

HR 5537

Digital GAP Act

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: International Affairs

Introduced: Jun 21, 2016

Current Status: Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Latest Action: Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations. (Sep 8, 2016)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/5537>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Royce, Edward R. [R-CA-39]

Party: Republican • **State:** CA • **Chamber:** House

Cosponsors (7 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Engel, Eliot L. [D-NY-16]	D · NY		Jun 21, 2016
Rep. McMorris Rodgers, Cathy [R-WA-5]	R · WA		Jun 21, 2016
Rep. Meng, Grace [D-NY-6]	D · NY		Jun 21, 2016
Rep. Bass, Karen [D-CA-37]	D · CA		Jul 14, 2016
Rep. McCaul, Michael T. [R-TX-10]	R · TX		Jul 14, 2016
Rep. Cicilline, David N. [D-RI-1]	D · RI		Jul 25, 2016
Rep. Kilmer, Derek [D-WA-6]	D · WA		Sep 7, 2016

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Foreign Affairs Committee	House	Markup By	Jul 14, 2016
Foreign Relations Committee	Senate	Referred To	Sep 8, 2016

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

International Affairs

Related Bills

No related bills are listed.

Digital Global Access Policy Act of 2016 or the Digital GAP Act

(Sec. 4) This bill declares that it is U.S. policy to coordinate with foreign governments, international organizations, regional economic communities, businesses, and civil society to promote in developing countries:

- first-time, affordable Internet access;
- Internet deployment and capacity building;
- removal of tax and regulatory barriers to Internet access;
- Internet use to increase economic growth and trade and to bolster democracy, government accountability, transparency, and human rights;
- Internet access, and inclusion into Internet policy making, for women, people with disabilities, minorities, low-income and marginalized groups, and underserved populations; and
- cybersecurity and data protection.

(Sec. 5) The bill expresses the sense of Congress that the State Department should: (1) redesignate an existing Assistant Secretary position to be the Assistant Secretary for Cyberspace to lead its diplomatic cyberspace policy, and (2) promote the recruitment of candidates with technical expertise into the Civil Service and the Foreign Service.

The redesignation of the Assistant Secretary position may not be construed as increasing the number of State Department Assistant Secretary positions above the current level of 24.

(Sec. 6) The bill expresses the sense of Congress that the U.S. Agency for International Development should: (1) integrate efforts to expand Internet access, develop appropriate technologies, and enhance digital literacy into its education, development, and economic growth programs; (2) expand the utilization of information and communications technologies in humanitarian aid and disaster relief responses; and (3) establish and promote guidelines for the protection of personal information of individuals served by humanitarian, disaster, and development programs.

(Sec. 7) The Peace Corps Act is amended to express the sense of Congress that technology access can transform agriculture, community economic development, education, environment, health, and youth development, which are the sectors in which Peace Corps currently develops volunteer positions.

(Sec. 8) The President is urged to use U.S. influence at international bodies to advocate for:

- increased efforts to promote affordable and gender-equitable Internet access,
- integrating gender-equitable affordable Internet access into existing economic and business assessments and indexes,
- standardized inclusion of broadband conduit--fiber optic cables that support broadband or wireless facilities for broadband service,
- providing technical assistance to regulatory authorities in developing countries to remove unnecessary barriers to investment and strengthen market growth and development, and
- protection of human rights online.

(Sec. 9) The President shall transmit to Congress within 180 days plans to promote U.S. and U.S.-funded agency partnerships with the private and public sectors to provide Internet access or infrastructure in developing countries.

(Sec. 10) The President shall report to Congress within 180 days on efforts to implement the Internet access policy under this bill.

(Sec. 11) The President is urged to include in the next White House Cyberspace Strategy information about methods to promote: (1) Internet access in developing countries, (2) cybersecurity policy consistent with the National Institute of Standards and Technology Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity, and (3) global Internet freedom principles.

(Sec. 12) The bill defines "cyberspace" as the interdependent network of information technology infrastructures, including the Internet, telecommunications networks, computer systems, embedded processors and controllers in critical industries, and the virtual environment of information and interactions between people.

Actions Timeline

- **Sep 8, 2016:** Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.
- **Sep 7, 2016:** Mr. Royce moved to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.
- **Sep 7, 2016:** Considered under suspension of the rules. (consideration: CR H5146-5149)
- **Sep 7, 2016:** DEBATE - The House proceeded with forty minutes of debate on H.R. 5537.
- **Sep 7, 2016:** Passed/agreed to in House: On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended Agreed to by voice vote.(text: CR H5146-5147)
- **Sep 7, 2016:** On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended Agreed to by voice vote. (text: CR H5146-5147)
- **Sep 7, 2016:** Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection.
- **Jul 14, 2016:** Committee Consideration and Mark-up Session Held.
- **Jul 14, 2016:** Ordered to be Reported (Amended) by Voice Vote.
- **Jun 21, 2016:** Introduced in House
- **Jun 21, 2016:** Referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

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