

What we are trusting here is that Chairman Clayton does the right thing—takes the message from this vote that we are about to take, and then begins to work with our committee to get this cybersecurity risk under control to provide the assurances that the American people want and that the markets need in order to trust that no more data is collected and made vulnerable than is necessary to accomplish the mission, but that whatever data is made available is secure.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of our colleagues to support the passage of this bill.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I urge an “aye” vote. Since I have no speakers seeking time on my side, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as I had said before, when information is the equivalent of modern-day gold, we need to make sure that whatever vaults that information, that gold, is going into are properly protected—properly protected for consumers and their personally identifiable information. We have an obligation, as the government, to make sure that their information is protected as best as possible, and doubly so when it is going into government-run systems. That is the reason why H.R. 3973 is so imperative that it be passed.

Mr. Speaker, I again commend my friend from Ohio (Mr. DAVIDSON) and my friend from California (Mr. SHERMAN) on their bipartisan work on that.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3973.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONNECTED GOVERNMENT ACT

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2331) to require a new or updated Federal website that is intended for use by the public to be mobile friendly, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2331

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Connected Government Act”.

SEC. 2. FEDERAL WEBSITES REQUIRED TO BE MOBILE FRIENDLY.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Subchapter II of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 3559. Federal websites required to be mobile friendly.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—If, on or after the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section, an agency creates a website that is intended for use by the public or conducts a redesign of an existing legacy website that is intended for use by the public, the agency shall ensure to the greatest extent practicable that the website is mobile friendly.

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) AGENCY.—The term ‘agency’ has the meaning given that term in section 551 of title 5.

“(2) MOBILE FRIENDLY.—The term ‘mobile friendly’ means, with respect to a website, that the website is configured in such a way that the website may be navigated, viewed, and accessed on a smartphone, tablet computer, or similar mobile device.”.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, is amended by adding after the item related to section 3558 the following new item:

“3559. Federal websites required to be mobile friendly”.

(c) REPORT BY OMB AND GSA REQUIRED.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Administrator of General Services, shall make publicly available and submit to Congress a report that—

(1) describes the implementation of the requirement described under section 3559 of title 44, United States Code, as added by subsection (a); and

(2) assesses the compliance of each agency with such requirement.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2331, introduced by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY). The bill requires all Federal agencies to ensure any Federal Government website intended for use by the public is mobile friendly. Services offered by the Federal Government should be effective but also accessible to the public. Agency websites are one of the most important tools for taxpayers to observe services and information from the government.

The U.S. Government runs more than 6,000 websites on over 400 domains. One recent study estimated that approximately 40 percent of government websites either are not accessible or

are difficult to access on a phone, yet nearly 80 percent of Americans own a smartphone, and at least 1 in 10 American adults rely exclusively on a smartphone for access to the internet, according to a Pew survey. The data clearly points to the utility of making all government websites mobile friendly.

Another study found that more people accessed the internet on their mobile devices than a desktop computer for the first time last year. It is clear that Federal agencies must emphasize mobile accessibility to effectively serve the American people. The Connected Government Act will require agencies to do just that.

This bill requires Federal agencies to ensure their websites are mobile friendly during the course of creating new websites or updating existing ones. A mobile-friendly government is a necessary step in the modernization of the government’s IT infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud my colleague, the gentlewoman from Illinois, for her work in sponsoring this bill. I am proud also to support this bipartisan legislation, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a blog post regarding this bill written by Congressman PALLONE and myself.

[From the Energy & Commerce Democrats, Sep. 13, 2017]

IT’S TIME TO GIVE THE GOVERNMENT AN UPGRADE FOR THE MOBILE WORLD

(By Frank Pallone, Jr. and Robin Kelly)

In the wake of the natural disasters devastating so much of the country, millions of Americans are turning to federal agencies for help—but the government’s websites don’t always make it easy. We’ve introduced legislation in the House that would change that, and it’s moving forward at a time when it can help a lot of Americans who are suffering.

For people who were forced from their homes or are without power because of hurricanes, storms or wildfires, their only connection to necessities of survival—food, water, fuel, and shelter—is through their mobile phones. It’s the device they could take with them when they had to flee their homes. But while private websites and charities have developed new mobile websites and apps to help those who are still struggling, many of the essential government websites on which people depend are essentially unusable on a phone.

During any natural disaster, we expect the government to be at its best. But for people whose homes have been flooded, burned out, or leveled, trying to navigate government websites on their phones likely feels like a waste of time. For instance, if you need to start looking for a loan to rebuild your home, good luck trying to use your phone to navigate the website for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. If you need to reach state or local authorities, the problems get worse. And asking people to hunt down a working desktop computer right now is just unreasonable.

Although these natural disasters are making this problem more acute, the need for a

government-wide upgrade is only growing more important every day. That's because the people who need the most help are often on mobile devices. If you are young, if you have a lower income, or if you are a minority, you are much more likely to use a smartphone as your only entry point to the internet.

The gap is significant—people earning less than \$30,000 were 13 times more likely in 2015 to depend on a smartphone than people earning more than \$75,000. Yet websites that are intended to strengthen the social safety net like programs providing food assistance are nearly inaccessible on a phone.

