

and help disaster victims in their application process for assistance.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of S. 1858. This bipartisan and bicameral effort was led by Senators PETERS and PAUL in the Senate and Representative NEGUSE and Congresswoman GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN in the House. This legislation aligns the deadlines to apply for FEMA Disaster Unemployment Assistance and Individual Assistance programs.

The application process for Federal disaster assistance can be cumbersome and often makes it difficult for survivors to get that critical aid.

The Federal Government must take every possible step to simplify and streamline this process. We want to do that with disaster survivors quickly because they need help. Navigating the disaster recovery application process should not be an added stressor.

Having to keep track of separate deadlines for Disaster Unemployment Assistance and Individual Assistance is unnecessary, complex, and confusing for disaster survivors.

This legislation helps alleviate the burden to keep track of multiple deadlines.

Mr. Speaker, I support the bill. I ask everyone else to support it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, this bill will help to reduce confusion for disaster victims by aligning the deadlines for certain types of assistance.

This bill makes a simple adjustment that will ultimately ease the process by which disaster victims seek assistance, relieving a burden during a difficult period of recovery.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. MOLINARO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1858.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### ELIMINATING BARRIERS TO RURAL INTERNET DEVELOPMENT GRANT ELIGIBILITY ACT

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1752) to amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to provide for a high-speed broadband deployment initiative, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1752

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

#### SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Eliminating Barriers to Rural Internet Development Grant Eligibility Act” or the “E-BRIDGE Act”.

#### 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) *CONSIDERATIONS*.—In reviewing applications submitted under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall take into consideration geographic diversity of grants allocated, including consideration of underserved markets, in addition to data requested in paragraph (3).

“(3) *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 Administration, 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.

“(4) *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 non-profit 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.

“(5) *PROCUREMENT*.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person or entity shall be disqualified from competing to provide goods or services 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 specifications, requirements, statements of work, or similar documents related to the goods or services to be provided.

“(6) *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) *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.”.

#### SEC. 3. APPLICABILITY.

The amendments made by this Act shall only apply to amounts appropriated on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material in the RECORD on H.R. 1752.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am very proud to sponsor H.R. 1752, the Eliminating Barriers to Rural Internet Development Grant Eligibility Act, or the E-BRIDGE Act.

Unfortunately, too many of our communities, particularly in rural Missouri, still lack broadband access.

Broadband is critical for conducting business, for attracting jobs, telehealth, education, and emergency preparedness and response—you name it.

While Economic Development Administration grants can be used to attract jobs to these economically distressed areas, right now, there are hurdles to using these grants for broadband projects, including difficult

last-mile efforts that often delay rural broadband deployment.

This bill removes those hurdles to help connect and revitalize our rural communities.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET,  
Washington, DC, September 27, 2023.  
Hon. SAM GRAVES,  
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and  
Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRAVES: I am writing regarding H.R. 1752, the E-Bridge Act, which was ordered reported by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on July 27, 2023.

The bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Budget. In order to expedite House consideration of H.R. 1752, the Committee on the Budget will forgo action on this bill. This is being done with the understanding that it does not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in H.R. 1752 or similar legislation and that the Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that the Committee may address any remaining issues that fall within its jurisdiction. The Committee on the Budget also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation and requests your support of any such request.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 1752 and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in your committee report and in the *Congressional Record* during floor consideration of H.R. 1752.

Sincerely,

JODEY C. ARRINGTON,  
Chairman, Committee on the Budget.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, September 27, 2023.

Hon. JODEY ARRINGTON,  
Chairman, Committee on the Budget,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ARRINGTON: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 1752, the Eliminating Barriers to Rural Internet Development Grant Eligibility (E-BRIDGE) Act. The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, with additional referrals to the Committee on Financial Services and the Committee on the Budget.

In response to your letter, I recognize that this bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Budget. I also acknowledge that your Committee's decision to forgo consideration would not prejudice your Committee regarding the appointment of conferees, to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill, or to similar legislation falling under your Committee's Rule X jurisdiction. In addition, should a conference on this bill become necessary, I would support your request to have members of the Committee on the Budget represented on the conference committee.

I will ensure that our exchange of letters is included in the *Congressional Record* during consideration on the House floor. Thank you again, I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to con-

tinuing to work with you as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

SAM GRAVES,  
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES,  
Washington, DC, September 25, 2023.  
Hon. SAM GRAVES,  
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and  
Infrastructure, House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRAVES: Thank you for consulting with the Committee on Financial Services regarding H.R. 1752, the E-BRIDGE Act. I agree that the Committee shall be discharged from further consideration of the bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House Floor. The Committee takes this action with the mutual understanding that, by foregoing consideration of H.R. 1752 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that the Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved on this or similar legislation as it moves forward. The Committee also reserves the right to see appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any conference with the Senate involving this or similar legislation, and we request your support for any such request.

