



IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BE IT ENACTED BY THE VIRTUAL CONGRESS AND PRESIDENT OF THE U.S.A.

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# Rural Electrification Modernization Act, 2020

A BILL TO: *modernize 7 U.S.C. Chapter 31.*

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## SPECIAL SECTION 1. AUTHOR AND COSPONSORS

**AUTHORED BY:** Mr. Carton of France

**COSPONSORED BY:** Mr. Mitchell of Wisconsin, Mr. Radcliffe of New York, Mr. Schlorp of California.

## SECTION 1. PREAMBLE

*The Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Virtual Congress Assembled, begun and held at the City of Washington, in the District of Columbia, on Saturday the 30 of May, in the Year of our Lord two thousand and twenty.*

## SUBSECTION 1.1. SHORT TITLE

THIS BILL may be cited as the ‘Rural Electrification Modernization Act, 2020’, or ‘REMA, 2020’, or ‘H.R. XX’.

## SUBSECTION 1.2. FINDINGS

IN THIS BILL, the Virtual Congress finds that:

- (a) The main objective of the Rural Electrification Administration has been fulfilled, with 100% of Americans having access to electricity;
- (b) The administration now manages funds used not only for electrification, but also to modernize our energy grid and support and develop green energy, as well as to develop telephone and broadband access;
- (c) Internet access is to our time what access to electricity was to the Great Depression, a challenge, with many Americans having access only to low-quality internet with reduced broadband, if not being left on the sidelines altogether;

- (d) The main tools at the hand of the Rural Electrification Administration, so far used for electrification, should now be used to develop internet access;
- (e) Other tools should be kept in place under a reformed Rural Electrification Administration to continue to support energy efficiency, green energy and telecommunications across rural areas of the United States.

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

## **SECTION 2. CONTENT**

- (a) Across 7 U.S.C. Chapter 31, subchapter 1, the words ‘Rural Electrification Act of 1936’ are replaced with ‘Rural Internet Access Act of 2020’.
- (b) Across 7 U.S.C. Chapter 31, subchapter 1, the words ‘Rural Electrification Administration’ are replaced with ‘Rural Internet Access Administration’.
- (c) 7 U.S.C 901 is replaced with: ‘This subchapter may be cited as the “Rural Internet Access Act of 2020”.’
- (d) 7 U.S.C. 902 is amended as follows:
  - (1) In subsection (a), after the words ‘United States’, replace the end of the paragraph with ‘for developing rural internet access and for the purpose of furnishing and improving telecommunication service in rural areas, as provided in this chapter, and for the purpose of assisting telecommunication borrowers to implement demand side management, and energy efficiency and conservation programs.’;
  - (2) In subsection (b), remove the word ‘electric.’;
- (e) 7 U.S.C. 904 is amended as follows:
  - (1) In subsection (a), replace the words ‘rural electrification’ with ‘developing rural internet access’;
  - (2) Furthermore, replace the words ‘generating plants, electric transmission and distribution lines or systems for the furnishing and improving of electric service’ with ‘internet emission and transmission devices, systems, distribution lines, and facilities for the furnishing and improving of internet access’;
  - (3) Furthermore, replace the words ‘assisting electric borrowers to implement demand side management, energy efficiency and conservation programs, and on-grid and off-grid renewable energy systems’ with ‘assisting internet providers to implement demand side management, and energy efficiency and conservation programs’;
  - (4) Furthermore, replace the word ‘electric’ with ‘internet’;
  - (5) In subsection (b), after ‘income’, remove the rest of the paragraph.
- (f) 7 U.S.C. 905 is repelled.
- (g) 7 U.S.C. 916 is repelled.
- (h) In 7 U.S.C. 917, subsection (a), replace the words ‘electric service’ with ‘internet service’;
- (i) 7 U.S.S. 918a is amended as follows:
  - (1) The title is replaced with ‘Internet emission, transmission, and distribution facilities efficiency grants and loans in rural communities with extremely high internet access costs’;

- (2) In subsection (a), after the word ‘improve’, replace the end of the subsection with ‘internet emission, transmission, or distribution facilities serving communities in which the average residential expenditure for home internet access is at least 275 percent of the national average residential expenditure for home internet access (as determined by the Bureau of Economic Analysis using the most recent data available);
- (3) Furthermore, clause (3) is repelled.
- (j) In the 7 U.S.C. 918b title, replace ‘energy’ with ‘internet access’.
- (k) 7 U.S.C. 918c is amended as follows:
  - (1) The title is replaced with ‘Rural and remote communities internet access grants’;
  - (2) The text of the section is replaced with:
    - ‘(a) Definitions. In this section:
      - (1) The term “eligible grantee” means a local government or municipality, peoples’ utility district, irrigation district, and cooperative, nonprofit, or limited-dividend association in a rural area.
      - (2) The term “rural area” means a city, town, or unincorporated area that has a population of not more than 10,000 inhabitants.
    - (b) Grants. The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, may provide grants under this section to eligible grantees for the purpose of—
      - (1) increasing internet access, siting or upgrading transmission and distribution lines or systems serving rural areas; or
      - (2) providing or modernizing internet access facilities that serve rural areas.
    - (c) Grant administration.
      - (1) The Secretary shall make grants under this section based on a determination of cost-effectiveness and the most effective use of the funds to achieve the purposes described in subsection (b).
      - (2) For each fiscal year, the Secretary shall allocate grant funds under this section equally between the purposes described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (b).
      - (3) In making grants for the purposes described in subsection (b)(2), the Secretary shall give preference to renewable energy facilities.
    - (d) Authorization of appropriations.

There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2020 through 2026.

### **SECTION 3. RURAL INTERNET ACCESS ADMINISTRATION**

- (a) The Rural Electrification Administration is renamed Rural Internet Access Administration.
- (b) The missions of the Rural Electrification Administration are: to initiate, formulate, administer, and supervise a program of approved projects with respect to the development of internet access and the furnishing and improving of telecommunication service in rural areas.

### **SECTION 4. TIMELINE**

THIS BILL is to be ratified immediately upon enactment.

#### **SECTION 4. CONFLICTS**

THIS BILL shall be mutual with all other laws, unless conflicting, by which they are to be stricken null and void.

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Rural Electrification Modernization Act, 2020 (H.R. XX)

*AUTHORED by House Representative Carton of France*