A SMART GOVERNMENT BRINGS SERVICES TO PEOPLE WHEN THEY NEED THEM MOST—NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND

Last year we crossed a significant threshold—Americans are now more likely to access the internet on their mobile device than on their desktop computer. If people rely on mobile devices, our services should be designed for mobile devices, and that's why agencies with consumer-facing websites should be designed with an eye towards mobile first. These mobile sites can make it easier for people who may not have the time to wait in line at a government office.

In order to bring government up to speed, we have introduced the Connected Government Act, which ensures that all new federal agency websites are designed to work well on mobile devices. These federal sites would serve as an example to the states who need to do more to modernize their own technology. This simple change can have a big impact—from shorter lines and faster service, to providing more help to more people. Mobile friendly websites will ultimately help build a stronger democracy.

Today, our bill is expected to clear a crucial committee vote in the House. And our colleagues Senators Maggie Hassan (D-NH) and Cory Gardner (R-CO) recently introduced a companion bill in the Senate. With this progress, our path to a smarter government is within reach. Congress should act soon to get this bill passed.

In the wake of these recent disasters, we need to ensure that anyone looking for assistance from a federal agency can get the information they need through their mobile device. This is the least we can do to help alleviate some of the stress people feel in times of need.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank the coleader on this bill, Congressman FRANK PALLONE, who has been a strong supporter every step of the way, from the bill's drafting through today's floor consideration. I also thank my good friend Congressman MARK MEADOWS, a cosponsor of the bill, and I thank Senator HASSAN, who introduced the Senate companion.

Mr. Speaker, this is a simple bill that will ensure all government websites are accessible to all Americans. It simply requires that any new or updated Federal websites be mobile friendly. It is 2017. We need Federal websites to work for all Americans.

In the past 90 days, there were 2.61 billion visits to Federal websites. Almost 40 percent of those came from mobile devices. That is over 1 billion hits from mobile devices like tablets and smartphones. But today, according to a report by the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, 40 percent of government websites don't work on smartphones or are mobile unfriendly.

Alarming, many of these sites are critical to serving the American people, like the application for Federal student aid and the launch point for bidding on Federal Government contracts. For millions of Americans without access to reliable broadband or without a desktop computer, smartphones are their doorway to the internet.

A recent Pew report found that younger Americans, low-income Americans, rural Americans, and people of color are more likely to rely only on smartphones to browse the web.

Today, 77 percent of Americans own and use smartphones to access the internet. For 10 percent of Americans, it is their primary access to the internet. That is 32 million Americans. It is unacceptable for 32 million Americans to have difficulty reaching their government simply because we couldn't keep up with technological trends.

Recently, Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria showed just how vital smartphones have become, especially during disasters. In the aftermath of these storms, millions of Americans relied on their smartphones to find assistance. Imagine the frustration of navigating SBA, FEMA, or HUD websites, looking for assistance on a 5-inch screen, and the site not working because it is only designed for desktop browsing.

In my time serving as the ranking member of the Information Technology Subcommittee, it has been clear that the Federal Government's IT systems are not working and have not kept up with even the most basic technology trends that are common in the private sector.

Americans deserve a modern American Government that is accessible and responsive to their needs. This bill takes us one step closer to realizing this goal.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense bill that the CBO has said will have no significant cost to taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her great work on this bill. I urge adoption of it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this year's natural disasters have devastated millions of Americans across the country, leaving so many with little more than the smartphone in their pocket. But when these people look to the government for help, they find that too many of the governments' websites aren't made for the computers they have with them all the time—their phones. Our bill takes a big step forward in fixing that issue and helping these Americans get back on their feet. I want to thank Congresswoman KELLY for championing the Connected Government Act in the Oversight and Government Reform Committee. I urge my colleagues to support this common sense bill, and I hope we can secure passage in the Senate soon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2331, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

FEDERAL ACQUISITION SAVINGS ACT OF 2017

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3071) to require executive agencies to consider equipment rental in any cost-effectiveness analysis for equipment acquisition, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3071

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Federal Acquisition Savings Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. COST-EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS OF EQUIPMENT RENTAL.

(a) COST-EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS OF EQUIPMENT RENTAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to any cost-effectiveness analysis for equipment acquisition conducted on or after the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the head of each executive agency shall consider equipment rental in such cost-effectiveness analysis.

(2) FEDERAL ACQUISITION REGULATION.—The Federal Acquisition Regulation shall be revised to implement the requirement under paragraph (1).

(b) STUDY OF COST-EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a comprehensive report on the decisions made by the executive agencies with the highest levels of acquisition spending, and a sample of executive agencies with lower levels of acquisition spending, to acquire high-value equipment by lease, rental, or purchase pursuant to subpart 7.4 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) EQUIPMENT RENTAL.—The term “equipment rental” means the acquisition of equipment by contract from a commercial source for a temporary period of use with no fixed duration.

(2) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—The term “executive agency” has the meaning given that term in section 102 of title 40, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) each will control 20 minutes.