To authorize a comprehensive program of nationwide access to Federal remote sensing data, to promote its use for education, workforce training and development, applied research, and to support Federal, State, tribal, and local government programs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 18, 2008

Mr. REGULA (for himself and Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To authorize a comprehensive program of nationwide access to Federal remote sensing data, to promote its use for education, workforce training and development, applied research, and to support Federal, State, tribal, and local government programs.

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

2 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

3 This Act may be cited as the “AmericaView Authorization Act”.

4 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

5 Congress finds the following:
(1) When Federal remote sensing data is available in a cost-effective and timely manner, State and local governments and educational institutions are able to develop new scientific, educational, and practical applications for the data and to adopt new tools for applied research, education, and training, as evidenced by the success of the United States Geological Survey pilot projects, OhioView and Gateway to Earth.

(2) Increased access to remote sensing data through State data archives benefits user communities that have traditionally struggled to afford the data as follows:

(A) Educators train college students for technology careers in remote sensing and train teachers that remote sensing data can enhance student learning in elementary and secondary education.

(B) Historically black colleges and universities partner with StateView universities to enhance learning and training opportunities for its students.

(C) Native Americans provide training and education in the use and application of remote sensing data for Native American students and
developing satellite-based applications for managing reservation resources.

(3) Universities and State and local government agencies use remote sensing data to support practical purposes, including—

(A) monitoring the health of national lands and forests;

(B) monitoring crop progress, assessing damage, and predicting crop yield;

(C) assisting with transportation and land-use planning in the urban areas of the Nation;

(D) predicting and assisting with the management of human disease outbreaks; and

(E) assessing and managing natural disasters.

(4) The AmericaView program is uniquely positioned to help each State address remote sensing data infrastructure issues and to expand the use and benefits of remote sensing data to each State.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

As used in this Act:

(1) AMERICAVIEW PROGRAM.—The term “AmericaView program” means the national AmericaView program of the USGS, comprised of the AmericaView project and AmericaView.
(2) AmericaView Project.—The term “AmericaView project” means the USGS data archive, development, maintenance, and product distribution program conducted at the EROS Data Center.

(3) AmericaView.—The term “AmericaView” means the national nonprofit collaboration of StateView participants cooperating with the EROS Data Center to achieve the purposes of the AmericaView program.

(4) Educational Institution.—The term “educational institution” means any public or private elementary or secondary school, vocational school, correspondence school, business school, college (including a junior college and teachers’ college) normal school, professional school, university, or scientific or technical institution, or any other institution that furnishes education.

(5) EROS Data Center.—The term “EROS Data Center” means the data management, systems development, and research field center of the USGS.

(6) National Spatial Data Infrastructure.—The term “national spatial data infrastructure” means the technology, policies, standards, and human resources necessary to acquire, process,
store, distribute, and improve utilization of
geospatial data for the Nation, established by Execu-
tive Order 12906, dated April 11, 1994 (“Coordi-
nating Geographic Data Acquisition and Access: The
National Spatial Data Infrastructure”).

(7) Remote sensing data.—The term “re-
move sensing data” means all information acquired
from above the surface of the Earth by satellite or
airplane.

(8) Secretary.—The term “Secretary” means
the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Di-
rector of the USGS.

(9) State.—The term “State” means each of
the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Com-
monwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands,
Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of
the Northern Mariana Islands.

(10) StateView.—The term “StateView”
means the AmericaView program of an individual
State, comprised of educational institutions and
State and local governments.

(11) USGS.—The term “USGS” means the
United States Geological Survey.
SEC. 4. AMERICAVIEW PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall maintain a nationwide program to advance the availability, timely distribution, and widespread use of remote sensing data and technology in each State.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the AmericaView program are to—

(1) increase accessibility and expand the use of remote sensing data in a standard, easy-to-use format to Federal, State, local and tribal governments, communities, educational institutions, and the commercial sector;

(2) assist each State in establishing the infrastructure necessary to archive and distribute remote sensing data;

(3) ensure that the National Satellite Land Remote Sensing Data Archive of the USGS and State remote sensing data archives support and comply with other Federal programs related to national data infrastructure, homeland security, and national defense; and

(4) provide remote sensing data to the national spatial data infrastructure.

(c) ACTIVITIES.—

(1) AMERICAVIEW PROJECT.—The Secretary, through the AmericaView project, shall support the
remote sensing data research and educational programs of each State by cooperating with the States to identify new remote sensing data needs and infrastructure and to define, consolidate, and maintain its data requirements.

(2) AMERICAVIEW.—The Secretary, through the AmericaView program, shall maintain AmericaView in each State to—

(A) share and cooperate in the development of a freely and publicly accessible remote sensing data archive and distribution infrastructure;

(B) cooperate with the AmericaView project to develop nationally consistent standards for remote sensing data archives in the State;

(C) expand the number of remote sensing data courses taught at educational institutions, and provide training, remote sensing data, and teaching tools to educators;

(D) expand remote sensing data research at research educational institutions;

(E) expand the knowledge and use of remote sensing data and data products in the
current workforce through outreach programs, workshops, and other training opportunities;

(F) build partnerships with local governments to identify unique research and development needs and foster remote sensing pilot projects;

(G) promote cooperation and sharing of expertise about remote sensing data among the participating State and within each participating State; and

(H) enable the States to provide remote sensing data to the EROS Data Center.

(3) GRANTS.—The Secretary shall annually award grants to sustain and develop StateView programs.

(4) FEDERAL PARTNER ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall maintain an advisory committee to advise the Director of the USGS about the AmericaView program.

(B) MEMBERSHIP AND APPOINTMENT.—The committee shall consist of a representative from AmericaView, the USGS, the Department
of Agriculture, and a representative of such other agencies as the Director may designate.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act for each of the fiscal years 2009 through 2014.