

Public Law 109–459
109th Congress

An Act

To direct the Federal Communications Commission to make efforts to reduce telephone rates for Armed Forces personnel deployed overseas.

Dec. 22, 2006

[S. 2653]

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

Call Home Act of
2006.

47 USC 609 note.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Call Home Act of 2006”.

SEC. 2. TELEPHONE RATES FOR MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES DEPLOYED ABROAD.

47 USC 201 note.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Federal Communications Commission shall take such action as may be necessary to reduce the cost of calling home for Armed Forces personnel who are stationed outside the United States under official military orders or deployed outside the United States in support of military operations, training exercises, or other purposes as approved by the Secretary of Defense, including the reduction of such costs through the waiver of government fees, assessments, or other charges for such calls. The Commission may not regulate rates in order to carry out this section.

(b) **FACTORS TO CONSIDER.**—In taking the action described in subsection (a), the Commission, in coordination with the Department of Defense and the Department of State, shall—

(1) evaluate and analyze the costs to Armed Forces personnel of such telephone calls to and from American military bases abroad;

(2) evaluate methods of reducing the rates imposed on such calls, including deployment of new technology such as voice over Internet protocol or other Internet protocol technology;

(3) encourage telecommunications carriers (as defined in section 3(44) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 153(44))) to adopt flexible billing procedures and policies for Armed Forces personnel and their dependents for telephone calls to and from such Armed Forces personnel; and

(4) seek agreements with foreign governments to reduce international surcharges on such telephone calls.

(c) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **ARMED FORCES.**—The term “Armed Forces” has the meaning given that term by section 2101(2) of title 5, United States Code.

(2) **MILITARY BASE.**—The term “military base” includes official duty stations to include vessels, whether such vessels are in port or underway outside of the United States.

SEC. 3. REPEAL OF EXISTING AUTHORIZATION.

Section 213 of the Telecommunications Authorization Act of 1992 (47 U.S.C. 201 note) is repealed.

SEC. 4. PUBLIC SAFETY INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS GRANTS.

Deadline.

Pursuant to section 3006 of Public Law 109-171 (47 U.S.C. 309 note), the Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information of the Department of Commerce, in consultation with the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, shall award no less than \$1,000,000,000 for public safety interoperable communications grants no later than September 30, 2007 subject to the receipt of qualified applications as determined by the Assistant Secretary.

Approved December 22, 2006.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S. 2653:**CONGRESSIONAL RECORD**, Vol. 152 (2006):

Dec. 6, considered and passed Senate.

Dec. 8, considered and passed House.