

# Union Calendar No.

118<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
1<sup>ST</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 3385

[Report No. 118-]

To direct the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to submit to Congress a report containing an assessment of the value, cost, and feasibility of developing a trans-Atlantic submarine fiber optic cable connecting the contiguous United States, the United States Virgin Islands, Ghana, and Nigeria, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 16, 2023

Ms. PLASKETT introduced the following bill; which was referred to the  
Committee on Energy and Commerce

SEPTEMBER --, 2023

Reported with amendments, committed to the Committee of the Whole House  
on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italie*]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on May 16, 2023]

# **A BILL**

To direct the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to submit to Congress a report containing an assessment of the value, cost, and feasibility of developing a trans-Atlantic submarine fiber optic cable connecting the contiguous United States, the United States Virgin Islands, Ghana, and Nigeria, 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. ASSESSMENT OF TRANS-ATLANTIC SUBMARINE**

4                                   **FIBER OPTIC CABLE.**

5       *(a) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of*  
6 *the enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in consultation*  
7 *with the heads of other Federal departments and agencies*  
8 *as necessary, shall submit to the Committee on Energy and*  
9 *Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Com-*  
10 *mittee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the*  
11 *Senate a report containing an assessment of the value, cost,*  
12 *and feasibility of a trans-Atlantic submarine fiber optic*  
13 *cable connecting the contiguous United States, the United*  
14 *States Virgin Islands, Ghana, and Nigeria, to enhance the*  
15 *national security of the United States.*

16       *(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection (a)*  
17 *shall include an assessment of—*

18                   *(1) the digital security, national security, and*  
19                   *economic opportunities associated with a trans-Atlan-*  
20                   *tic submarine fiber optic cable described in subsection*  
21                   *(a);*

22                   *(2) the lifespan of submarine fiber optic cables*  
23                   *currently connecting the United States Virgin Islands*  
24                   *to the contiguous United States;*

1           (3) *the current security of telecommunications*  
2           *between the contiguous United States and the United*  
3           *States Virgin Islands;*

4           (4) *the readiness of telecommunications infra-*  
5           *structure in the United States Virgin Islands to sup-*  
6           *port a trans-Atlantic submarine fiber optic cable de-*  
7           *scribed in subsection (a);*

8           (5) *the potential for engagement with trusted en-*  
9           *tities in the deployment of a trans-Atlantic submarine*  
10          *fiber optic cable described in subsection (a), and the*  
11          *associated geopolitical and economic advantages;*

12          (6) *the potential connectivity opportunities to*  
13          *maximize investments in the United States economy*  
14          *through the use of a trans-Atlantic submarine fiber*  
15          *optic cable described in subsection (a);*

16          (7) *the value, cost, and feasibility of establishing*  
17          *a data center and high-security cloud services facility,*  
18          *with independent power generation, in the United*  
19          *States Virgin Islands for communications of the*  
20          *United States Africa Command, communications of*  
21          *the United States Special Operations Command, and*  
22          *national security communications;*

23          (8) *the state of submarine fiber optic cables con-*  
24          *ected to United States telecommunications infra-*  
25          *structure; and*

1           (9) *any other related matters the Secretary deter-*  
2           *mines are appropriate.*

3           (c) *NO MANDATORY DATA COLLECTION.—The Sec-*  
4           *retary may not require any entity to provide data for pur-*  
5           *poses of preparing the report required by subsection (a).*

6           (d) *FORM.—The report required by subsection (a) shall*  
7           *be submitted in unclassified form without any designation*  
8           *relating to dissemination control, but may include a classi-*  
9           *fied annex.*

10          (e) *DEFINITIONS.—In this section:*

11           (1) *NOT TRUSTED.—The term “not trusted”*  
12           *means, with respect to an entity, that the entity is de-*  
13           *termined by the Secretary to pose an unacceptable*  
14           *risk to the national security of the United States, or*  
15           *the security and safety of United States persons,*  
16           *based solely on one or more determination described*  
17           *under paragraphs (1) through (4) of section 2(c) of*  
18           *the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks*  
19           *Act of 2019 (47 U.S.C. 1601(c)).*

20           (2) *SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means*  
21           *the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Assist-*  
22           *ant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and*  
23           *Information.*

1           (3) *TRUSTED*.—*The term “trusted” means, with*  
2           *respect to an entity, that the Secretary has not deter-*  
3           *mined that the entity is not trusted.*

Amend the title so as to read: “A bill to direct the Secretary of Commerce to submit to Congress a report containing an assessment of the value, cost, and feasibility of a trans-Atlantic submarine fiber optic cable connecting the contiguous United States, the United States Virgin Islands, Ghana, and Nigeria.”.