadband service obtained or purchased by the Commission;

“(II) other publicly available data or information on access to broadband service; and

“(III) other publicly available data or information on State broadband service deployment programs; and

“(iii) not determine an area is not an unserved area, an area with low-tier service, or an area with mid-tier service on the basis that one location within such area does not meet the definition of an unserved area, an area with low-tier service, or an area with mid-tier service.

“(B) Initial determination.—The Commission shall make an initial determination of the areas that are unserved areas, areas with low-tier service, and areas with mid-tier service and which anchor institutions are unserved anchor institutions not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this section.

“(C) Challenge of determination.—
“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall provide for a process for challenging any initial determination regarding whether an area is an unserved area, an area with low-tier service, or an area with mid-tier service or whether an anchor institution is an unserved anchor institution that, at a minimum, provides not less than 45 days for a person to voluntarily submit information concerning—

“(I) the broadband service offered in the area, or a commitment to offer broadband service in the area that is subject to legal sanction if not performed; or

“(II) the broadband service offered to the anchor institution.

“(ii) STREAMLINED PROCESS.—The Commission shall ensure that such process is sufficiently streamlined such that a reasonably prudent person may easily participate to challenge such initial determination with little burden on such person.

“(D) FINAL DETERMINATION.—The Commission shall make a final determination of the
areas that are unserved areas, areas with low-
tier service, or areas with mid-tier service and
which anchor institutions are unserved anchor
institutions within 1 year after the date of the
enactment of this section.

“(7) NOTICE, TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNT-
ABILITY, AND OVERSIGHT REQUIRED.—The program
shall contain sufficient notice, transparency, ac-
countability, and oversight measures to provide the
public with notice of the assistance provided under
this section, and to deter waste, fraud, and abuse of
program funds.

“(8) COMPETENCE.—The program shall contain
sufficient processes and requirements, as established
by an entity administering a system of competitive
bidding (either a State or the Commission), to en-
sure that, prior to bidding in such system of com-
petitive bidding, a provider of broadband service
seeking to participate in such system of competitive
bidding—

“(A) is capable of carrying out the project
in a competent manner in compliance with all
applicable Federal, State, and local laws;

“(B) has the financial capacity to meet the
buildout obligations of the project and require-
ments as set forth under this section and as
may be further prescribed by the Commission;
and
“(C) has the technical and operational ca-
pability to provide broadband services in the
manner contemplated by the provider’s bid in
the system of competitive bidding, including a
detailed consideration of the provider’s prior
performance in delivering services as con-
templated in the bid and the capabilities of the
provider’s proposed network to deliver the con-
templated services in the area in question.
“(9) CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS.—All labor-
ers and mechanics employed by contractors or sub-
contractors in the performance of construction, al-
teration, or repair work carried out, in whole or in
part, with assistance made available under this sec-
tion shall be paid wages at rates not less than those
prevailing on projects of a similar character in the
locality as determined by the Secretary of Labor in
accordance with subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title
40, United States Code. With respect to the labor
standards in this paragraph, the Secretary of Labor
shall have the authority and functions set forth in
Reorganization Plan Numbered 14 of 1950 (64 Stat.
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“(10) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION REGARDING EN-
VIRONMENTAL LAWS.—Nothing in this section shall
be construed to affect—

“(A) the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et
seq.);

“(B) the Federal Water Pollution Control
Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.; commonly referred
to as the ‘Clean Water Act’);

“(C) the National Environmental Policy
Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);

“(D) the Endangered Species Act of 1973
(16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.);

“(E) the Solid Waste Disposal Act (42
U.S.C. 6901 et seq.; commonly referred to as
the ‘Resource Conservation and Recovery Act’);
or

“(F) any State or local law that is similar
to a law listed in subparagraphs (A) through
(E).

“(11) REFERRAL OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF
APPLICABLE FEDERAL LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
LAWS.—The Commission shall refer any alleged vio-
lation of an applicable labor and employment law to
the appropriate Federal agency for investigation and
enforcement, and any alleged violation of paragraph
(9) or (12) to the National Labor Relations Board
for investigation and enforcement, utilizing all ap-
propriate remedies up to and including debarment
from the program.

“(12) LABOR ORGANIZATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the
National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C. 151
et seq.), subparagraphs (B) through (F) shall
apply with respect to any funding recipient who
is an employer and any labor organization who
represents employees of a funding recipient.

“(B) NEUTRALITY REQUIREMENT.—An
employer shall remain neutral with respect to
the exercise of employees and labor organiza-
tions of the right to organize and bargain under
the National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C.
151 et seq.).

“(C) COMMENCEMENT OF COLLECTIVE
bargaining.—Not later than 10 days after re-
ceiving a written request for collective bar-
gaining from a labor organization that has been
newly recognized or certified as a representative
under section 9(a) of the National Labor Rela-
tions Act (29 U.S.C. 159(a)), or within such further period as the parties agree upon, the parties shall meet and commence to bargain collectively and shall make every reasonable effort to conclude and sign a collective bargaining agreement.

“(D) Mediation and conciliation for failure to reach a collective bargaining agreement.—

“(i) In general.—If the parties have failed to reach an agreement before the date that is 90 days after the date on which bargaining is commenced under subparagraph (C), or any later date agreed upon by both parties, either party may notify the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service of the existence of a dispute and request mediation.

“(ii) Federal mediation and conciliation service.—Whenever a request is received under clause (i), the Director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service shall promptly communicate with the parties and use best efforts, by medi-
ation and conciliation, to bring them to agreement.

"(E) TRIPARTITE ARBITRATION PANEL.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—If the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service is not able to bring the parties to agreement by mediation or conciliation before the date that is 30 days after the date on which such mediation or conciliation is commenced, or any later date agreed upon by both parties, the Service shall refer the dispute to a tripartite arbitration panel established in accordance with such regulations as may be prescribed by the Service, with one member selected by the labor organization, one member selected by the employer, and one neutral member mutually agreed to by the parties.

"(ii) DISPUTE SETTLEMENT.—A majority of the tripartite arbitration panel shall render a decision settling the dispute and such decision shall be binding upon the parties for a period of two years, unless amended during such period by writ-
ten consent of the parties. Such decision
shall be based on—

“(I) the employer’s financial sta-
tus and prospects;

“(II) the size and type of the em-
ployer’s operations and business;

“(III) the employees’ cost of liv-
ing;

“(IV) the employees’ ability to
sustain themselves, their families, and
their dependents on the wages and
benefits they earn from the employer;
and

“(V) the wages and benefits that
other employers in the same business
provide their employees.

“(F) PROHIBITION ON SUBCONTRACTING
FOR CERTAIN PURPOSES.—A funding recipient
may not engage in subcontracting for the pur-
pose of circumventing the terms of a collective
bargaining agreement with respect to wages,
benefits, or working conditions.

“(G) PARTIES DEFINED.—In this para-
graph, the term ‘parties’ means a labor organi-
zation that is newly recognized or certified as a
representative under section 9(a) of the National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C. 159(a)) and the employer of the employees represented by such organization.

“(d) PROJECT REQUIREMENTS.—Any project funded through the program shall meet the following requirements:

“(1) The project shall adhere to quality-of-service standards as established by the Commission.

“(2) Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection (c), the project shall offer broadband service with a download speed of at least 100 megabits per second, an upload speed of at least 100 megabits per second, and a latency that is sufficiently low to allow real-time, interactive applications.

“(3) The project shall offer broadband service at prices that are comparable to, or lower than, the prices charged for comparable levels of service in areas that were not unserved areas, areas with low-tier service, or areas with mid-tier service on the day before the date of the enactment of this section.

“(4) For any project that involves laying fiber-optic cables along a roadway, the project shall in-
clude interspersed conduit access points at regular and short intervals.

“(5) The project shall incorporate prudent cybersecurity and supply chain risk management practices, as specified by the Commission through the rulemaking described in subsection (e), in consultation with the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the Assistant Secretary.

“(6) The project shall incorporate best practices, as defined by the Commission, for ensuring reliability and resiliency of the network during disasters.

“(7) Any funding recipient must agree to have the project meet the requirements established under section 224, as if the project were classified as a ‘utility’ under such section. The preceding sentence shall not apply to those entities or persons excluded from the definition of the term ‘utility’ by the second sentence of subsection (a)(1) of such section.

“(8) The project shall offer an affordable option for a broadband service plan under which broadband service is provided—

“(A) with a download speed of at least 50 megabits per second;
“(B) with an upload speed of at least 50 megabits per second; and

“(C) with latency that is sufficiently low to allow multiple, simultaneous, real-time, interactive applications.

