Committee Print

(Showing the text of H.R. 2566 as forwarded by the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, September 13, 2016)

114th Congress 1st Session  H. R. 2566

To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure the integrity of voice communications and to prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United States in the delivery of such communications.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

May 21, 2015

Mr. Young of Iowa (for himself, Mr. Welch, Mr. Zinke, Mr. Peterson, Mr. Pocan, Mr. Loebsack, and Mr. Nolan) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure the integrity of voice communications and to prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United States in the delivery of such communications.

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

2 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act of 2016”.

3 4 5
SEC. 2. ENSURING THE INTEGRITY OF VOICE COMMUNICATIONS.

Part II of title II of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 251 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 262. ENSURING THE INTEGRITY OF VOICE COMMUNICATIONS.

“(a) Registration and Compliance by Intermediate Providers.—An intermediate provider that offers or holds itself out as offering the capability to transmit covered voice communications from one destination to another and that charges any rate to any other entity (including an affiliated entity) for the transmission shall—

“(1) register with the Commission; and

“(2) comply with the service quality standards for such transmission to be established by the Commission under subsection (c)(1)(B).

“(b) Required Use of Registered Intermediate Providers.—A covered provider may not use an intermediate provider to transmit covered voice communications unless such intermediate provider is registered under subsection (a)(1).

“(c) Commission Rules.—

“(1) In General.—

“(A) Registry.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the
Commission shall promulgate rules to establish
a registry to record registrations under sub-
section (a)(1).

“(B) SERVICE QUALITY STANDARDS.—Not
later than 1 year after the date of enactment of
this section, the Commission shall promulgate
rules to establish service quality standards for
the transmission of covered voice communica-
tions by intermediate providers.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In promulgating the
rules required by paragraph (1), the Commission
shall—

“(A) ensure the integrity of the trans-
mission of covered voice communications to all
customers in the United States; and

“(B) prevent unjust or unreasonable dis-
crimination among areas of the United States
in the delivery of covered voice communications.

“(d) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF REGISTRY.—The
Commission shall make the registry established under sub-
section (c)(1)(A) publicly available on the website of the
Commission.

“(e) SCOPE OF APPLICATION.—The requirements of
this section shall apply regardless of the format by which
any communication or service is provided, the protocol or
format by which the transmission of such communication
or service is achieved, or the regulatory classification of
such communication or service.

“(f) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sec-
tion shall be construed to affect the regulatory classifica-
tion of any communication or service.

“(g) EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.—Nothing in this sec-
tion shall be construed to preempt or expand the authority
of a State public utility commission or other relevant State
agency to collect data, or investigate and enforce State
law and regulations, regarding the completion of intra-
state voice communications, regardless of the format by
which any communication or service is provided, the pro-
tocol or format by which the transmission of such commu-
nication or service is achieved, or the regulatory classifica-
tion of such communication or service.

“(h) EXCEPTION.—The requirement under sub-
section (a)(2) to comply with the service quality standards
established under subsection (c)(1)(B) shall not apply to
a covered provider that—

“(1) on or before the date that is 1 year after
the date of enactment of this section, has certified
as a Safe Harbor provider under section 64.2107(a)
of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any suc-
cessor regulation; and
“(2) continues to meet the requirements under such section 64.2107(a).

“(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) COVERED PROVIDER.—The term ‘covered provider’ has the meaning given the term in section 64.2101 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor thereto.

“(2) COVERED voice communication.—The term ‘covered voice communication’ means a voice communication (including any related signaling information) that is generated—

“(A) from the placement of a call from a connection using a North American Numbering Plan resource or a call placed to a connection using such a numbering resource; and

“(B) through any service provided by a covered provider.

“(3) INTERMEDIATE PROVIDER.—The term ‘intermediate provider’ means any entity that—

“(A) enters into a business arrangement with a covered provider or other intermediate provider for the specific purpose of carrying, routing, or transmitting voice traffic that is generated from the placement of a call placed—
“(i) from an end user connection using a North American Numbering Plan resource; or

“(ii) to an end user connection using such a numbering resource; and

“(B) does not itself, either directly or in conjunction with an affiliate, serve as a covered provider in the context of originating or terminating a given call.”.