Finally, as you mentioned in your letter, I ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this bill be included in your Committee's report to accompany the legislation, as well as in the *Congressional Record* during floor consideration.

Sincerely,

PATRICK MCHENRY,  
Chairman, Committee on Financial Services.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, September 26, 2023.

Hon. PATRICK MCHENRY,  
Chairman, Committee on Financial Services,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCHENRY: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 1752, the Eliminating Barriers to Rural Internet Development Grant Eligibility (E-BRIDGE) Act. The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, with additional referrals to the Committee on Financial Services and the Committee on the Budget.

In response to your letter, I recognize that this bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Financial Services. I also acknowledge that your Committee's decision to forgo consideration would not prejudice your Committee regarding the appointment of conferees, to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill, or to similar legislation falling under your Committee's Rule X jurisdiction. In addition, should a conference on this bill become necessary, I would support your request to have members of the Committee on Financial Services represented on the conference committee.

I will ensure that our exchange of letters is included in the *Congressional Record* during consideration on the House floor. Thank you again, I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with you as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

SAM GRAVES,  
Chairman.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1752, as well, the E-BRIDGE Act, which creates high-speed broadband opportunities at the Economic Development Administration and for the public, both in rural areas and in inner city, underserved areas. It makes public-private partnerships and consortiums eligible for grant awards.

Without having access to broadband, you can't keep up economically or socially.

Access to reliable high-speed internet is a vital tool for participation in today's workforce and economy. Despite a clear commitment to broadband access across Federal agencies, E-BRIDGE is still necessary.

While the EDA can fund the deployment of broadband infrastructure in communities most in need of assistance, many communities lack the financial and technical resources necessary to apply for these funds.

By clarifying that public-private partnerships and consortiums are eligible, the E-BRIDGE Act enables communities to leverage private sector expertise without disqualifying them from receiving EDA assistance.

The bill provides grant applications with additional flexibility in financing broadband infrastructure projects by clarifying that EDA funds can be combined with other Federal resources and allowing real or personal property to count toward the non-Federal share of a project's costs.

The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman GRAVES has introduced this legislation in the 116th and 117th Congresses. In the 117th Congress, the bill passed the House with overwhelming bipartisan support by a vote of 410-16.

I support this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to do the same. I thank Mr. GRAVES for pursuing this legislation again, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MOLINARO).

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman GRAVES for yielding. I rise in support of H.R. 1752, the Eliminating Barriers for Rural Internet Development Grant Eligibility Act, or E-BRIDGE.

This bill will help to attract and support businesses in rural areas of the country by eliminating barriers to investment in broadband projects and provide these projects with the flexibility needed to be successful.

We all know that access to reliable internet is essential for small businesses, families, and farms, along with schools. It touches all aspects of residential and commercial life.

Yet, too many families and businesses don't have access to high-speed internet, so it is imperative that we work to bridge the digital divide and ensure communities across America, like those in upstate New York do not get left behind in funding opportunities for broadband expansion.

□ 1630

Without adequate broadband infrastructure, rural communities like those I represent face obstacles in education, healthcare, economic development, and overall social well-being.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be a cosponsor of this bill. I am grateful to the chairman and the bipartisan support of the bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, as has been discussed, this bill would help close the digital divide and help communities across the country connect to reliable high-speed vital for participation in today's workforce and economy.

In Mr. GRAVES' own State of Missouri, it would allow people in the bootheel of Missouri to connect so much closer to the city of Memphis, where they will want to come and hear music, eat barbecue, and watch the Cardinals' farm team play baseball.

Mr. Speaker, I support the legislation and urge all my colleagues to do the same, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1752, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

## SAVE OUR SEAS 2.0 AMENDMENTS ACT

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 886) to amend the Save Our Seas 2.0 Act to improve the administration of the Marine Debris Foundation, to amend the Marine Debris Act to improve the administration of the Marine Debris Program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 886

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

### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Save Our Seas 2.0 Amendments Act".

### SEC. 2. MODIFICATIONS TO THE MARINE DEBRIS PROGRAM OF THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Marine Debris Act (Public Law 109-449) is amended by inserting before section 3 the following:

#### "Subtitle A—NOAA And Coast Guard Programs".

(b) GRANTS, COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS, CONTRACTS, AND OTHER AGREEMENTS.—Section 3(d) of the Marine Debris Act (33 U.S.C. 1952(d)) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading by striking "AND CONTRACTS" and inserting "CONTRACTS, AND OTHER AGREEMENTS";

(2) in paragraph (1) by striking "and contracts" and inserting ", contracts, and other agreements";

(3) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) by striking "part of the" and inserting "part of a"; and

(ii) by inserting "or (C)" after "subparagraph (A)"; and

(B) in subparagraph (C) in the matter preceding clause (i) by inserting "and except as provided in subparagraph (B)" after "subparagraph (A)"; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

"(7) IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS.—With respect to any project carried out pursuant to a contract or other agreement entered into under paragraph (1) that is not a cooperative agreement or an agreement to provide financial assistance in the form of a grant, the Under Secretary may contribute on an in-kind basis the portion of the costs of the project that the Under Secretary determines represents the amount of benefit the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration derives from the project."