“(e) Rulemaking and Distribution and Award of Funds.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Commission, in consultation with the Assistant Secretary, shall promulgate rules—

“(1) that implement the requirements of this section, as appropriate;

“(2) that establish the design of and rules for the national systems of competitive bidding;

“(3) that establish notice requirements for all systems of competitive bidding authorized under this section that, at a minimum, provide the public with notice of—

“(A) the initial determination of which areas are unserved areas, areas with low-tier service, or areas with mid-tier service;

“(B) the final determination of which areas are unserved areas, areas with low-tier service, or areas with mid-tier service after the
process for challenging the initial determination has concluded;

“(C) which entities have applied to bid for funding; and

“(D) the results of any system of competitive bidding, including identifying the funding recipients, which areas each project will serve, the nature of the service that will be provided by the project in each of those areas, and how much funding the funding recipients will receive in each of those areas;

“(4) that establish broadband service buildout milestones and periodic certification by funding recipients to ensure compliance with the broadband service buildout milestones for all systems of competitive bidding authorized under this section;

“(5) that, except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection (e), establish a maximum buildout timeframe of four years beginning on the date on which funding is provided under this section for a project;

“(6) that establish periodic reporting requirements for funding recipients and that identify, at a minimum, the nature of the service provided in each
area for any system of competitive bidding authorized under this section;

“(7) that establish standard penalties for the noncompliance of funding recipients or projects with the requirements as set forth under this section and as may be further prescribed by the Commission for any system of competitive bidding authorized under this section;

“(8) that establish procedures for recovery of funds, in whole or in part, from funding recipients in the event of the default or noncompliance of the funding recipient or project with the requirements established under this section for any system of competitive bidding authorized under this section; and

“(9) that establish mechanisms to reduce waste, fraud, and abuse within the program for any system of competitive bidding authorized under this section.

“(f) REPORTS REQUIRED.—

“(1) INSPECTOR GENERAL AND COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT.—Not later than June 30 and December 31 of each year following the awarding of the first funds under the program, the Inspector General of the Commission and the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committees on Energy and Commerce of the House
of Representatives and Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report for the previous 6 months that reviews the program. Such report shall include any recommendations to address waste, fraud, and abuse.

“(2) STATE REPORTS.—Any State that receives funds under the program shall submit an annual report to the Commission on how such funds were spent, along with a certification of compliance with the requirements as set forth under this section and as may be further prescribed by the Commission, including a description of each service provided and the number of individuals to whom the service was provided.

“(g) APPROPRIATION.—There are appropriated to the Commission, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, $80,000,000,000 to carry out the program for fiscal year 2021, to remain available until expended.

“(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) AFFORDABLE OPTION.—The term ‘affordable option’ means, with respect to a broadband service plan, that broadband service is provided under such plan at a rate that is determined by the Commission, in coordination with the Office of
Internet Connectivity and Growth, to be affordable for a household with an income of 136 percent of the poverty threshold, as determined by using criteria of poverty established by the Bureau of the Census, for a 4-person household that includes 2 dependents under the age of 18.

“(2) Anchor Institution.—The term ‘anchor institution’ means a public or private school, a library, a medical or healthcare provider, a museum, a public safety entity, a public housing agency (as defined in section 3(b) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a(b))), a community college, an institution of higher education, a religious organization, or any other community support organization or agency.

“(3) Area.—The term ‘area’ means the geographic unit of measurement with the greatest level of granularity reasonably feasible for the Commission to use in making eligibility determinations under this section and in meeting the requirements and deadlines of this section.

“(4) Area with Low-tier Service.—The term ‘area with low-tier service’ means an area where at least 90 percent of the population has access to broadband service offered—
“(A) with a download speed of at least 25 megabits per second but less than 100 megabits per second;

“(B) with an upload speed of at least 25 megabits per second but less than 100 megabits per second; and

“(C) with latency that is sufficiently low to allow multiple, simultaneous, real-time, interactive applications.

“(5) AREA WITH MID-TIER SERVICE.—The term ‘area with mid-tier service’ means an area where at least 90 percent of the population has access to broadband service offered—

“(A) with a download speed of at least 100 megabits per second but less than 1 gigabit per second;

“(B) with an upload speed of at least 100 megabits per second but less than 1 gigabit per second; and

“(C) with latency that is sufficiently low to allow multiple, simultaneous, real-time, interactive applications.

“(6) ASSISTANT SECRETARY.—The term ‘Assistant Secretary’ means the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information.
“(7) BROADBAND SERVICE.—The term ‘broadband service’—

“(A) means broadband internet access service that is a mass-market retail service, or a service provided to an anchor institution, by wire or radio that provides the capability to transmit data to and receive data from all or substantially all internet endpoints, including any capabilities that are incidental to and enable the operation of the communications service;

“(B) includes any service that is a functional equivalent of the service described in subparagraph (A); and

“(C) does not include dial-up internet access service.

“(8) COLLECTIVE BARGAINING.—The term ‘collective bargaining’ means performance of the mutual obligation described in section 8(d) of the National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C. 158(d)).

“(9) COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT.—The term ‘collective bargaining agreement’ means an agreement reach through collective bargaining.

“(10) FUNDING RECIPIENT.—The term ‘funding recipient’ means an entity that receives funding
for a project under this section, including a private
entity, public-private partnership, cooperative, or
municipal broadband service provider.

“(11) HIGH-POVERTY AREA.—The term ‘high-
poverty area’ means a census tract with a poverty
rate of at least 20 percent, as measured by the most
recent 5-year data series available from the Amer-
ican Community Survey of the Bureau of the Census
as of the year before the date of the enactment of
this section.

“(12) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—
The term ‘institution of higher education’—

“(A) has the meaning given the term in
section 101 of the Higher Education Act of
1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001); and

“(B) includes a postsecondary vocational
institution.

“(13) LABOR ORGANIZATION.—The term ‘labor
organization’ has the meaning given the term in sec-
section 2 of the National Labor Relations Act (29

“(14) PERSISTENT POVERTY COUNTY.—The
term ‘persistent poverty county’ means any county
with a poverty rate of at least 20 percent, as deter-
mined in each of the 1990 and 2000 decennial cen-
suses and in the Small Area Income and Poverty Es-
timates of the Bureau of the Census for the most re-
cent year for which the Estimates are available.

“(15) POSTSECONDARY VOCATIONAL INSTITU-
tion.—The term ‘postsecondary vocational institu-
tion’ has the meaning given the term in section
102(e) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
U.S.C. 1002(e)).

“(16) PROGRAM.—Unless otherwise indicated,
the term ‘program’ means the program established
under subsection (a).

“(17) PROJECT.—The term ‘project’ means an
undertaking by a funding recipient under this sec-
tion to construct and deploy infrastructure for the
provision of broadband service.

“(18) UNSERVED ANCHOR INSTITUTION.—The
term ‘unserved anchor institution’ means an anchor
institution that has no access to broadband service
or does not have access to broadband service of-
fered—

“(A) with a download speed of at least 1
gigabit per second per 1,000 users;

“(B) with an upload speed of at least 1
gigabit per second per 1,000 users; and
“(C) with latency that is sufficiently low to allow multiple, simultaneous, real-time, interactive applications.

“(19) UNSERVED AREA.—The term ‘unserved area’ means an area where at least 90 percent of the population has no access to broadband service or does not have access to broadband service offered—

“(A) with a download speed of at least 25 megabits per second;

“(B) with an upload speed of at least 25 megabits per second; and

“(C) with latency that is sufficiently low to allow real-time, interactive applications.”.

Subtitle B—Broadband Infrastructure Finance and Innovation

SEC. 3201. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(1) BIFIA PROGRAM.—The term “BIFIA program” means the broadband infrastructure finance and innovation program established under this subtitle.

(2) BROADBAND SERVICE.—The term “broadband service”—

(A) means broadband internet access service that is a mass-market retail service, or a
service provided to an entity described in para-
graph (11)(B)(ii), by wire or radio that pro-
vides the capability to transmit data to and re-
ceive data from all or substantially all internet
endpoints, including any capabilities that are
incidental to and enable the operation of the
communications service;

(B) includes any service that is a func-
tional equivalent of the service described in sub-
paragraph (A); and

(C) does not include dial-up internet access
service.

