

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5243

To amend the National Telecommunications and Information Administration Organization Act to establish a mobile hotspot grant program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 21, 2019

Ms. MENG (for herself, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. KHANNA, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. NADLER, Mr. RYAN, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. TONKO, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Labor, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To amend the National Telecommunications and Information Administration Organization Act to establish a mobile hotspot grant program, 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 “Closing the Homework
5 Gap Through Mobile Hotspots Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. MOBILE HOTSPOT GRANT PROGRAM.**

2 The National Telecommunications and Information
3 Administration Organization Act (47 U.S.C 901 et seq.)
4 is amended by adding after section 158 the following new
5 section:

6 **“SEC. 159 MOBILE HOTSPOT GRANT PROGRAM.**

7 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Assistant Secretary
8 shall establish a program (to be known as the ‘Mobile
9 Hotspot Grant Program’) to provide grants to eligible in-
10 stitutions to facilitate mobile hotspot programs.

11 “(b) GRANT AUTHORITY.—The Assistant Secretary
12 may provide grants to eligible institutions under the pro-
13 gram established in subsection (a).

14 “(c) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a grant
15 provided under this section, an eligible institution shall
16 submit an application at such time, in such manner, and
17 containing such information as the Assistant Secretary
18 may require.

19 “(d) USE OF GRANTS.—A grant provided under this
20 section shall be used to facilitate a mobile hotspot program
21 that provides a hotspot device to an enrolled student, or
22 the family or guardian of such enrolled student, and such
23 hotspot device shall—

24 “(1) be portable;

25 “(2) not contain a data limitation; and

1 “(3) comply with the Children’s Online Privacy
2 Protection Act of 1998 (15 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.).

3 “(e) PRIORITY OF GRANTS.—

4 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Assistant Secretary
5 shall prioritize providing a grant to eligible institu-
6 tions that create a mobile hotspot program that will
7 provide hotspot devices to the highest number of
8 low-income students.

9 “(2) SET ASIDES.—

10 “(A) FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED INDIAN
11 TRIBES.—To the extent practicable, at least 5
12 percent of the amounts appropriated to carry
13 out this section shall be used to provide grants
14 to federally recognized Indian Tribes.

15 “(B) U.S. TERRITORIES AND THE DIS-
16 TRICT OF COLUMBIA.—To the extent prac-
17 ticable, at least 5 percent of the amounts ap-
18 propriated to carry out this section shall be
19 used to provide grants to territories of the
20 United States and the District of Columbia.

21 “(f) GRANT LIMIT.—An eligible institution may not
22 receive more than 2 percent of the total sum appropriated
23 for a fiscal year to carry out this section.

24 “(g) REPORT.—The Assistant Secretary shall submit
25 to Congress a report on—

1 “(1) the number of eligible institutions that re-
2 ceive a grant provided under this section;

3 “(2) the number of enrolled students that re-
4 ceive access to broadband internet access service
5 through a grant provided under this section;

6 “(3) the number of enrolled students that are
7 part of the homework gap;

8 “(4) how hotspot devices are used; and

9 “(5) the amount of data used per hotspot de-
10 vice.

11 “(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
12 is authorized to be appropriated \$100,000,000 for each
13 fiscal year 2020 through 2025.

14 “(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

15 “(1) BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS SERV-
16 ICE.—The term ‘broadband internet access service’
17 has the meaning given such term in section 8.1(b)
18 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations (or any suc-
19 cessor regulation).

20 “(2) ELEMENTARY SCHOOL; SECONDARY
21 SCHOOL.—The terms ‘elementary school’ and ‘sec-
22 ondary school’ have the meanings given such terms
23 in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary
24 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

1 “(3) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term ‘eligi-
2 ble institution’ means any of the following:

3 “(A) An elementary school.

4 “(B) A secondary school.

5 “(C) An institution of higher education.

6 “(D) A federally recognized Indian Tribe.

7 “(E) A library.

8 “(F) A library consortium.

9 “(G) A State library administrative agen-
10 cy.

11 “(4) ENROLLED STUDENT.—The term ‘enrolled
12 student’ means a student who is enrolled in an ele-
13 mentary school, a secondary school, or an institution
14 of higher education.

15 “(5) FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED INDIAN
16 TRIBE.—The term ‘federally recognized Indian
17 Tribe’ has the meaning given the term ‘Indian tribe’
18 in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and
19 Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

20 “(6) HOMEWORK GAP.—The term ‘homework
21 gap’ means unequal access to digital devices and
22 broadband internet access service that prevents an
23 enrolled student from completing homework.

24 “(7) HOTSPOT DEVICE.—The term ‘hotspot de-
25 vice’ means a portable device—

1 “(A) that connects to broadband internet
2 access service using a cellular data connection;

3 “(B) to which other devices wirelessly con-
4 nect by means of Wi-Fi; and

5 “(C) that enables the devices described in
6 subparagraph (B) to connect to the broadband
7 internet access service described in subpara-
8 graph (A).

9 “(8) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—
10 The term ‘institution of higher education’ has the
11 meaning given such term in section 101 of the High-
12 er Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

13 “(9) LIBRARY; LIBRARY CONSORTIUM; STATE
14 LIBRARY ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY.—The terms ‘li-
15 brary’, ‘library consortium’, and ‘State library ad-
16 ministrative agency’ have the meanings given such
17 terms in section 213 of the Museum and Library
18 Services Act (20 U.S.C. 9122).

19 “(10) LOW-INCOME STUDENT.—The term ‘low-
20 income student’ has the meaning given such term in
21 section 6122 of the America COMPETES Act (20
22 U.S.C. 9832).”.

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