117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. ______

To establish the Digital Literacy and Equity Commission, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mrs. LAWRENCE introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on ______________________

A BILL

To establish the Digital Literacy and Equity Commission, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SEC. 1. ESTABLISHMENT.

There is established a commission to be known as the “Digital Literacy and Equity Commission” (in this Act referred to as the “Commission”).

SEC. 2. DUTIES.

The Commission shall conduct a study on digital literacy and equity, including—
(1) the state of digital literacy and information literacy in the United States, including—

(A) Federal, State, and local programs aimed at increasing digital literacy and information literacy; and

(B) an analysis of digital literacy and information literacy in low-income areas and disadvantaged areas;

(2) programs in other countries with the goal of increasing digital literacy and information literacy; and

(3) the identification of strategies and best practices to maintain increased levels of digital literacy and information literacy in the United States.

SEC. 3. MEMBERSHIP.

(a) NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The Commission shall be composed of—

(1) the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information or the delegate of the Assistant Secretary;

(2) the Chairperson of the Federal Communications Commission or the delegate of the Chairperson of the Federal Communications Commission;
(3) the Chief of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau of the Federal Communications Commission or the delegate of the Chief;

(4) the Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services or the delegate of the Director;

(5) the Secretary of Education or the delegate of the Secretary;

(6) the Secretary of Health and Human Services or the delegate of the Secretary;

(7) the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development or the delegate of the Secretary;

(8) 3 members appointed by the Chairperson of the Commission—

(A) with knowledge or expertise in digital literacy and equity;

(B) from the public or private sector, including—

(i) Federal, State, or local employees;

(ii) former Members of Congress; or

(iii) employees of academic institutions and non-governmental organizations; and

(C) who represent diverse economic, professional, and cultural backgrounds; and
(9) not more than 5 members appointed by the President, from among the heads of Federal agencies, or delegates of the heads of Federal agencies, who the President determines would be beneficial to the Commission.

(b) Chairperson; Vice Chairperson.—The Secretary of Education or the delegate of the Secretary shall serve as the Chairperson of the Commission, and the Chairperson of the Federal Communications Commission or the delegate of the Chairperson of the Federal Communications Commission shall serve as the Vice Chairperson of the Commission.

(c) Meetings.—

(1) First Meeting.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Chairperson of the Commission shall hold a meeting of the Commission.

(2) Subsequent Meetings.—The Commission shall meet not less than once every 4 months at a time and place determined by the Chairperson of the Commission, and may hold such other meetings as the Chairperson of the Commission determines are necessary to carry out this Act.

(3) Public Access.—All meetings of the Commission shall be open to the public.
(d) Quorum.—A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number may hold hearings.

SEC. 4. POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.

(a) Hearings and Sessions.—The Commission may, for the purpose of carrying out this Act, hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Commission considers appropriate.

(b) Powers of Members and Agents.—Any member or agent of the Commission may, if authorized by the Commission, take any action that the Commission is authorized to take by this section.

SEC. 5. REPORT.

Within 2 years after the appointment of the members of the Commission, the Chairperson of the Commission shall submit to the Congress a report that contains—

(1) the results of the study required by section 2;

(2) recommendations on how to improve and maintain the digital literacy and information literacy of individuals in the United States and education in the United States relating to digital literacy and information literacy through early education and community outreach, with a particular focus on increas-
ing equity in the availability of digital literacy and
information literacy resources;

(3) recommendations for the Federal Govern-
ment to create and implement a method to measure
digital literacy in the United States, in order to aid
future efforts to address digital literacy; and

(4) a plan to increase inter-agency coordination
to improve digital literacy services provided by the
Federal Government.

SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) DIGITAL LITERACY.—The term “digital lit-
eracy” means the ability to use information and
communication technologies to find, evaluate, create,
and communicate information, requiring both cog-
nitive and technical skills.

(2) INFORMATION LITERACY.—The term “infor-
mation literacy” means—

(A) the ability to recognize when informa-
tion is needed; and

(B) the ability to locate, evaluate, and use
needed information effectively.

(3) LOW-INCOME.—The term “low-income” has
the meaning given that term in section 1303 of the

(4) DISADVANTAGED AREA.—The term “disadvantaged area” means a community with an annual median household income that is less than 80 percent of the statewide annual median household income, determined on the basis of the latest available decennial census of the United States.