(3) ELIGIBLE PROJECT COSTS.—The term “el-
igible project costs” means amounts substantially all
of which are paid by, or for the account of, an obli-
gor in connection with a project, including the cost
of—

(A) development phase activities, including
planning, feasibility analysis, revenue fore-
casting, environmental review, historic preserva-
tion review, permitting, preliminary engineering
and design work, and other preconstruction ac-
tivities;

(B) construction and deployment phase ac-
tivities, including—
(i) construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, replacement, and acquisition of real property (including land relating to the project and improvements to land), equipment, instrumentation, networking capability, hardware and software, and digital network technology;

(ii) environmental mitigation; and

(iii) construction contingencies; and

(C) capitalized interest necessary to meet market requirements, reasonably required reserve funds, capital issuance expenses, and other carrying costs during construction and deployment.

(4) FEDERAL CREDIT INSTRUMENT.—The term “Federal credit instrument” means a secured loan, loan guarantee, or line of credit authorized to be made available under the BIFIA program with respect to a project.

(5) INVESTMENT-GRADE RATING.—The term “investment-grade rating” means a rating of BBB minus, Baa3, bbb minus, BBB (low), or higher assigned by a rating agency to project obligations.

(6) LENDER.—The term “lender” means any non-Federal qualified institutional buyer (as defined
in section 230.144A(a) of title 17, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation), known as Rule 144A(a) of the Securities and Exchange Commission and issued under the Securities Act of 1933 (15 U.S.C. 77a et seq.), including—

(A) a qualified retirement plan (as defined in section 4974(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) that is a qualified institutional buyer; and

(B) a governmental plan (as defined in section 414(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) that is a qualified institutional buyer.

(7) LETTER OF INTEREST.—The term “letter of interest” means a letter submitted by a potential applicant prior to an application for credit assistance in a format prescribed by the Assistant Secretary on the website of the BIFIA program that—

(A) describes the project and the location, purpose, and cost of the project;

(B) outlines the proposed financial plan, including the requested credit assistance and the proposed obligor;

(C) provides a status of environmental review; and
(D) provides information regarding satisfaction of other eligibility requirements of the BIFIA program.

(8) LINE OF CREDIT.—The term “line of credit” means an agreement entered into by the Assistant Secretary with an obligor under section 3204 to provide a direct loan at a future date upon the occurrence of certain events.

(9) LOAN GUARANTEE.—The term “loan guarantee” means any guarantee or other pledge by the Assistant Secretary to pay all or part of the principal of and interest on a loan or other debt obligation issued by an obligor and funded by a lender.

(10) OBLIGOR.—The term “obligor” means a party that—

(A) is primarily liable for payment of the principal of or interest on a Federal credit instrument; and

(B) may be a corporation, company, partnership, joint venture, trust, or governmental entity, agency, or instrumentality.

(11) PROJECT.—The term “project” means a project—

(A) to construct and deploy infrastructure for the provision of broadband service; and
(B) that the Assistant Secretary determines will—

(i) provide access or improved access to broadband service to consumers residing in areas of the United States that have no access to broadband service or do not have access to broadband service offered—

(I) with a download speed of at least 100 megabits per second;

(II) with an upload speed of at least 20 megabits per second; and

(III) with latency that is sufficiently low to allow real-time, interactive applications; or

(ii) provide access or improved access to broadband service to—

(I) schools, libraries, medical and healthcare providers, community colleges and other institutions of higher education, museums, religious organizations, and other community support organizations and entities to facilitate greater use of broadband service by or through such organizations;
organizations and agencies
that provide outreach, access, equip-
ment, and support services to facili-
tate greater use of broadband service
by low-income, unemployed, aged, and
otherwise vulnerable populations;

(III) job-creating strategic facili-
ties located within a State-designated
economic zone, Economic Develop-
ment District designated by the De-
partment of Commerce, Empower-
ment Zone designated by the Depart-
ment of Housing and Urban Develop-
ment, or Enterprise Community des-
ignated by the Department of Agri-
culture; or

(IV) public safety agencies.

(12) Project obligation.—The term
“project obligation” means any note, bond, deben-
ture, or other debt obligation issued by an obligor in
connection with the financing of a project, other
than a Federal credit instrument.

(13) Public authority.—The term “public
authority” means a Federal, State, county, town, or
township, Indian Tribe, municipal or other local gov-
ernment or instrumentality with authority to fi-
nance, build, operate, or maintain infrastructure for
the provision of broadband service.

(14) RATING AGENCY.—The term “rating agen-
cy” means a credit rating agency registered with the
Securities and Exchange Commission as a nationally
recognized statistical rating organization (as defined
in section 3(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of
1934 (15 U.S.C. 78c(a))).

(15) SECURED LOAN.—The term “secured
loan” means a direct loan or other debt obligation
issued by an obligor and funded by the Assistant
Secretary in connection with the financing of a
project under section 3203.

(16) SMALL PROJECT.—The term “small
project” means a project having eligible project costs
that are reasonably anticipated not to equal or ex-
ceed $20,000,000.

(17) SUBSIDY AMOUNT.—The term “subsidy
amount” means the amount of budget authority suf-
ficient to cover the estimated long-term cost to the
Federal Government of a Federal credit instru-
ment—

(A) calculated on a net present value basis;

and
(B) excluding administrative costs and any incidental effects on governmental receipts or outlays in accordance with the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (2 U.S.C. 661 et seq.).

(18) **SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION.**—The term “substantial completion” means, with respect to a project receiving credit assistance under the BIFIA program—

(A) the commencement of the provision of broadband service using the infrastructure being financed; or

(B) a comparable event, as determined by the Assistant Secretary and specified in the credit agreement.

**SEC. 3202. DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND PROJECT SELECTION.**

(a) **ELIGIBILITY.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—A project shall be eligible to receive credit assistance under the BIFIA program if—

(A) the entity proposing to carry out the project submits a letter of interest prior to submission of a formal application for the project; and
(B) the project meets the criteria described in this subsection.

(2) CREDITWORTHINESS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), to be eligible for assistance under the BIFIA program, a project shall satisfy applicable creditworthiness standards, which, at a minimum, shall include—

(i) adequate coverage requirements to ensure repayment;

(ii) an investment-grade rating from at least 2 rating agencies on debt senior to the Federal credit instrument; and

(iii) a rating from at least 2 rating agencies on the Federal credit instrument.

(B) SMALL PROJECTS.—In order for a small project to be eligible for assistance under the BIFIA program, such project shall satisfy alternative creditworthiness standards that shall be established by the Assistant Secretary under section 3205 for purposes of this paragraph.

(3) APPLICATION.—A State, local government, agency or instrumentality of a State or local government, public authority, public-private partnership, or any other legal entity undertaking the project and
authorized by the Assistant Secretary shall submit a project application that is acceptable to the Assistant Secretary.

(4) **Eligible project cost parameters for infrastructure projects.**—Eligible project costs shall be reasonably anticipated to equal or exceed $2,000,000 in the case of a project or program of projects—

(A) in which the applicant is a local government, instrumentality of local government, or public authority (other than a public authority that is a Federal or State government or instrumentality);

(B) located on a facility owned by a local government; or

(C) for which the Assistant Secretary determines that a local government is substantially involved in the development of the project.

(5) **Dedicated revenue sources.**—The applicable Federal credit instrument shall be repayable, in whole or in part, from—

(A) amounts charged to—

(i) subscribers of broadband service for such service; or
(ii) subscribers of any related service provided over the same infrastructure for such related service;
(B) user fees;
(C) payments owing to the obligor under a public-private partnership; or
(D) other dedicated revenue sources that also secure or fund the project obligations.

(6) Applications Where Obligor Will Be Identified Later.—A State, local government, agency or instrumentality of a State or local government, or public authority may submit to the Assistant Secretary an application under paragraph (3), under which a private party to a public-private partnership will be—
(A) the obligor; and
(B) identified later through completion of a procurement and selection of the private party.

(7) Beneficial Effects.—The Assistant Secretary shall determine that financial assistance for the project under the BIFIA program will—
(A) foster, if appropriate, partnerships that attract public and private investment for the project;
(B) enable the project to proceed at an earlier date than the project would otherwise be able to proceed or reduce the lifecycle costs (including debt service costs) of the project; and

(C) reduce the contribution of Federal grant assistance for the project.

(8) PROJECT READINESS.—To be eligible for assistance under the BIFIA program, the applicant shall demonstrate a reasonable expectation that the contracting process for the construction and deployment of infrastructure for the provision of broadband service through the project can commence by no later than 90 days after the date on which a Federal credit instrument is obligated for the project under the BIFIA program.

(9) PUBLIC SPONSORSHIP OF PRIVATE ENTITIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—If an eligible project is carried out by an entity that is not a State or local government or an agency or instrumentality of a State or local government or a Tribal Government or consortium of Tribal Governments, the project shall be publicly sponsored.

