

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 553

To direct the Secretary of Commerce to establish a working group to recommend to Congress a definition of blockchain technology, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 26, 2019

Mr. YOUNG (for himself and Mr. MARKEY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Commerce to establish a working group to recommend to Congress a definition of blockchain technology, 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 “Blockchain Promotion
5 Act of 2019”.

6 **SEC. 2. WORKING GROUP TO RECOMMEND DEFINITION OF**
7 **BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY.**

8 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

1 (1) the term “Federal agency” has the meaning
2 given the term “agency” in section 551 of title 5,
3 United States Code; and

4 (2) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary
5 of Commerce.

6 (b) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days after
7 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall es-
8 tablish within the Department of Commerce a working
9 group to be known as the “Blockchain Working Group”.

10 (c) MEMBERSHIP.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Blockchain Working
12 Group shall be composed of members, the number of
13 whom shall be determined by the Secretary, and who
14 shall be appointed in accordance with paragraph (2).

15 (2) APPOINTMENT.—

16 (A) REPRESENTATIVES OF FEDERAL
17 AGENCIES.—

18 (i) DESIGNATION OF FEDERAL AGEN-
19 CIES.—The Secretary shall designate Fed-
20 eral agencies to be represented in the
21 Blockchain Working Group, as the Sec-
22 retary considers appropriate to ensure rep-
23 resentation of a cross-section of Federal
24 agencies that could use, or benefit from,
25 blockchain technology.

1 (ii) APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.—

2 The head of each Federal agency des-
 3 ignated under clause (i) shall appoint an
 4 officer or employee of the Federal agency
 5 to serve as a member of the Blockchain
 6 Working Group.

7 (B) REPRESENTATIVES OF NONGOVERN-
 8 MENTAL STAKEHOLDERS.—

9 (i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
 10 appoint representatives of nongovern-
 11 mental stakeholders with respect to
 12 blockchain technology to serve as members
 13 of the Blockchain Working Group.

14 (ii) REPRESENTATION OF CERTAIN
 15 STAKEHOLDERS REQUIRED.—The members
 16 of the Blockchain Working Group ap-
 17 pointed under clause (i) shall include rep-
 18 resentatives of—

19 (I) information and communica-
 20 tions technology manufacturers, sup-
 21 pliers, software providers, service pro-
 22 viders, and vendors;

23 (II) subject matter experts rep-
 24 resenting industrial sectors, other
 25 than the technology sector, that the

1 Secretary determines could use, or
2 benefit from, blockchain technology;

3 (III) small, medium, and large
4 businesses;

5 (IV) individuals and institutions
6 engaged in academic research relating
7 to blockchain technology;

8 (V) nonprofit organizations and
9 consumer advocacy groups engaged in
10 activities relating to blockchain tech-
11 nology; and

12 (VI) rural and urban stake-
13 holders.

14 (d) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
16 the date of enactment of this Act, the Blockchain
17 Working Group shall submit to Congress a report
18 that contains—

19 (A) a recommended definition of the dis-
20 tributed ledger technology commonly known as
21 “blockchain technology”; and

22 (B) recommendations for—

23 (i) a study to be conducted by the As-
24 sistant Secretary of Commerce for Com-
25 munications and Information, in coordina-

tion with the Federal Communications Commission, on the impact of blockchain technology on electromagnetic spectrum policy;

(ii) a study to examine a range of potential applications, including nonfinancial applications, for blockchain technology; and

(iii) opportunities for Federal agencies to use blockchain technology.

(2) CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IN

NIST INTERNAL REPORT 8202.—In making recommendations under paragraph (1), the Blockchain Working Group may consider any recommendations contained in National Institute of Standards and Technology Internal Report 8202, entitled “Blockchain Technology Overview” and published in October 2018.

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