

114TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5897

To utilize loans and loan guarantees under the rural broadband access program to provide broadband service for agricultural producers and to provide universal service support for installation charges for broadband service for agricultural producers in order to improve precision farming and ranching, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 14, 2016

Ms. STEFANIK introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To utilize loans and loan guarantees under the rural broadband access program to provide broadband service for agricultural producers and to provide universal service support for installation charges for broadband service for agricultural producers in order to improve precision farming and ranching, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Precision Farming Act
3 of 2016”.

4 **SEC. 2. LOAN PRIORITIES IN PROVIDING ACCESS TO**
5 **BROADBAND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERV-**
6 **ICES IN RURAL AREAS.**

7 Section 601(c)(2) of the Rural Electrification Act of
8 1936 (7 U.S.C. 950bb(c)(2)) is amended—

9 (1) by striking “and” at the end of subpara-
10 graph (C);

11 (2) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as sub-
12 subparagraph (E) and, in such subparagraph, by strik-
13 ing “in the applications of the applicants”; and

14 (3) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the fol-
15 lowing new subparagraph (D):

16 “(D) give priority to applicants that offer
17 to provide broadband service, at better than the
18 minimum acceptable level of broadband service
19 established under subsection (e), to agricultural
20 producers in the proposed service territory to
21 improve their ability to conduct precision farm-
22 ing or ranching, as determined by the Sec-
23 retary; and”.

1 **SEC. 3. UNIVERSAL SERVICE SUPPORT FOR BROADBAND**
2 **SERVICE INSTALLATION CHARGES FOR AGRI-**
3 **CULTURAL PRODUCERS.**

4 Section 254 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47
5 U.S.C. 254) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
6 lowing:

7 “(m) SUPPORT FOR BROADBAND SERVICE INSTAL-
8 LATION CHARGES FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS.—

9 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A provider of broadband
10 service serving a geographic area shall, upon a bona
11 fide request from an agricultural producer for con-
12 nection to such service to improve the ability of the
13 producer to conduct precision farming or ranching,
14 install any line or other facility or equipment nec-
15 essary to enable such connection at a discount from
16 the amount that the provider would charge other
17 parties for a similar installation.

18 “(2) AMOUNT OF DISCOUNT.—The amount of
19 the discount provided under paragraph (1) shall be
20 the lesser of—

21 “(A) the amount that the provider would
22 charge other parties for a similar installation;
23 or

24 “(B) \$15,000.

25 “(3) LIMIT OF ONE DISCOUNT PER AGRICUL-
26 TURAL PRODUCER.—An agricultural producer may

1 not receive more than one discount under paragraph
2 (1).

3 “(4) OFFSET OR REIMBURSEMENT.—A provider
4 of broadband service that makes an installation
5 under paragraph (1) shall—

6 “(A) have an amount equal to the amount
7 of the discount provided under such paragraph
8 treated as an offset to its obligation to con-
9 tribute to the mechanisms to preserve and ad-
10 vance universal service; or

11 “(B) notwithstanding the provisions of
12 subsection (e), receive reimbursement utilizing
13 the support mechanisms to preserve and ad-
14 vance universal service.

15 “(5) CONSISTENCY WITH RURAL BROADBAND
16 ACCESS PROGRAM.—The Commission shall, in con-
17 sultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, promul-
18 gate such regulations as are necessary to ensure that
19 this subsection is carried out in a manner that is
20 consistent with the manner in which the Secretary
21 of Agriculture carries out subparagraph (D) of sec-
22 tion 601(c)(2) of the Rural Electrification Act of
23 1936 (7 U.S.C. 950bb(c)(2)).”.

○