(B) PUBLIC SPONSORSHIP.—For purposes of this subtitle, a project shall be considered to
be publicly sponsored if the obligor can demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Assistant Secretary, that the project applicant has consulted with the State, local, or Tribal Government in the area in which the project is located, or that is otherwise affected by the project, and that such Government supports the proposal.

(b) **Selection Among Eligible Projects.**

(1) **Establishment of Application Process.**—The Assistant Secretary shall establish a rolling application process under which projects that are eligible to receive credit assistance under subsection (a) shall receive credit assistance on terms acceptable to the Assistant Secretary, if adequate funds are available to cover the subsidy costs associated with the Federal credit instrument.

(2) **Preliminary Rating Opinion Letter.**—The Assistant Secretary shall require each project applicant to provide—

(A) a preliminary rating opinion letter from at least 1 rating agency—

(i) indicating that the senior obligations of the project, which may be the Federal credit instrument, have the potential to achieve an investment-grade rating; and
(ii) including a preliminary rating opinion on the Federal credit instrument; or

(B) in the case of a small project, alternative documentation that the Assistant Secretary shall require in the standards established under section 3205 for purposes of this paragraph.

(3) TECHNOLOGY NEUTRALITY REQUIRED.—In selecting projects to receive credit assistance under the BIFIA program, the Assistant Secretary may not favor a project using any particular technology.

(4) PREFERENCE FOR OPEN-ACCESS NETWORKS.—In selecting projects to receive credit assistance under the BIFIA program, the Assistant Secretary shall give preference to projects providing for the deployment of open-access broadband service networks.

(c) FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The following provisions of law shall apply to funds made available under the BIFIA program and projects assisted with those funds:

(A) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.).
(B) The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

(C) 54 U.S.C. 300101 et seq. (commonly referred to as the “National Historic Preservation Act”).

(D) The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 4601 et seq.).

(2) NEPA.—No funding shall be obligated for a project that has not received an environmental categorical exclusion, a finding of no significant impact, or a record of decision under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

(3) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.—For purposes of title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.), any project that receives credit assistance under the BIFIA program shall be considered a program or activity within the meaning of section 606 of such title (42 U.S.C. 2000d–4a).

(4) Contracting Requirements.—All laborers and mechanics employed by contractors or subcontractors in the performance of construction, alteration, or repair work carried out, in whole or in part, with assistance made available through a Fed-
eral credit instrument shall be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on projects of a similar character in the locality as determined by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code. With respect to the labor standards in this paragraph, the Secretary of Labor shall have the authority and functions set forth in Reorganization Plan Numbered 14 of 1950 (64 Stat. 1267; 5 U.S.C. App.) and section 3145 of title 40, United States Code.

(5) NEUTRALITY REQUIREMENT.—An employer receiving assistance made available through a Federal credit instrument under this subtitle shall remain neutral with respect to the exercise of employees and labor organizations of the right to organize and bargain under the National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C. 151 et seq.).

(6) REFERRAL OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF APPLICABLE FEDERAL LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAWS.—The Assistant Secretary shall refer any alleged violation of an applicable labor and employment law to the appropriate Federal agency for investigation and enforcement, and any alleged violation of paragraph (4) or (5) to the National Labor
Relations Board for investigation and enforcement, utilizing all appropriate remedies up to and including debarment from the BIFIA program.

(d) Application Processing Procedures.—

(1) Notice of Complete Application.—Not later than 30 days after the date of receipt of an application under this section, the Assistant Secretary shall provide to the applicant a written notice to inform the applicant whether—

(A) the application is complete; or

(B) additional information or materials are needed to complete the application.

(2) Approval or Denial of Application.—Not later than 60 days after the date of issuance of the written notice under paragraph (1), the Assistant Secretary shall provide to the applicant a written notice informing the applicant whether the Assistant Secretary has approved or disapproved the application.

(3) Approval Before NEPA Review.—Subject to subsection (c)(2), an application for a project may be approved before the project receives an environmental categorical exclusion, a finding of no significant impact, or a record of decision under the Na-
tional Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

(c) DEVELOPMENT PHASE ACTIVITIES.—Any credit instrument secured under the BIFIA program may be used to finance up to 100 percent of the cost of development phase activities as described in section 3201(3)(A).

SEC. 3203. SECURED LOANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) AGREEMENTS.—Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the Assistant Secretary may enter into agreements with one or more obligors to make secured loans, the proceeds of which shall be used—

(A) to finance eligible project costs of any project selected under section 3202;

(B) to refinance interim construction financing of eligible project costs of any project selected under section 3202; or

(C) to refinance long-term project obligations or Federal credit instruments, if the refinancing provides additional funding capacity for the completion, enhancement, or expansion of any project that—

(i) is selected under section 3202; or

(ii) otherwise meets the requirements of section 3202.
(2) LIMITATION ON REFINANCING OF INTERIM
CONSTRUCTION FINANCING.—A loan under para-
graph (1) shall not refinance interim construction fi-
nancing under paragraph (1)(B)—

(A) if the maturity of such interim con-
struction financing is later than 1 year after
the substantial completion of the project; and

(B) later than 1 year after the date of sub-
stantial completion of the project.

(3) RISK ASSESSMENT.—Before entering into
an agreement under this subsection, the Assistant
Secretary, in consultation with the Director of the
Office of Management and Budget, shall determine
an appropriate capital reserve subsidy amount for
each secured loan, taking into account each rating
letter provided by a rating agency under section
3202(b)(2)(A)(ii) or, in the case of a small project,
the alternative documentation provided under section
3202(b)(2)(B).

(b) TERMS AND LIMITATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A secured loan under this
section with respect to a project shall be on such
terms and conditions and contain such covenants,
representations, warranties, and requirements (in-
cluding requirements for audits) as the Assistant Secretary determines to be appropriate.

(2) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—The amount of a secured loan under this section shall not exceed the lesser of 49 percent of the reasonably anticipated eligible project costs or, if the secured loan is not for a small project and does not receive an investment-grade rating, the amount of the senior project obligations.

(3) PAYMENT.—A secured loan under this section—

(A) shall—

(i) be payable, in whole or in part, from—

(I) amounts charged to—

(aa) subscribers of broadband service for such service; or

(bb) subscribers of any related service provided over the same infrastructure for such related service;

(II) user fees;
(III) payments owing to the obligor under a public-private partnership; or

(IV) other dedicated revenue sources that also secure the senior project obligations; and

(ii) include a coverage requirement or similar security feature supporting the project obligations; and

(B) may have a lien on revenues described in subparagraph (A), subject to any lien securing project obligations.

(4) **INTEREST RATE.**—The interest rate on a secured loan under this section shall be not less than the yield on United States Treasury securities of a similar maturity to the maturity of the secured loan on the date of execution of the loan agreement.

(5) **MATURITY DATE.**—The final maturity date of the secured loan shall be the lesser of—

(A) 35 years after the date of substantial completion of the project; and

(B) if the useful life of the infrastructure for the provision of broadband service being financed is of a lesser period, the useful life of the infrastructure.
(6) NONSUBORDINATION.—

   (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the secured loan shall not be subordinated to the claims of any holder of project obligations in the event of bankruptcy, insolvency, or liquidation of the obligor.

   (B) PREEXISTING INDENTURE.—

      (i) IN GENERAL.—The Assistant Secretary shall waive the requirement under subparagraph (A) for a public agency borrower that is financing ongoing capital programs and has outstanding senior bonds under a preexisting indenture, if—

          (I) the secured loan—

              (aa) is rated in the A category or higher; or

              (bb) in the case of a small project, meets an alternative standard that the Assistant Secretary shall establish under section 3205 for purposes of this subclause;

          (II) the secured loan is secured and payable from pledged revenues not affected by project performance,
such as a tax-backed revenue pledge
or a system-backed pledge of project
revenues; and

(III) the BIFIA program share
of eligible project costs is 33 percent
or less.

(ii) LIMITATION.—If the Assistant
Secretary waives the nonsubordination re-
quirement under this subparagraph—

(I) the maximum credit subsidy
to be paid by the Federal Government
shall be not more than 10 percent of
the principal amount of the secured
loan; and

(II) the obligor shall be respon-
sible for paying the remainder of the
subsidy cost, if any.

(7) FEES.—The Assistant Secretary may estab-
lish fees at a level sufficient to cover all or a portion
of the costs to the Federal Government of making
a secured loan under this section.

