

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 827

To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure the integrity of voice communications and to prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United States in the delivery of such communications.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 19, 2015

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. TESTER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure the integrity of voice communications and to prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United States in the delivery of such communications.

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 “Improving Rural Call
5 Quality and Reliability Act of 2015”.

1 **SEC. 2. ENSURING THE INTEGRITY OF VOICE COMMUNICA-**
 2 **TIONS.**

3 Part II of title II of the Communications Act of 1934
 4 (47 U.S.C. 251 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
 5 the following:

6 **“SEC. 262. ENSURING THE INTEGRITY OF VOICE COMMU-**
 7 **NICATIONS.**

8 “(a) **REGISTRATION AND COMPLIANCE BY INTER-**
 9 **MEDIATE PROVIDERS.**—An intermediate provider that of-
 10 fers or holds itself out as offering the capability to trans-
 11 mit covered voice communications from one destination to
 12 another and that charges any rate to any other entity (in-
 13 cluding an affiliated entity) for the transmission shall—

14 “(1) register with the Commission; and

15 “(2) comply with the service quality standards
 16 for such transmission to be established by the Com-
 17 mission under subsection (c)(1)(B).

18 “(b) **REQUIRED USE OF REGISTERED INTER-**
 19 **MEDIATE PROVIDERS.**—A covered provider may not use
 20 an intermediate provider to transmit covered voice com-
 21 munications unless such intermediate provider is reg-
 22 istered under subsection (a)(1).

23 “(c) **COMMISSION RULES.**—

24 “(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days
 25 after the date of the enactment of this section, the
 26 Commission shall promulgate rules to establish—

1 “(A) a registry to record registrations
2 under subsection (a)(1); and

3 “(B) service quality standards for the
4 transmission of covered voice communications
5 by intermediate providers.

6 “(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In promulgating the
7 rules required by paragraph (1), the Commission
8 shall—

9 “(A) ensure the integrity of the trans-
10 mission of covered voice communications to all
11 customers in the United States; and

12 “(B) prevent unjust or unreasonable dis-
13 crimination among areas of the United States
14 in the delivery of covered voice communications.

15 “(d) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF REGISTRY.—The
16 Commission shall make the registry established under sub-
17 section (e)(1)(A) publicly available on the website of the
18 Commission.

19 “(e) SCOPE OF APPLICATION.—The requirements of
20 this section shall apply regardless of the format by which
21 any communication or service is provided, the protocol or
22 format by which the transmission of such communication
23 or service is achieved, or the regulatory classification of
24 such communication or service.

1 “(f) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sec-
2 tion shall be construed to affect the regulatory classifica-
3 tion of any communication or service.

4 “(g) EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.—Nothing in this sec-
5 tion shall be construed to preempt the authority of a State
6 public utility commission or other relevant State agency
7 to collect data, or investigate and enforce State law and
8 regulations, regarding the completion of intrastate voice
9 communications, regardless of the format by which any
10 communication or service is provided, the protocol or for-
11 mat by which the transmission of such communication or
12 service is achieved, or the regulatory classification of such
13 communication or service.

14 “(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

15 “(1) COVERED PROVIDER.—The term ‘covered
16 provider’ has the meaning given the term in section
17 64.2101 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or
18 any successor thereto.

19 “(2) COVERED VOICE COMMUNICATION.—The
20 term ‘covered voice communication’ means a voice
21 communication (including any related signaling in-
22 formation) that is generated—

23 “(A) from the placement of a call from a
24 connection using a North American Numbering

1 Plan resource or a call placed to a connection
2 using such a numbering resource; and

3 “(B) through any service provided by a
4 covered provider.

5 “(3) INTERMEDIATE PROVIDER.—The term ‘in-
6 termediate provider’ means any entity that—

7 “(A) carries or processes traffic that is
8 generated from the placement of a call from a
9 connection using a North American Numbering
10 Plan resource or a call placed to a connection
11 using such a numbering resource; and

12 “(B) does not itself originate or terminate
13 such traffic in the context of the carriage or
14 processing.”.

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