

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3294

To direct the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to develop a plan for providing the staffing necessary to ensure timely review of communications use authorizations, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 15, 2023

Mr. ARMSTRONG (for himself and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, 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 direct the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to develop a plan for providing the staffing necessary to ensure timely review of communications use authorizations, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Enhancing Adminis-
5 trative Reviews for Broadband Deployment Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. ENSURING TIMELY REVIEW OF COMMUNICATIONS**

2 **USE AUTHORIZATIONS.**

3 (a) STUDY AND REPORT.—

4 (1) STUDY.—The Secretaries concerned shall
5 each conduct, with respect to the relevant covered
6 department, a study to determine—

7 (A) if there are programmatic or adminis-
8 trative barriers to the timely review of requests
9 for communications use authorizations;

10 (B) if there are revisions to rules or regu-
11 lations that could be implemented to improve
12 efficiency with respect to reviewing requests for
13 communications use authorizations; and

14 (C) if there are processes for prioritizing
15 the review of requests for communications use
16 authorizations.

17 (2) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the
18 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretaries
19 concerned shall jointly submit to the appropriate
20 congressional committees a report that—

21 (A) describes the results of the studies
22 conducted under paragraph (1), including any
23 barriers, revisions, or processes identified under
24 subparagraphs (A) through (C) of such para-
25 graph; and

1 (B) includes a plan for providing, with re-
2 spect to the organizational units of the relevant
3 covered departments, the staffing necessary to
4 ensure timely review of communications use au-
5 thorizations.

6 (b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

7 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
8 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
9 mittees” means—

10 (A) the Committee on Energy and Com-
11 merce of the House of Representatives;

12 (B) the Committee on Natural Resources
13 of the House of Representatives;

14 (C) the Committee on Commerce, Science,
15 and Transportation of the Senate; and

16 (D) the Committee on Environment and
17 Public Works of the Senate.

18 (2) COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY.—The term
19 “communications facility” has the meaning given the
20 term “communications facility installation” in sec-
21 tion 6409(d) of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job
22 Creation Act of 2012 (47 U.S.C. 1455(d)).

23 (3) COMMUNICATIONS USE.—The term “com-
24 munications use” means the placement and oper-
25 ation of a communications facility.

1 (4) COMMUNICATIONS USE AUTHORIZATION.—

2 The term “communications use authorization”
3 means an easement, right-of-way, lease, license, or
4 other authorization—

5 (A) provided by the Secretary of the Inte-
6 rior or the Secretary of Agriculture;

7 (B) to locate or modify a communications
8 facility on covered land; and

9 (C) for the primary purpose of authorizing
10 the occupancy and use of such covered land for
11 communications use.

12 (5) COVERED LAND.—The term “covered land”
13 means—

14 (A) public lands; and

15 (B) National Forest System land.

16 (6) NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—The term
17 “National Forest System” has the meaning given
18 that term in section 11(a) of the Forest and Range-
19 land Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16
20 U.S.C. 1609(a)).

21 (7) ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT.—The term “orga-
22 nizational unit” means—

23 (A) with respect to the Department of the
24 Interior—

1 (i) a State office of the Bureau of
2 Land Management;

3 (ii) a regional office of the Bureau of
4 Land Management;

5 (iii) a district office of the Bureau of
6 Land Management; or

7 (iv) a field office of the Bureau of
8 Land Management; and

9 (B) with respect to the Department of Ag-
10 riculture—

11 (i) a regional office of the Forest
12 Service;

13 (ii) a management unit of the Forest
14 Service; or

15 (iii) a ranger district office of the For-
16 est Service.

17 (8) PUBLIC LANDS.—The term “public lands”
18 has the meaning given that term in section 103 of
19 the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of
20 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702).

21 (9) RELEVANT COVERED DEPARTMENT.—The
22 term “relevant covered department” means—

23 (A) with respect to the Secretary of the In-
24 terior, the Department of the Interior; and

1 (B) with respect to the Secretary of Agri-
2 culture, the Department of Agriculture.

3 (10) SECRETARIES CONCERNED.—The term
4 “Secretaries concerned” means—

5 (A) the Secretary of the Interior; and

6 (B) the Secretary of Agriculture, acting
7 through the Chief of the Forest Service.

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