(8) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The proceeds of a
secured loan under the BIFIA program, if the loan
is repayable from non-Federal funds—
(A) may be used for any non-Federal share of project costs required under this subtitle; and

(B) shall not count toward the total Federal assistance provided for a project for purposes of paragraph (9).

(9) MAXIMUM FEDERAL INVOLVEMENT.—The total Federal assistance provided for a project receiving a loan under the BIFIA program shall not exceed 80 percent of the total project cost.

(c) REPAYMENT.—

(1) SCHEDULE.—The Assistant Secretary shall establish a repayment schedule for each secured loan under this section based on—

(A) the projected cash flow from project revenues and other repayment sources; and

(B) the useful life of the infrastructure for the provision of broadband service being financed.

(2) COMMENCEMENT.—Scheduled loan repayments of principal or interest on a secured loan under this section shall commence not later than 5 years after the date of substantial completion of the project.

(3) DEFERRED PAYMENTS.—
(A) IN GENERAL.—If, at any time after the date of substantial completion of the project, the project is unable to generate sufficient revenues to pay the scheduled loan repayments of principal and interest on the secured loan, the Assistant Secretary may, subject to subparagraph (C), allow the obligor to add unpaid principal and interest to the outstanding balance of the secured loan.

(B) INTEREST.—Any payment deferred under subparagraph (A) shall—

(i) continue to accrue interest in accordance with subsection (b)(4) until fully repaid; and

(ii) be scheduled to be amortized over the remaining term of the loan.

(C) CRITERIA.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Any payment deferral under subparagraph (A) shall be contingent on the project meeting criteria established by the Assistant Secretary.

(ii) REPAYMENT STANDARDS.—The criteria established pursuant to clause (i) shall include standards for reasonable assurance of repayment.
(4) Prepayment.—

(A) Use of excess revenues.—Any excess revenues that remain after satisfying scheduled debt service requirements on the project obligations and secured loan and all deposit requirements under the terms of any trust agreement, bond resolution, or similar agreement securing project obligations may be applied annually to prepay the secured loan without penalty.

(B) Use of proceeds of refinancing.—The secured loan may be prepaid at any time without penalty from the proceeds of refinancing from non-Federal funding sources.

(d) Sale of Secured Loans.—

(1) In general.—Subject to paragraph (2), as soon as practicable after substantial completion of a project and after notifying the obligor, the Assistant Secretary may sell to another entity or reoffer into the capital markets a secured loan for the project if the Assistant Secretary determines that the sale or reoffering can be made on favorable terms.

(2) Consent of obligor.—In making a sale or reoffering under paragraph (1), the Assistant Secretary may not change the original terms and
conditions of the secured loan without the written
consent of the obligor.

(c) LOAN GUARANTEES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Assistant Secretary
may provide a loan guarantee to a lender in lieu of
making a secured loan under this section if the As-
sistant Secretary determines that the budgetary cost
of the loan guarantee is substantially the same as
that of a secured loan.

(2) TERMS.—The terms of a loan guarantee
under paragraph (1) shall be consistent with the
terms required under this section for a secured loan,
except that the rate on the guaranteed loan and any
prepayment features shall be negotiated between the
obligor and the lender, with the consent of the As-
sistant Secretary.

(f) STREAMLINED APPLICATION PROCESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Assistant Secretary
shall develop one or more expedited application proc-
esses, available at the request of entities seeking se-
cured loans under the BIFIA program, that use a
set or sets of conventional terms established pursuant
to this section.

(2) TERMS.—In establishing the streamlined
application process required by this subsection, the
Assistant Secretary may allow for an expedited application period and include terms such as those that require—

(A) that the project be a small project;

(B) the secured loan to be secured and payable from pledged revenues not affected by project performance, such as a tax-backed revenue pledge, tax increment financing, or a system-backed pledge of project revenues; and

(C) repayment of the loan to commence not later than 5 years after disbursement.

SEC. 3204. LINES OF CREDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) AGREEMENTS.—Subject to paragraphs (2) through (4), the Assistant Secretary may enter into agreements to make available to one or more obligors lines of credit in the form of direct loans to be made by the Assistant Secretary at future dates on the occurrence of certain events for any project selected under section 3202.

(2) USE OF PROCEEDS.—The proceeds of a line of credit made available under this section shall be available to pay debt service on project obligations issued to finance eligible project costs, extraordinary repair and replacement costs, operation and mainte-
(3) Risk Assessment.—

(A) In General.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), before entering into an agreement under this subsection, the Assistant Secretary, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and each rating agency providing a preliminary rating opinion letter under section 3202(b)(2)(A), shall determine an appropriate capital reserve subsidy amount for each line of credit, taking into account the rating opinion letter.

(B) Small Projects.—Before entering into an agreement under this subsection to make available a line of credit for a small project, the Assistant Secretary, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall determine an appropriate capital reserve subsidy amount for each such line of credit, taking into account the alternative documentation provided under section 3202(b)(2)(B) instead of preliminary rating opinion letters provided under section 3202(b)(2)(A).
(4) Investment-grade rating requirement.—The funding of a line of credit under this section shall be contingent on—

(A) the senior obligations of the project receiving an investment-grade rating from 2 rating agencies; or

(B) in the case of a small project, the project meeting an alternative standard that the Assistant Secretary shall establish under section 3205 for purposes of this paragraph.

(b) Terms and Limitations.—

(1) In general.—A line of credit under this section with respect to a project shall be on such terms and conditions and contain such covenants, representations, warranties, and requirements (including requirements for audits) as the Assistant Secretary determines to be appropriate.

(2) Maximum amounts.—The total amount of a line of credit under this section shall not exceed 33 percent of the reasonably anticipated eligible project costs.

(3) Draws.—Any draw on a line of credit under this section shall—

(A) represent a direct loan; and
(B) be made only if net revenues from the project (including capitalized interest, but not including reasonably required financing reserves) are insufficient to pay the costs specified in subsection (a)(2).

(4) INTEREST RATE.—The interest rate on a direct loan resulting from a draw on the line of credit shall be not less than the yield on 30-year United States Treasury securities, as of the date of execution of the line of credit agreement.

(5) SECURITY.—A line of credit issued under this section—

(A) shall—

(i) be payable, in whole or in part, from—

(I) amounts charged to—

(aa) subscribers of broadband service for such service; or

(bb) subscribers of any related service provided over the same infrastructure for such related service;

(II) user fees;
(III) payments owing to the obligor under a public-private partnership; or

(IV) other dedicated revenue sources that also secure the senior project obligations; and

(ii) include a coverage requirement or similar security feature supporting the project obligations; and

(B) may have a lien on revenues described in subparagraph (A), subject to any lien securing project obligations.

(6) Period of Availability.—The full amount of a line of credit under this section, to the extent not drawn upon, shall be available during the 10-year period beginning on the date of substantial completion of the project.

(7) Rights of Third-Party Creditors.—

(A) Against Federal Government.—A third-party creditor of the obligor shall not have any right against the Federal Government with respect to any draw on a line of credit under this section.

(B) Assignment.—An obligor may assign a line of credit under this section to—
(i) one or more lenders; or

(ii) a trustee on the behalf of such a lender.

(8) NONSUBORDINATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), a direct loan under this section shall not be subordinated to the claims of any holder of project obligations in the event of bankruptcy, insolvency, or liquidation of the obligor.

(B) PRE-EXISTING INDENTURE.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The Assistant Secretary shall waive the requirement of subparagraph (A) for a public agency borrower that is financing ongoing capital programs and has outstanding senior bonds under a preexisting indenture, if—

(I) the line of credit—

(aa) is rated in the A category or higher; or

(bb) in the case of a small project, meets an alternative standard that the Assistant Secretary shall establish under sec-
tion 3205 for purposes of this subclause;

(II) the BIFIA program loan resulting from a draw on the line of credit is payable from pledged revenues not affected by project performance, such as a tax-backed revenue pledge or a system-backed pledge of project revenues; and

(III) the BIFIA program share of eligible project costs is 33 percent or less.

(ii) LIMITATION.—If the Assistant Secretary waives the nonsubordination requirement under this subparagraph—

(I) the maximum credit subsidy to be paid by the Federal Government shall be not more than 10 percent of the principal amount of the secured loan; and

(II) the obligor shall be responsible for paying the remainder of the subsidy cost.

(9) FEES.—The Assistant Secretary may establish fees at a level sufficient to cover all or a portion
of the costs to the Federal Government of providing
a line of credit under this section.

(10) Relationship to other credit instruments.—A project that receives a line of credit
under this section also shall not receive a secured
loan or loan guarantee under section 3203 in an
amount that, combined with the amount of the line
of credit, exceeds 49 percent of eligible project costs.

