

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7943

To establish within the Federal Communications Commission the Communications Equity and Diversity Council, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 16, 2026

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. BARRAGÁN, and Mr. CARTER of Louisiana) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To establish within the Federal Communications Commission the Communications Equity and Diversity Council, 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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Communications Eq-
5 uity and Diversity Council Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. COMMUNICATIONS EQUITY AND DIVERSITY COUN-**
2 **CIL.**

3 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within
4 the Commission an advisory committee to be known as the
5 Communications Equity and Diversity Council.

6 (b) DUTIES.—The duties of the Council shall be the
7 following:

8 (1) To make recommendations to the Commis-
9 sion, including with respect to—

10 (A) advancing equity with respect to the
11 provision of and access to communication serv-
12 ices, without discrimination on the basis of
13 race, color, religion, national origin, sex, or dis-
14 ability;

15 (B) assisting historically underserved indi-
16 viduals to benefit from communication services
17 and opportunities made possible by such serv-
18 ices;

19 (C) accelerating the deployment to all com-
20 munities of affordable and reliable communica-
21 tion services by reducing or removing regulatory
22 barriers to infrastructure and investment;

23 (D) accelerating the entry of small busi-
24 nesses, including those owned by historically
25 underserved individuals, into industries relating
26 to communication services; and

1 (E) promoting, with respect to communica-
2 tion services, a diversity of voices, localism, eco-
3 nomic competition, technological advancement,
4 and the public interest, convenience, and neces-
5 sity.

6 (2) To provide a forum for stakeholders with
7 respect to communication services, including with re-
8 spect to the issues of—

- 9 (A) deployment;
- 10 (B) affordability;
- 11 (C) digital discrimination;
- 12 (D) access to capital;
- 13 (E) small business mentoring;
- 14 (F) employment upskilling;
- 15 (G) ownership diversity; and
- 16 (H) procurement opportunities.

17 (3) To develop data and examine industry
18 trends and practices for purposes of carrying out
19 each duty described in this subsection.

20 (4) To carry out other tasks as determined ap-
21 propriate by the Commission.

22 (c) MEMBERSHIP.—

23 (1) NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The Council
24 shall be composed of not fewer than 30 and not

1 more than 35 members, each of whom shall be ap-
2 pointed by the Chair of the Commission.

3 (2) TERM.—Each member of the Council shall
4 serve for a 2-year term.

5 (3) REPRESENTATION.—The members of the
6 Council shall—

7 (A) be appointed in a manner that ensures
8 the Council has the expertise and balance of
9 viewpoints necessary to carry out the duties of
10 the Council; and

11 (B) include representatives of—

12 (i) historically underserved individ-
13 uals;

14 (ii) consumers;

15 (iii) civil rights organizations; and

16 (iv) industry stakeholders with respect
17 to communication services.

18 (4) DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICER.—

19 (A) APPOINTMENT.—The Chair of the
20 Commission shall appoint an employee of the
21 Commission as the Designated Federal Officer
22 for purposes of the Council.

23 (B) DUTIES.—The Designated Federal Of-
24 ficer appointed under subparagraph (A) shall—

1 (i) call or approve each meeting of the
2 Council;

3 (ii) prepare and approve each meeting
4 agenda;

5 (iii) attend each meeting of the Coun-
6 cil;

7 (iv) adjourn each meeting of the
8 Council once the Designated Federal Offi-
9 cer determines adjournment is in the pub-
10 lic interest; and

11 (v) chair each meeting of the Council
12 when directed to do so by the Chair of the
13 Commission.

14 (5) VACANCIES.—The Chair of the Commission
15 shall fill any vacancy of the Council within 60 days
16 from the date an appointment of the Council be-
17 comes vacant.

18 (d) MEETINGS.—

19 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Council shall meet not
20 fewer than 3 times each year.

21 (2) OPEN MEETING REQUIREMENTS.—Each
22 meeting of the Council shall—

23 (A) be open to the public; and

24 (B) result in a deliverable, accessible to the
25 public, including—

- 1 (i) any recommendation made to the
2 Council;
3 (ii) a summary of the meeting;
4 (iii) meeting minutes; and
5 (iv) a presentation of any topic dis-
6 cussed.

7 (3) NOTICE.—Timely notice of each meeting of
8 the Council shall be published in the Federal Reg-
9 ister.

10 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
11 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
12 \$450,000 for fiscal year 2027.

13 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

14 (1) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission”
15 means the Federal Communications Commission.

16 (2) COUNCIL.—The term “Council” means the
17 Communications Equity and Diversity Council estab-
18 lished under subsection (a).

19 (3) COMMUNICATION SERVICE.—The term
20 “communication service” means communication
21 services subject to the jurisdiction of the Federal
22 Communications Commission.

23 (4) HISTORICALLY UNDERSERVED INDIVIDUAL.—The term “historically underserved indi-
24 vidual” means each of the following:
25

1 (A) An individual of color.

2 (B) A woman.

3 (C) An individual who resides in a rural
4 area.

5 (D) A veteran.

6 (E) An individual with a disability.

7 (F) An individual adversely affected by
8 persistent poverty or inequality.

9 (5) RURAL.—The term “rural” has the mean-
10 ing given such term in section 54.600 of title 47,
11 Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regu-
12 lation).

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