

103^D CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2592

To establish a clearinghouse of information concerning telecommunications technologies that are useful in distance learning programs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 1, 1993

Mr. KREIDLER (for himself, Mrs. UNSOELD, and Mr. McDERMOTT) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To establish a clearinghouse of information concerning telecommunications technologies that are useful in distance learning programs, 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 “Distance Learning In-
5 formation Act of 1993”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSES.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that—

8 (1) the use by schools, libraries, public broad-
9 casters and nonprofit organizations of telecommuni-

1 cations technologies to enhance access to education
2 and training should be encouraged and supported;

3 (2) the Federal Government supports and will
4 expand its support for the development of these
5 services through the public telecommunications fa-
6 cilities program of the National Telecommunications
7 and Information Administration and other grant
8 programs;

9 (3) one of the problems experienced by both
10 providers of “distance learning” as well as by Fed-
11 eral grant administrators is a lack of data on which
12 technologies are most useful for given situations and
13 educational curricula; and

14 (4) as a result, money spent on distance learn-
15 ing programs may not be spent as efficiently as
16 possible.

17 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

18 (1) to achieve significant cost savings and im-
19 proved distance learning services by establishing, at
20 the National Telecommunications and Information
21 Administration of the Department of Commerce, an
22 “information clearinghouse” for distance learning
23 activities to gather and distribute information on the
24 effectiveness of distance learning programs and the
25 technologies used in such programs; and

1 (2) to require that any entity obtaining funding
2 from the public telecommunications facilities pro-
3 gram for distance learning activities must submit a
4 report on the effectiveness of its facility.

5 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF CLEARINGHOUSE.**

6 Part A of the National Telecommunications and In-
7 formation Administration Organization Act is amended—

8 (1) in section 103(b), by striking “section
9 105(d)” both places it appears and inserting “sec-
10 tion 106(d)”;

11 (2) by redesignating section 105 as section 106;
12 and

13 (3) by inserting after section 104 the following
14 new section:

15 **“SEC. 105. DISTANCE LEARNING INFORMATION CLEARING-**
16 **HOUSE.**

17 “(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—The Assistant Sec-
18 retary shall, in accordance with the requirements of this
19 section, establish within the National Telecommunications
20 and Information Administration Organizat Act a clearing-
21 house for the collection and dissemination of information
22 concerning distance learning.

23 “(b) FUNCTIONS OF CLEARINGHOUSE.—The func-
24 tions of the clearinghouse established under subsection (a)
25 shall include the following:

1 “(1) Maintaining a database of distance learn-
2 ing providers.

3 “(2) Receiving and reviewing reports of dif-
4 ferent distance learning activities.

5 “(3) Analyzing which activities appear to be
6 most effective under certain circumstances.

7 “(4) Publishing periodically a compilation of
8 the reports submitted and the clearinghouse analy-
9 sis.

10 “(5) Coordinating with the public telecommuni-
11 cations facilities program and other grant programs
12 of the Department of Commerce for review of dis-
13 tance learning grant applications.

14 “(c) DEFINITION.—The term ‘distance learning’
15 means the use by schools, libraries, public broadcasters
16 and nonprofit organizations of two-way video and audio
17 telecommunications technologies, such as satellite trans-
18 mission, fiber optics, and broadcast, to allow increased ac-
19 cess to educational materials and information by individ-
20 uals and groups who are at different and remote locations
21 from the originator of the information.”.

22 **SEC. 4. COORDINATION WITH PUBLIC TELECOMMUNI-**
23 **CATIONS FACILITIES PROGRAM.**

24 Section 392(a) of the Communications Act of 1934
25 is amended—

1 (1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph
2 (5);

3 (2) by striking the period at the end of para-
4 graph (6) and inserting “; and”; and

5 (3) by adding at the end the following new
6 paragraph:

7 “(7) the applicant will submit to the distance
8 learning clearinghouse established under section 105
9 of the National Telecommunications and Informa-
10 tion Administration Organization Act such informa-
11 tion concerning the project funded by the grant as
12 the Secretary may require in order to promote the
13 purposes of such clearinghouse.”.

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