

PRECISION AGRICULTURE SATELLITE CONNECTIVITY ACT

JULY 10, 2025.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. GUTHRIE, from the Committee on Energy and Commerce,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 1618]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Energy and Commerce, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 1618) to require the Federal Communications Commission to review certain rules of the Commission and develop recommendations for rule changes to promote precision agriculture, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with an amendment and recommends that the bill as amended do pass.

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The amendment is as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Precision Agriculture Satellite Connectivity Act”.

SEC. 2. PRECISION AGRICULTURE SATELLITE CONNECTIVITY.

(a) **REVIEW.**—The Commission shall—

(1) review the rules of the Commission relating to fixed satellite service, mobile satellite service, and earth exploration satellite service to determine if there are rule changes that the Commission could implement under existing authority to promote precision agriculture; and

(2) if the Commission determines under paragraph (1) that there are rule changes that the Commission could implement, develop recommendations for how to implement the changes.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 15 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission 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 on the results of the review conducted under subsection (a), including any recommendations developed under paragraph (2) of such subsection.

(c) **COMMISSION DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “Commission” means the Federal Communications Commission.

PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

H.R. 1618, the Precision Agriculture Satellite Connectivity Act, was introduced by Representative Robert E. Latta (R-OH) on February 26, 2025. The bill requires the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to review its rules regarding certain satellite communications services to determine if changes to its rules could promote precision agriculture. If the FCC determines that there are rule changes that could be made under the FCC’s existing authority to promote precision agriculture, the FCC must develop recommendations and submit them to Congress within 15 months of enactment.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Precision agriculture allows for the optimization of crop yield, water usage, and soil sustainability. Unfortunately, many rural communities have little or no connectivity, thereby reducing the ability of many farmers to utilize precision agriculture. Additionally, there are earth exploration and observation services authorized by the FCC that could promote precision agriculture. These satellite technologies offer the opportunity to expand the use of precision agriculture throughout the United States, and this legislation would require the FCC to evaluate its rules to see if there are changes that can be made to promote this deployment.

COMMITTEE ACTION

The Committee on Energy and Commerce held a hearing in the development of the legislation during the 119th Congress. On January 23, 2025, the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology held a hearing entitled, “Strengthening American Leadership in Wireless Technology.” The Subcommittee received testimony from the following witnesses:

- Mr. Michael K. Powell, President & CEO, NCTA—The Internet & Television Association;
- Mr. Brad Gillen, Executive Vice President, CTIA—The Wireless Association;
- Ms. Diane Rinaldo, Executive Director, Open RAN Policy Coalition; and
- Mr. Chris Lewis, President & CEO, Public Knowledge.

On March 4, 2025, the full Committee on Energy and Commerce met in open markup session and adopted an amendment in the na-

ture of a substitute by voice vote, and then ordered H.R. 1618, as amended, favorably reported to the House by voice vote.

COMMITTEE VOTES

Clause 3(b) of rule XIII requires the Committee to list the record votes on the motion to report legislation and amendments thereto. There were no record votes taken in connection with order H.R. 1618 reported.

OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Pursuant to clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII, the Committee held hearings and made findings that are reflected in this report.

NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY, ENTITLEMENT AUTHORITY, AND TAX EXPENDITURES

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII, the Committee finds that H.R. 1618 would result in no new or increased budget authority, entitlement authority, or tax expenditures or revenues.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE ESTIMATE

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII, the following is the cost estimate provided by the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974:

H.R. 1618, Precision Agriculture Satellite Connectivity Act			
As ordered reported by the House Committee on Energy and Commerce on March 4, 2025			
By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2025	2025-2030	2025-2035
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	*	*	not estimated
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?	No	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	No
		Mandate Effects	
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	Yes, Under Threshold
* = between zero and \$500,000.			

H.R. 1618 would require the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to review its rules concerning fixed, mobile, and earth exploration satellite service and recommend changes that would promote precision agriculture. The bill would require the FCC to report to the Congress on that review and any associated recommendations within 15 months of enactment.

Using information from the FCC, CBO expects that it would need five part-time employees, at an average cost of \$195,000 per person to review the relevant rules and report to the Congress. On that basis, CBO estimates that it would cost the agency \$1 million over the 2025–2030 period to implement the bill. However, because the

FCC is authorized to collect fees each year sufficient to offset the appropriated costs of its regulatory activities, CBO estimates that the net cost to the FCC would be negligible, assuming appropriation actions consistent with that authority.

If the FCC increased fees to offset the costs associated with implementing the bill, H.R. 1618 would increase the cost of an existing mandate on private entities required to pay those fees. CBO estimates that the incremental cost of that mandate would be small and fall below the annual threshold established in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) for private-sector mandates (\$203 million in 2025, adjusted annually for inflation).

H.R. 1618 contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined in UMRA.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Zunara Naeem (for federal costs) and Rachel Austin (for mandates). The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

PHILLIP L. SWAGEL,
Director, Congressional Budget Office.

FEDERAL MANDATES STATEMENT

The Committee adopts as its own the estimate of Federal mandates prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 423 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

STATEMENT OF GENERAL PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII, the general performance goal or objective of this legislation is to require the Federal Communications Commission to review its rules regarding certain satellite communications services to determine whether any changes could be made to promote precision agriculture, and if so, develop and submit recommendations to Congress on the rule changes that could promote precision agriculture.

DUPLICATION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(5) of rule XIII, no provision of H.R. 1618 is known to be duplicative of another Federal program, including any program that was included in a report to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139 or the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.

RELATED COMMITTEE AND SUBCOMMITTEE HEARINGS

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(6) of rule XIII, the following hearings were used to develop or consider H.R. 1618:

On January 23, 2025, the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology held a hearing. The title of the hearing was “Strengthening American Leadership in Wireless Technology.” The Subcommittee received testimony from the following witnesses:

- Mr. Michael K. Powell, President & CEO, NCTA—The Internet & Television Association;
- Mr. Brad Gillen, Executive Vice President, CTIA—The Wireless Association;
- Ms. Diane Rinaldo, Executive Director, Open RAN Policy Coalition; and

- Mr. Chris Lewis, President & CEO, Public Knowledge.

COMMITTEE COST ESTIMATE

Pursuant to clause 3(d)(1) of rule XIII, the Committee adopts as its own the cost estimate prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

earmark, limited tax benefits, and limited tariff benefits

Pursuant to clause 9(e), 9(f), and 9(g) of rule XXI, the Committee finds that H.R. 1618 contains no earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE STATEMENT

No advisory committees within the meaning of section 5(b) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act were created by this legislation.

APPLICABILITY TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that the legislation does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE LEGISLATION

Section 1. Short title

This section designates that the short title may be cited as the “Precision Agriculture Satellite Connectivity Act.”

Section 2. Precision agriculture satellite connectivity

Subsection (a) requires the Federal Communications Commission (the Commission) to (1) review the rules of the Commission relating to fixed satellite service, mobile satellite service, and earth exploration satellite service to determine whether there are any changes to its rules that could promote precision agriculture; and (2) if the Commission identifies such changes, to develop recommendations for how to implement those changes.

Subsection (b) requires the Commission to submit, not later than 15 months after the date of enactment, a report to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation on the results of the review conducted under subsection (a), including any recommendations.

Subsection (c) defines key terms.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

This legislation does not amend any existing Federal statute.