(e) Repayment.—

(1) Terms and conditions.—The Assistant
Secretary shall establish repayment terms and condi-
tions for each direct loan under this section based
on—

(A) the projected cash flow from project
revenues and other repayment sources; and

(B) the useful life of the infrastructure for
the provision of broadband service being fi-
nanced.

(2) Timing.—All repayments of principal or in-
terest on a direct loan under this section shall be
scheduled—

(A) to commence not later than 5 years
after the end of the period of availability speci-
fied in subsection (b)(6); and
(B) to conclude, with full repayment of principal and interest, by the date that is 25 years after the end of the period of availability specified in subsection (b)(6).

SEC. 3205. ALTERNATIVE PRUDENTIAL LENDING STANDARDS FOR SMALL PROJECTS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant Secretary shall establish alternative, streamlined prudential lending standards for small projects receiving credit assistance under the BIFIA program to ensure that such projects pose no additional risk to the Federal Government, as compared with projects that are not small projects.

SEC. 3206. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION.

(a) REQUIREMENT.—The Assistant Secretary shall establish a uniform system to service the Federal credit instruments made available under the BIFIA program.

(b) FEES.—The Assistant Secretary may collect and spend fees, contingent on authority being provided in appropriations Acts, at a level that is sufficient to cover—

(1) the costs of services of expert firms retained pursuant to subsection (d); and

(2) all or a portion of the costs to the Federal Government of servicing the Federal credit instruments.
(c) Servicer.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Assistant Secretary may appoint a financial entity to assist the Assistant Secretary in servicing the Federal credit instruments.

(2) DUTIES.—A servicer appointed under paragraph (1) shall act as the agent for the Assistant Secretary.

(3) FEE.—A servicer appointed under paragraph (1) shall receive a servicing fee, subject to approval by the Assistant Secretary.

(d) Assistance From Expert Firms.—The Assistant Secretary may retain the services of expert firms, including counsel, in the field of municipal and project finance to assist in the underwriting and servicing of Federal credit instruments.

(e) Expedited Processing.—The Assistant Secretary shall implement procedures and measures to economize the time and cost involved in obtaining approval and the issuance of credit assistance under the BIFIA program.

(f) Assistance to Small Projects.—Of the amount appropriated under section 3209(a), and after the set-aside for administrative expenses under section 3209(b), not less than 20 percent shall be made available
for the Assistant Secretary to use in lieu of fees collected under subsection (b) for small projects.

SEC. 3207. STATE AND LOCAL PERMITS.

The provision of credit assistance under the BIFIA program with respect to a project shall not—

(1) relieve any recipient of the assistance of any obligation to obtain any required State or local permit or approval with respect to the project;

(2) limit the right of any unit of State or local government to approve or regulate any rate of return on private equity invested in the project; or

(3) otherwise supersede any State or local law (including any regulation) applicable to the construction or operation of the project.

SEC. 3208. REGULATIONS.

The Assistant Secretary may promulgate such regulations as the Assistant Secretary determines to be appropriate to carry out the BIFIA program.

SEC. 3209. FUNDING.

(a) APPROPRIATION.—There are appropriated to the Assistant Secretary, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, $5,000,000,000 to carry out this subtitle for fiscal year 2021, to remain available until expended.
(b) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Of the amount appropriated under subsection (a), the Assistant Secretary may use not more than 5 percent for the administration of the BIFIA program.

SEC. 3210. REPORTS TO CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 2 years thereafter, the Assistant Secretary shall submit to Congress a report summarizing the financial performance of the projects that are receiving, or have received, assistance under the BIFIA program, including a recommendation as to whether the objectives of the BIFIA program are best served by—

(1) continuing the program under the authority of the Assistant Secretary; or

(2) establishing a Federal corporation or federally sponsored enterprise to administer the program.

(b) APPLICATION PROCESS REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Assistant Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report that includes a list of all of the letters...
of interest and applications received for assistance
under the BIFIA program during the preceding fis-
cal year.

(2) Inclusions.—

(A) In general.—Each report under
paragraph (1) shall include, at a minimum, a
description of, with respect to each letter of in-
terest and application included in the report—

(i) the date on which the letter of in-
terest or application was received;

(ii) the date on which a notification
was provided to the applicant regarding
whether the application was complete or
incomplete;

(iii) the date on which a revised and
completed application was submitted (if
applicable);

(iv) the date on which a notification
was provided to the applicant regarding
whether the project was approved or dis-
approved; and

(v) if the project was not approved,
the reason for the disapproval.

(B) Correspondence.—Each report
under paragraph (1) shall include copies of any
correspondence provided to the applicant in accordance with section 3202(d).

Subtitle C—Wi-Fi on School Buses

SEC. 3301. E-RATE SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL BUS WI-FI.

(a) Rulemaking.—

(1) In general.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall commence a rulemaking to make the provision of Wi-Fi access on school buses eligible for support under the E-rate program of the Commission set forth under subpart F of part 54 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations.

(2) Eligible recipients.—Notwithstanding section 254(h)(1)(B) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 254(h)(1)(B)), the Commission shall provide in the rulemaking under paragraph (1) for State educational agencies, educational service agencies, and local educational agencies to be eligible to receive the support described in such paragraph.

(b) Definitions.—In this section:

(1) School bus.—The term “school bus” means a passenger motor vehicle that is—

(A) designed to carry a driver and not less than 5 passengers; and

(B) used significantly to transport—
(i) children enrolled in an early childhood education program to or from such program or an event related to such program; or

(ii) students enrolled in an elementary school or secondary school to or from such school or an event related to such school.

(2) TERMS DEFINED IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT OF 1965.—The terms “early childhood education program”, “educational service agency”, “elementary school”, “local educational agency”, “secondary school”, and “State educational agency” have the meanings given such terms in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

TITLE IV—COMMUNITY BROADBAND

SEC. 4001. STATE, LOCAL, PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP, AND CO-OP BROADBAND SERVICES.

Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (47 U.S.C. 1302) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (e) and inserting after subsection (e) the following:
“(d) State, Local, Public-Private Partnership, and Co-Op Advanced Telecommunications Capability and Services.—

“(1) In general.—No State statute, regulation, or other State legal requirement may prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting any public provider, public-private partnership provider, or cooperatively organized provider from providing, to any person or any public or private entity, advanced telecommunications capability or any service that utilizes the advanced telecommunications capability provided by such provider.

“(2) Antidiscrimination safeguards.—

“(A) Public providers.—To the extent any public provider regulates competing private providers of advanced telecommunications capability or services that utilize advanced telecommunications capability, such public provider shall apply its ordinances and rules without discrimination in favor of itself or any provider that it owns of services that utilize advanced telecommunications capability.

“(B) Public-private partnership providers.—To the extent any State or local entity that is part of a public-private partnership
provider regulates competing private providers
of advanced telecommunications capability or
services that utilize advanced telecommunications capability, such State or local entity
shall apply its ordinances and rules without dis-
crimination in favor of such public-private part-
nership provider or any provider that such
State or local entity or public-private partner-
ship provider owns of services that utilize ad-
vanced telecommunications capability.

“(3) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this sub-
section shall exempt a public provider, public-private
partnership provider, or cooperatively organized pro-
vider from any Federal or State telecommunications
law or regulation that applies to all providers of ad-
vanced telecommunications capability or services
that utilize such advanced telecommunications capa-
bility.”; and

(2) in subsection (e), as redesignated—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1),
by striking “this subsection” and inserting
“this section”;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (2) as
paragraph (3);
(C) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) COOPERATIVELY ORGANIZED PROVIDER.—The term ‘cooperatively organized provider’ means an entity that is treated as a cooperative under Federal tax law and that provides advanced telecommunications capability, or any service that utilizes such advanced telecommunications capability, to any person or public or private entity.”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) PUBLIC PROVIDER.—The term ‘public provider’ means a State or local entity that provides advanced telecommunications capability, or any service that utilizes such advanced telecommunications capability, to any person or public or private entity.

“(5) PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP PROVIDER.—The term ‘public-private partnership provider’ means a public-private partnership, between a State or local entity and a private entity, that provides advanced telecommunications capability, or any service that utilizes such advanced telecommunications capability, to any person or public or private entity.

“(6) STATE OR LOCAL ENTITY.—The term ‘State or local entity’ means a State or political sub-
division thereof, any agency, authority, or instrumentality of a State or political subdivision thereof, or an Indian tribe (as defined in section 4(e) of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304(e))).”.

