

116TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 3569

To help small business broadband providers keep customers connected.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 23, 2020

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. SMITH, Mr. SULLIVAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. DAINES, Mr. JONES, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. TESTER, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. YOUNG, Ms. ROSEN, and Mr. PETERS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

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## A BILL

To help small business broadband providers keep customers connected.

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 “Keeping Critical Con-  
5 nections Act of 2020”.

6 **SEC. 2. KEEPING CRITICAL CONNECTIONS EMERGENCY**

7 **FUND.**

8 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

1           (1) the term “Commission” means the Federal  
2       Communications Commission;

3           (2) the term “covered program” means a pro-  
4       gram established by a small business broadband pro-  
5       vider under which the small business broadband pro-  
6       vider, at any time during the COVID–19 emergency  
7       period, voluntarily—

8           (A) provides a customer with free or dis-  
9       counted broadband service, or free upgrades of  
10      existing service to meet certain capacity and  
11      speed needs, due specifically to the presence of  
12      a student in the household of the customer who  
13      needs distance learning capability; or

14          (B) refrains from disconnecting broadband  
15      service provided to an existing customer due to  
16      nonpayment or underpayment if the customer—

17           (i) has a household income, at the  
18      time of the nonpayment or underpayment,  
19      that does not exceed 135 percent of the  
20      Federal poverty guidelines (as determined  
21      by the Secretary of Health and Human  
22      Services);

23           (ii) is unable to make a full payment  
24      due specifically to the economic impact of

1 the national emergency described in para-  
2 graph (3); and

3 (iii) provides sufficient documentation  
4 to the provider to show that the customer  
5 meets the criteria under clauses (i) and  
6 (ii);

7 (3) the term “COVID–19 emergency period”  
8 means the period during which the national emer-  
9 gency declaration by the President under the Na-  
10 tional Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.)  
11 with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019  
12 (COVID–19) is in effect; and

13 (4) the term “small business broadband pro-  
14 vider” means a broadband provider that provides  
15 broadband service to fewer than 250,000 customers.

16 (b) FUNDING.—

17 (1) APPROPRIATION.—Out of any funds in the  
18 Treasury not otherwise appropriated, there is appro-  
19 priated to the Commission \$2,000,000,000 for fiscal  
20 year 2020, to remain available until expended, to re-  
21 imburse small business broadband providers for the  
22 costs of carrying out a covered program.

23 (2) RULES.—The Commission shall promulgate  
24 rules on an expedited basis, and without regard to  
25 section 553 of title 5, United States Code, regarding

- 1 the provision of reimbursements to small business
- 2 broadband providers under paragraph (1).

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