H. R. 

To amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to provide for a high-speed broadband deployment initiative.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri (for himself and Mr. GUEST) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to provide for a high-speed broadband deployment initiative.

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 “Eliminating Barriers 
5 to Rural Internet Development Grant Eligibility Act” or 
6 the “E-BRIDGE Act”.

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SEC. 2. HIGH-SPEED BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT INITIATIVE.

(a) In general.—Title II of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3141 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 219. HIGH-SPEED BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT INITIATIVE.

“(a) Definitions.—In this section:

“(1) Broadband project.—The term ‘broadband project’ means, for the purpose of providing, extending, expanding, or improving high-speed broadband service to further the goals of this Act—

“(A) planning, technical assistance, or training;

“(B) the acquisition or development of land; or

“(C) the acquisition, design and engineering, construction, rehabilitation, alteration, expansion, or improvement of facilities, including related machinery, equipment, contractual rights, and intangible property.

“(2) Eligible recipient.—

“(A) In general.—The term ‘eligible recipient’ means an eligible recipient.
“(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term ‘eligible recipient’ includes—

“(i) a public-private partnership; and

“(ii) a consortium formed for the purpose of providing, extending, expanding, or improving high-speed broadband service between 1 or more eligible recipients and 1 or more for-profit organizations.

“(3) HIGH-SPEED BROADBAND.—The term ‘high-speed broadband’ means the provision of 2-way data transmission with sufficient downstream and upstream speeds to end users to permit effective participation in the economy and to support economic growth, as determined by the Secretary.

“(b) BROADBAND PROJECTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—On the application of an eligible recipient, the Secretary may make grants under this title for broadband projects, which shall be subject to the provisions of this section.

“(2) DATA REQUESTED.—In reviewing an application submitted under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall request from the Federal Communications Commission, the Administrator of the National Telecommunications and Information Administra-
tion, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the Appalachian Regional Commission data on—

“(A) the level and extent of broadband service that exists in the area proposed to be served; and

“(B) the level and extent of broadband service that will be deployed in the area proposed to be served pursuant to another Federal program.

“(3) INTEREST IN REAL OR PERSONAL PROPERTY.—For any broadband project carried out by an eligible recipient that is a public-private partnership or consortium, the Secretary shall require that title to any real or personal property acquired or improved with grant funds, or if the recipient will not acquire title, another possessory interest acceptable to the Secretary, be vested in a public partner or eligible nonprofit organization or association for the useful life of the project, after which title may be transferred to any member of the public-private partnership or consortium in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary.

“(4) PROCUREMENT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person or entity shall be disqualified from competing to provide goods or serv-
ices related to a broadband project on the basis that
the person or entity participated in the development
of the broadband project or in the drafting of speci-
fications, requirements, statements of work, or simi-
lar documents related to the goods or services to be
provided.

“(5) BROADBAND PROJECT PROPERTY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may
permit a recipient of a grant for a broadband
project to grant an option to acquire real or
personal property (including contractual rights
and intangible property) related to that project
to a third party on such terms as the Secretary
determines to be appropriate, subject to the
condition that the option may only be exercised
after the Secretary releases the Federal interest
in the property.

“(B) TREATMENT.—The grant or exercise
of an option described in subparagraph (A)
shall not constitute a redistribution of grant
funds under section 217.

“(c) SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE.—A grant provided
under this section may be provided from amounts made
available to carry out this title in combination with
amounts made available under any other Federal program.
“(d) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—In determining the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of a broadband project, the Secretary may provide credit toward the non-Federal share for the present value of allowable contributions over the useful life of the broadband project, subject to the condition that the Secretary may require such assurances of the value of the rights and of the commitment of the rights as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3121 note; Public Law 89–136) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 218 the following:

“Sec. 219. High-speed broadband deployment initiative.”.