**TITLE V—BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE DEPLOYMENT**

**SEC. 5001. BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE DEPLOYMENT.**

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

1. **APPROPRIATE STATE AGENCY.**—The term “appropriate State agency” means a State governmental agency that is recognized by the executive branch of the State as having the experience necessary to evaluate and facilitate the installation and operation of broadband infrastructure within the State.

2. **BROADBAND.**—The term “broadband” has the meaning given the term “advanced telecommunications capability” in section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (47 U.S.C. 1302).

3. **BROADBAND CONDUIT.**—The term “broadband conduit” means a conduit or innerduct for fiber optic cables (or successor technology of greater quality and speed) that supports the provision of broadband.
(4) Broadband Infrastructure.—The term “broadband infrastructure” means any buried or underground facility and any wireless or wireline connection that enables the provision of broadband.

(5) Broadband Provider.—The term “broadband provider” means an entity that provides broadband to any person or facilitates provision of broadband to any person, including, with respect to such entity—

(A) a corporation, company, association, firm, partnership, nonprofit organization, or any other private entity;

(B) a State or local broadband provider;

(C) an Indian Tribe; and

(D) a partnership between any of the entities described in subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C).

(6) Covered Highway Construction Project.—

(A) In General.—The term “covered highway construction project” means, without regard to ownership of a highway, a project to construct a new highway or an additional lane for an existing highway, to reconstruct an exist-
ing highway, or new construction, including for a paved shoulder.

(B) Exclusions.—The term “covered highway construction project” excludes any project—

(i) awarded before the date on which regulations required under subsection (b) take effect;

(ii) that does not include work beyond the edge of pavement or current paved shoulder; or

(iii) that does not require excavation.

(7) Dig Once Requirement.—The term “dig once requirement” means a requirement designed to reduce the cost and accelerate the deployment of broadband by minimizing the number and scale of repeated excavations for the installation and maintenance of broadband conduit or broadband infrastructure in rights-of-way.

(8) Project.—The term “project” has the meaning given such term in section 101 of title 23, United States Code.

(9) Secretary.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Transportation.
(10) STATE.—Notwithstanding section 2(14), the term “State” has the meaning given such term in section 401 of title 23, United States Code.

(11) STATE OR LOCAL BROADBAND PROVIDER.—The term “State or local broadband provider” means a State or political subdivision thereof, or any agency, authority, or instrumentality of a State or political subdivision thereof, that provides broadband to any person or facilitates the provision of broadband to any person in that State.

(12) TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term “Tribal government” means the recognized governing body of an Indian Tribe or any agency, authority, or instrumentality of such governing body or such Indian Tribe.

(b) DIG ONCE REQUIREMENT.—To facilitate the installation of broadband infrastructure, the Secretary shall, not later than 9 months after the date of enactment of this Act, promulgate regulations to ensure that each State that receives funds under chapter 1 of title 23, United States Code, meets the following requirements:

(1) BROADBAND PLANNING.—The State department of transportation, in consultation with appropriate State agencies, shall—
(A) identify a broadband coordinator, who may have additional responsibilities in the State department of transportation or in another State agency, that is responsible for facilitating the broadband infrastructure right-of-way efforts within the State; and

(B) review existing State broadband plans, including existing dig once requirements of the State, municipal governments incorporated under State law, and Tribal governments within the State, to determine opportunities to coordinate projects occurring within or across highway rights-of-way with planned broadband infrastructure projects.

(2) NOTICE OF PLANNED CONSTRUCTION FOR BROADBAND PROVIDERS.—

(A) NOTICE.—The State department of transportation, in consultation with appropriate State agencies, shall establish a process—

(i) for the registration of broadband providers that seek to be included in the advance notification of, and opportunity to participate in, broadband infrastructure right-of-way facilitation efforts within the State; and
(ii) to electronically notify all broadband providers registered under clause (i)—

(I) of the State transportation improvement program on at least an annual basis; and

(II) of projects within the highway right-of-way for which Federal funding is expected to be obligated in the subsequent fiscal year.

(B) WEBSITE.—A State department of transportation shall be considered to meet the requirements of subparagraph (A) if such State department of transportation publishes on a public website—

(i) the State transportation improvement program on at least an annual basis; and

(ii) projects within the highway right-of-way for which Federal funding is expected to be obligated in the subsequent fiscal year.

(C) COORDINATION.—The State department of transportation, in consultation with appropriate State agencies, shall establish a proc-
ess for a broadband provider to commit to in-
stalling broadband conduit or broadband infra-
structure as part of any project.

(3) REQUIRED INSTALLATION OF CONDUIT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The State department
of transportation shall install broadband con-
duit, in accordance with this paragraph, except
as described in subparagraph (F), as part of
any covered highway construction project, un-
less a broadband provider has committed to in-
stall broadband conduit or broadband infra-
structure as part of such project in a process
described under paragraph (2)(C).

(B) INSTALLATION REQUIREMENTS.—The
State department of transportation shall ensure
that—

(i) an appropriate number of
broadband conduits, as determined in con-
sultation with the appropriate State agen-
cies, are installed along the highway of a
covered highway construction project to ac-
commodate multiple broadband providers,
with consideration given to the availability
of existing conduits;
(ii) the size of each such conduit is consistent with industry best practices and is sufficient to accommodate potential demand, as determined in consultation with the appropriate State agencies;

(iii) hand holes and manholes necessary for fiber access and pulling with respect to such conduit are placed at intervals consistent with standards determined in consultation with the appropriate State agencies (which may differ by type of road, topologies, and rurality) and consistent with safety requirements;

(iv) each broadband conduit installed pursuant to this paragraph includes a pull tape and is capable of supporting fiber optic cable placement techniques consistent with best practices; and

(v) is placed at a depth consistent with requirements of the covered highway construction project and best practices and that, in determining the depth of placement, consideration is given to the location of existing utilities and cable separation re-
quirements of State and local electrical
codes.

(C) GUIDANCE FOR THE INSTALLATION OF
broadband conduit.—The Secretary, in con-
sultation with the Assistant Secretary, shall
issue guidance for best practices related to the
installation of broadband conduit as described
in this paragraph and of conduit and similar in-
frastucture for intelligent transportation sys-
tems (as such term is defined in section 501 of
title 23, United States Code) that may utilize
broadband conduit installed pursuant to this
paragraph.

(D) ACCESS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The State depart-
ment of transportation shall ensure that
any requesting broadband provider has ac-
cess to each broadband conduit installed
pursuant to this paragraph, on a competi-
tively neutral and nondiscriminatory basis,
and in accordance with State permitting,
licensing, leasing, or other similar laws and
regulations.

(ii) FEE SCHEDULE.—The State de-
dpartment of transportation, in consultation
with appropriate State agencies, shall publish a fee schedule for a broadband provider to access conduit installed pursuant to this paragraph. Fees in such schedule—

(I) shall be consistent with the fees established pursuant to section 224 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 224);

(II) may vary by topography, location, type of road, rurality, and other factors in the determination of the State; and

(III) may be updated not more frequently than annually.

(iii) IN-KIND COMPENSATION.—The State department of transportation may negotiate in-kind compensation with any broadband provider requesting access to broadband conduit installed under the provisions of this paragraph as a replacement for part or all of, but not to exceed, the relevant fee in the fee schedule described in clause (ii).

(iv) SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS.—The State department of transportation shall
require of broadband providers a process
for safe access to the highway right-of-way
during installation and ongoing mainte-
nance of the broadband fiber optic cables
including a traffic control safety plan.

(v) COMMUNICATION.—A broadband
provider with access to the conduit in-
stalled pursuant to this subsection shall
notify and receive permission from the rel-
levant agencies of State responsible for the
installation of such broadband conduit
prior to accessing any highway or highway
right-of-way, in accordance with applicable
Federal requirements.

(E) TREATMENT OF PROJECTS.—Notwith-
standing any other provision of law, broadband
conduit and broadband infrastructure installa-
tion projects under this paragraph shall comply
with section 113(a) of title 23, United States
Code.

(F) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—A State department
of transportation may waive the required
installation of broadband conduit for part
or all of any covered highway construction
project under this paragraph if, in the determination of the State—

(I) broadband infrastructure, terrestrial broadband infrastructure, aerial broadband fiber cables, or broadband conduit is present near a majority of the length of the covered highway construction project;

(II) the installation of conduit increases overall costs of a covered highway construction project by 1.5 percent or greater;

(III) the installation of broadband conduit associated with covered highway construction project will not be utilized or connected to future broadband infrastructure in the next 20 years, in the determination of the State department of transportation, in consultation with appropriate State agencies and potentially affected local governments and Tribal governments;

(IV) the requirements of this paragraph would require installation
of conduit redundant with a dig once requirement of a local or Tribal government;

(V) there exists a circumstance involving force majeure; or

(VI) other relevant factors, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the Assistant Secretary through regulation, warrant a waiver.

