

HR 4208

Section 331 Obligation Clarification Act

Congress: 117 (2021–2023, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Science, Technology, Communications

Introduced: Jun 28, 2021

Current Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology.

Latest Action: Referred to the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology. (Jun 29, 2021)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/4208>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Pascrell, Bill, Jr. [D-NJ-9]

Party: Democratic • State: NJ • Chamber: House

Cosponsors (2 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Sires, Albio [D-NJ-8]	D · NJ		Jun 28, 2021
Rep. Van Drew, Jefferson [R-NJ-2]	R · NJ		Jun 28, 2021

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Energy and Commerce Committee	House	Referred to	Jun 29, 2021

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Science, Technology, Communications

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
117 S 2220	Identical bill	Jun 24, 2021: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Section 331 Obligation Clarification Act

This bill specifies that certain service obligations owed by the licensee of a commercial television broadcast station apply regardless of the broadcast frequency used by the licensee.

Specifically, the bill provides that a licensee making a change from a very high frequency (VHF) broadcast station to an ultrahigh frequency (UHF) broadcast station must ensure the change does not affect its obligation to provide service to its customers. The bill also requires such a licensee to (1) broadcast at least 14 hours of common local programming per week, (2) include a substantial amount of particularized local content, and (3) maintain a studio in the station's community.

The bill further provides for the reallocation of a station to a community where there is no VHF or UHF station.

The Government Accountability Office must examine and report on the process used by the Federal Communications Commission for renewing broadcast television licenses to determine if that process meets specified obligations. In particular, the GAO must review how the process relates to television broadcast stations with specific obligations to serve the needs of their local communities.

Actions Timeline

- **Jun 29, 2021:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology.
- **Jun 28, 2021:** Introduced in House
- **Jun 28, 2021:** Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.