

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7131

To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for a moratorium on number reassignment after a disaster declaration, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 14, 2018

Mr. THOMPSON of California (for himself and Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for a moratorium on number reassignment after a disaster declaration, 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 “Preserving Home and
5 Office Numbers in Emergencies Act of 2018”.

1 **SEC. 2. MORATORIUM ON NUMBER REASSIGNMENT AFTER**
2 **DISASTER DECLARATION.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 251(e) of the Commu-
4 nications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 251(e)) is amended by
5 adding at the end the following:

6 “(4) MORATORIUM ON NUMBER REASSIGNMENT
7 AFTER DISASTER DECLARATION.—

8 “(A) IN GENERAL.—During a covered pe-
9 riod with respect to an area, a number assigned
10 in such area may not be reassigned, and the as-
11 signment of such number may not be rescinded
12 or otherwise modified, except at the request of
13 the subscriber to which such number is as-
14 signed.

15 “(B) EXTENSION AT REQUEST OF SUB-
16 SCRIBER.—At the request of the subscriber, the
17 prohibition in subparagraph (A) shall be ex-
18 tended with respect to the number assigned to
19 such subscriber for 2 years beyond the end of
20 the covered period.

21 “(C) SUBSCRIBER RIGHT TO CANCEL AND
22 RESUBSCRIBE.—

23 “(i) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a
24 number that is assigned to a subscriber for
25 the provision of wireline voice service at a
26 residence that is located in an area that is

1 in a covered period (or in the case of such
2 a number with respect to which the sub-
3 scriber requests an extension under sub-
4 paragraph (B)), if the major disaster in-
5 volved results in covered damage to such
6 residence—

7 “(I) the provider of such service
8 may not charge the subscriber any
9 early termination or other fee in con-
10 nection with the cancellation of such
11 service; and

12 “(II) if the subscriber cancels
13 such service, such provider (or any
14 other provider of wireline voice service
15 that serves the location involved)—

16 “(aa) shall permit the sub-
17 scriber to subscribe or resub-
18 scribe, as the case may be, to
19 wireline voice service with such
20 number at such residence or at a
21 different residence (if such num-
22 ber is available in the location of
23 such different residence); and

24 “(bb) may not charge the
25 subscriber any connection fee or

1 other fee relating to the initiation
2 of such service.

3 “(ii) TIMING.—Clause (i) shall cease
4 to apply with respect to the number at the
5 end of the covered period or at the end of
6 the extended period under subparagraph
7 (B), as the case may be.

8 “(iii) LIMITATION.—Except as pro-
9 vided in this subparagraph, the prohibition
10 in subparagraph (A) and any extension of
11 such prohibition under subparagraph (B)
12 shall cease to apply with respect to a num-
13 ber when the subscriber cancels the service
14 with respect to which the number is as-
15 signed.

16 “(D) IDENTIFICATION ON COMMISSION
17 WEBSITE.—The Commission shall publicly iden-
18 tify on the website of the Commission each area
19 that is in a covered period.

20 “(E) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

21 “(i) COVERED DAMAGE.—The term
22 ‘covered damage’ means, with respect to a
23 residence, damage—

24 “(I) that renders a residence in-
25 accessible or uninhabitable, or that re-

1 sults in displacement from the resi-
2 dence; and

3 “(II) with respect to which the
4 President determines that an indi-
5 vidual or household is eligible for
6 housing assistance or other needs as-
7 sistance under the Robert T. Stafford
8 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assist-
9 ance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.).

10 “(ii) COVERED PERIOD.—The term
11 ‘covered period’ means, with respect to an
12 area, any period that—

13 “(I) begins on the date of a dec-
14 laration by the President of a major
15 disaster under section 401 of the Rob-
16 ert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
17 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
18 5170) with respect to such area; and

19 “(II) ends on the date that is 1
20 year after the date on which such dec-
21 laration expires.

22 “(iii) WIRELINE VOICE SERVICE.—
23 The term ‘wireline voice service’ has the
24 meaning given the term ‘voice service’ in
25 section 227(e)(8), except that the term

1 ‘wireline voice service’ does not include
2 commercial mobile service (as defined in
3 section 332(d)).”.

4 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Paragraph (4) of section
5 251(e) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C.
6 251(e)), as added by subsection (a), shall apply with re-
7 spect to a major disaster declared by the President under
8 section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
9 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170) after the
10 date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of
11 this Act.

12 (c) TRANSITIONAL RULE.—Clause (iii) of subpara-
13 graph (E) of paragraph (4) of section 251(e) of the Com-
14 munications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 251(e)), as added by
15 subsection (a), shall apply before the effective date of the
16 amendment made to section 227(e)(8) of such Act (47
17 U.S.C. 227(e)(8)) by subparagraph (C) of section
18 503(a)(2) of division P of the Consolidated Appropriations
19 Act, 2018 (Public Law 115–141) as if such amendment
20 were already in effect.

○