(ii) CONTENTS OF WAIVER.—A waiver authorized under this subparagraph shall—

(I) identify the covered highway construction project; and

(II) include a brief description of the determination of the State for issuing such waiver.

(iii) AVAILABILITY OF WAIVER.—A waiver authorized under this subparagraph shall be included in the plans, specifications, and estimates for the associated project, as long as such information is publicly available.

(4) PRIORITY.—If a State provides for the installation of broadband infrastructure or broadband
conduit in the right-of-way of an applicable project
under this subsection, the State department of
transportation, along with appropriate State agen-
cies, shall carry out appropriate measures to ensure
that any existing broadband providers are afforded
equal opportunity access, as compared to other
broadband providers, with respect to the program
under this subsection.

(5) CONSULTATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In promulgating regu-
lations required by this subsection or to imple-
ment any part of this section, the Secretary
shall consult—

(i) the Assistant Secretary;

(ii) the Commission;

(iii) State departments of transpor-
tation;

(iv) appropriate State agencies;

(v) agencies of local governments re-
sponsible for transportation and rights-of-
way, utilities, and telecommunications and
broadband;

(vi) Tribal governments;

(vii) broadband providers; and
(viii) manufacturers of optical fiber, conduit, pull tape, and related items.

(B) BROADBAND USERS.—The Secretary shall ensure that the entities consulted under clauses (iii) through (vi) of subparagraph (A) include rural areas and populations with limited access to broadband infrastructure.

(C) BROADBAND PROVIDERS.—The Secretary shall ensure that the entities consulted under clause (vii) of subparagraph (A) include entities who provide broadband to rural areas and populations with limited access to broadband infrastructure.

(6) PROHIBITION ON UNFUNDED MANDATE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—This subsection shall apply only to projects for which Federal obligations or expenditures are initially approved on or after the date regulations required under this subsection take effect.

(B) NO MANDATE.—Absent an available and dedicated Federal source of funding—

(i) nothing in this subsection establishes a mandate or requirement that a State install broadband conduit in a highway right-of-way; and
(ii) nothing in paragraph (3) shall estab-

lish any requirement for a State.

(7) Rules of Construction.—

(A) State Law.—Nothing in this sub-
section shall be construed to require a State to
install or allow the installation of broadband
conduit or broadband infrastructure—

(i) that is otherwise inconsistent with
what is allowable under State law; or

(ii) where the State lacks the author-
ity or property easement necessary for
such installation.

(B) No Requirement for Installation
of Mobile Services Equipment.—Nothing in
this section shall be construed to require a
State, a municipal government incorporated
under State law, or an Indian Tribe to install
or allow for the installation of equipment essen-
tial for the provision of commercial mobile serv-
ices (as defined in section 332(d) of the Com-
munications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 332(d)))
or commercial mobile data service (as defined in
section 6001 of the Middle Class Tax Relief
and Job Creation Act of 2012 (47 U.S.C.
1401)), other than broadband conduit and asso-
associated equipment described in paragraph (3)(B).

(c) Relation to State Dig Once Requirements.—Nothing in subsection (b) or any regulations promulgated under subsection (b) shall be construed to alter or supersede any provision of a State law or regulation that provides for a dig once requirement that includes similar or more stringent requirements to the provisions of subsection (b) and any regulations promulgated under subsection (b).

(d) Dig Once Funding Task Force.—

(1) Establishment.—There is established an independent task force on funding the nationwide dig once requirement described in this section to be known as the “Dig Once Funding Task Force” (hereinafter referred to as the “Task Force”).

(2) Duties.—The duties of the Task Force shall be to—

(A) estimate the annual cost for implementing and administering a nationwide dig once requirement; and

(B) propose and evaluate options for funding a nationwide dig once requirement described in this section that includes—
(i) a discussion of the role and potential share of costs of—

(I) the Federal Government;

(II) State, local, and Tribal governments; and

(III) broadband providers; and

(ii) consideration of the role of existing dig once requirements of State, local, and Tribal governments and private broadband investment, with a goal to not discourage or disincentivize such dig once requirements or such investment.

(3) REPORTS.—

(A) INTERIM REPORT AND BRIEFING.—Not later than 9 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Task Force shall submit an interim report to Congress and provide briefings for Congress on the findings of the Task Force.

(B) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Task Force shall submit a final report to Congress on the findings of the Task Force.

(4) MEMBERS.—
(A) APPOINTMENTS.—The Task Force shall consist of 14 members, consisting of—

(i) the 2 co-chairs described in sub-
paragraph (B);

(ii) 6 members jointly appointed by
the Speaker and minority leader of the
House of Representatives, in consultation
with the respective Chairs and Ranking
Members of the—

(I) the Committee on Transpor-
tation and Infrastructure of the
House of Representatives;

(II) the Committee on Energy
and Commerce of the House of Rep-
resentatives; and

(III) the Committee on Approp-
riations of the House of Representa-
tives; and

(iii) 6 members jointly appointed by
the majority leader and minority leader of
the Senate, in consultation with the respec-
tive Chairs and Ranking Members of the—

(I) the Committee on Environ-
ment and Public Works of the Senate;
(II) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate; and

(III) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

(B) Co-Chairs.—The Task Force shall be co-chaired by the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary, or their designees.

(C) Composition.—The Task Force shall include at least—

(i) 1 representative from a State department of transportation;

(ii) 1 representative from a local government;

(iii) 1 representative from a Tribal government;

(iv) 1 representative from a broadband provider;

(v) 1 representative from a State or local broadband provider;

(vi) 1 representative from a labor union; and

(vii) 1 representative from a public interest organization.
(D) APPOINTMENT DEADLINE.—Members shall be appointed to the Task Force not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(E) EFFECT OF LACK OF APPOINTMENT BY APPOINTMENT DATE.—If 1 or more appointments required under subparagraph (A) is not made by the appointment date specified in subparagraph (D), the authority to make such appointment or appointments shall expire and the number of members of the Task Force shall be reduced by the number equal to the number of appointments so expired.

(F) TERMS.—Members shall be appointed for the life of the Task Force. A vacancy in the Task Force shall not affect its powers and shall be filled in the same manner as the initial appointment was made.

(5) CONSULTATIONS.—In carrying out the duties required under this subsection, the Task Force shall consult, at a minimum—

(A) the Commission;

(B) agencies of States including—

(i) State departments of transportation; and
(ii) appropriate State agencies;

(C) agencies of local governments responsible for transportation and rights of way, utilities, and telecommunications and broadband;

(D) Tribal governments;

(E) broadband providers and other telecommunications providers;

(F) labor unions; and

(G) State or local broadband providers and Tribal governments that act as broadband providers.

(6) ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

(A) EXPENSES FOR NON-FEDERAL MEMBERS.—Non-Federal members of the Task Force shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Task Force.

(B) STAFF.—Staff of the Task Force shall comprise detailees with relevant expertise from the Department of Transportation and the National Telecommunications and Information Ad-
ministration, or another Federal agency the co-
chairpersons consider appropriate, with the con-
sent of the head of the Federal agency, and
such detaillee shall retain the rights, status, and
privileges of his or her regular employment
without interruption.

(C) Administrative Assistance.—The
Secretary and Assistant Secretary shall provide
to the Task Force on a reimbursable basis ad-
ministrative support and other services for the
performance of the functions of the Task Force.

(7) Termination.—The Task Force shall ter-
minate not later than 90 days after issuance of the
final report required under paragraph (3)(B).

TITLE VI—REPEAL OF RULE AND
PROHIBITION ON USE OF NPRM

SEC. 6001. REPEAL OF RULE AND PROHIBITION ON USE OF
NPRM.

(a) Repeal of Rule.—The Fourth Report and
Order, Order on Reconsideration, Memorandum Opinion
and Order, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, and Notice
of Inquiry in the matter of bridging the digital divide for
low-income consumers, lifeline and link up reform and
modernization, telecommunications carriers eligible for
universal service support that was adopted by the Commis-
(b) Rulemaking in Reliance on Universal Service Contribution Methodology NPRM Prohibited.—Beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission may not rely on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the matter of universal service contribution methodology that was adopted by the Commission on May 15, 2019 (FCC 19–46), to satisfy the requirements of section 553 of title 5, United States Code, for adopting, amending, revoking, or otherwise modifying any rule (as defined in section 551 of such title) of the Commission.