(c) RECEIPT AND EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS; USE OF RESOURCES.—Section 3 of such Act (33 U.S.C. 1952) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(e) RECEIPT AND EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS.—In order to accomplish the purpose set forth in section 2, the Under Secretary, acting through the Program, may receive and, only to the extent provided in advance in appropriations Acts, expend funds made available by—

"(1) any department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States;

"(2) any State or local government (or any political subdivision thereof);

"(3) any Indian tribe;

"(4) any foreign government or international organization;

"(5) any public or private organization; or

"(6) any individual.

"(f) USE OF RESOURCES.—In order to accomplish the purpose set forth in section 2, the Under Secretary, acting through the Program, may use, with consent, with reimbursement, and subject to the availability of appropriations, the land, services, equipment, personnel, and facilities of—

"(1) any department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States;

"(2) any State or local government (or any political subdivision thereof);

"(3) any Indian tribe;

"(4) any foreign government or international organization;

"(5) any public or private organization; or

"(6) any individual."

### SEC. 3. MODIFICATIONS TO THE MARINE DEBRIS FOUNDATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle B of title I of the Save Our Seas 2.0 Act (Public Law 116-224) is transferred to appear after section 6 of the Marine Debris Act (P.L. 109-449).

(b) STATUS OF FOUNDATION.—Section 111(a) of the Marine Debris Act (Public Law 109-449), as transferred by this Act, is amended, in the second sentence, by striking "organization" and inserting "corporation".

(c) BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—

(1) APPOINTMENT, VACANCIES, AND REMOVAL.—Section 112(b) of the Marine Debris Act (Public Law 109-449), as transferred by this Act, is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (5) as paragraphs (2) through (6) respectively;

(B) by inserting before paragraph (2), as redesignated, the following:

"(1) RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOARD REGARDING APPOINTMENTS.—For appointments made under paragraph (2), the Board shall submit to the Under Secretary recommendations on candidates for appointment."

(C) in paragraph (2), as redesignated, in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking "and considering" and inserting "considering"; and

(ii) by inserting "and with the approval of the Secretary of Commerce," after "by the Board,";

(D) in paragraph (4)(A), as redesignated, by inserting "with the approval of the Secretary of Commerce" after "the Board";

(E) by amending paragraph (3), as redesignated, to read as follows:

"(3) TERMS.—Any Director appointed under paragraph (2) shall be appointed for a term of 6 years.";

(F) in paragraph (6), as redesignated—

(i) by inserting "the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development," after "Service,"; and

(ii) by inserting "and with the approval of the Secretary of Commerce" after "EPA Administrator".

(2) GENERAL POWERS.—Section 112(g) of the Marine Debris Act (Public Law 109-449), as transferred by this Act, is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A) by striking "officers and employees" and inserting "the initial officers and employees"; and

(B) in paragraph (2)(B)(i) by striking "its chief operating officer" and inserting "the chief executive officer of the Foundation".

(3) CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.—Section 112 of the Marine Debris Act (Public Law 109-449), as transferred by this Act, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(h) CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.—

"(1) APPOINTMENT; REMOVAL; REVIEW.—The Board may appoint, remove, and review the performance of the chief executive officer of the Foundation.

"(2) POWERS.—The chief executive officer of the Foundation may appoint, remove, and review the performance of any officer or employee of the Foundation."

(d) POWERS OF FOUNDATION.—Section 113(c)(1) of the Marine Debris Act (Public Law 109-449), as transferred by this Act, is amended in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(1) by inserting "nonprofit" before "corporation"; and

(2) by striking "acting as a trustee" and inserting "formed".

(e) PRINCIPAL OFFICE.—Section 113 of the Marine Debris Act (Public Law 109-449), as transferred by this Act, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(g) PRINCIPAL OFFICE.—The Board shall locate the principal office of the Foundation in the National Capital Region, as such term is defined in section 2674(f)(2) of title 10, United States Code, or a coastal shoreline community."

(f) BEST PRACTICES.—Section 113 of the Marine Debris Act (Public Law 109-449), as transferred by this Act and amended by subsection (e), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

"(h) BEST PRACTICES.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Foundation shall develop and implement best practices for conducting outreach to Indian Tribes.

"(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The best practices developed under paragraph (1) shall—

"(A) include a process to support technical assistance and capacity building to improve outcomes; and

"(B) promote an awareness of programs and grants available under this Act."