

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2368

To direct the Secretary of Labor to make grants to States, units of general local government, and Indian tribes for the purpose of creating employment opportunities for unemployed and underemployed residents in distressed communities.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 24, 2011

Mr. ELLISON (for himself, Ms. WOOLSEY, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. MOORE, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Labor to make grants to States, units of general local government, and Indian tribes for the purpose of creating employment opportunities for unemployed and underemployed residents in distressed communities.

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 “Put America to Work
5 Act of 2011”.

1 **SEC. 2. GRANTS TO STATES, UNITS OF GENERAL LOCAL**
2 **GOVERNMENT, AND INDIAN TRIBES.**

3 (a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—Subject to the availability of
4 appropriations for such purpose, the Secretary of Labor
5 shall make grants to States, units of general local govern-
6 ment, and Indian tribes to carry out activities in accord-
7 ance with this Act.

8 (b) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of this program is to
9 create employment opportunities for unemployed and un-
10 deremployed residents of distressed communities in activi-
11 ties designed to address community needs and reduce dis-
12 parities in health, housing, education, job readiness, and
13 public infrastructure that have impeded these communities
14 from realizing their full economic potential.

15 (c) **ELIGIBILITY.**—For purposes of the grant pro-
16 gram under this Act, an eligible entity is—

17 (1) a unit of general local government, includ-
18 ing a metropolitan city or an urban county;

19 (2) a State; or

20 (3) an Indian tribe.

21 (d) **USE OF FUNDS.**—A recipient of a grant under
22 this section shall use the grant for the following purposes:

23 (1) For the 9-month period after the date of
24 the enactment of this Act, the grant shall be used
25 only to fund the following types of fast-track job
26 placements:

1 (A) The painting and repair of schools,
2 community centers, and libraries.

3 (B) The restoration and revitalization of
4 abandoned and vacant properties to alleviate
5 blight in distressed, foreclosure-affected, and
6 natural disaster-affected areas of a unit of gen-
7 eral local government.

8 (C) The expansion of emergency food pro-
9 grams to reduce hunger and promote family
10 stability.

11 (D) The augmentation of staffing in Head
12 Start, child care, and other early childhood edu-
13 cation programs to promote school readiness
14 and early literacy.

15 (E) The renovation and enhancement of
16 maintenance of parks, playgrounds, and other
17 public spaces.

18 (2) During the 9-month period after the date of
19 the enactment of this Act, the grant recipients shall
20 consult with community leaders, including local gov-
21 ernment officials, small business owners, labor orga-
22 nizations, non-profit organizations, and local resi-
23 dents to—

24 (A) assess the needs of the community
25 served by the grant recipient;

1 (B) determine sectors of the local economy
2 that are in need of employees;

3 (C) make recommendations for new em-
4 ployment opportunities in the areas described in
5 paragraph (3); and

6 (D) assess the effectiveness of job place-
7 ments made under paragraph (1).

8 (3) Not later than 9 months after the recipient
9 of a grant begins to use the grant to fund fast-track
10 job placements under paragraph (1), the recipient
11 shall use the remaining amount of the grant to make
12 grants to public entities, nonprofit organizations,
13 public-private partnerships, or small businesses to
14 create opportunities for employment in the following
15 areas:

16 (A) Construction, re-construction, rehabili-
17 tation, and site improvements of residences or
18 public facilities, including improvements in the
19 energy efficiency or environmental quality of
20 such public facilities or residences.

21 (B) Provision of human services, including
22 child care services, health care services, edu-
23 cation, or recreational programs.

1 (C) The remediation and demolition of va-
2 cant and abandoned properties to eliminate
3 blight.

4 (D) Programs that provide disadvantaged
5 youth with opportunities for employment, edu-
6 cation, leadership development, entrepreneurial
7 skills development, and training.

8 (e) CONDITIONS.—As a condition of receiving a grant
9 under this section, a grant recipient shall—

10 (1) agree to comply with the nondiscrimination
11 policy set forth under section 109 of the Housing
12 and Community Development Act of 1974 (42
13 U.S.C. 5309);

14 (2) allocate not less than 85 percent of the
15 funding allocated to each project funded under the
16 grant to wages, benefits, and support services, in-
17 cluding child care services, for individuals employed
18 on such project;

19 (3) ensure that employment on any project
20 funded under the grant is carried out in accordance
21 with subsection (f); and

22 (4) institute an outreach program with commu-
23 nity organizations and service providers in low-in-
24 come communities to provide information about

1 placements funded under the grant to individuals
2 suited to perform community infrastructure work.

3 (f) EMPLOYMENT DESCRIBED.—Employment funded
4 under this section shall meet the following specifications:

5 (1) Any employer that employs an individual
6 whose employment is funded under the grant shall—

7 (A) employ such individual for not less
8 than 12 months;

9 (B) employ such individual for not less
10 than 30 hours per week;

11 (C) comply with responsible contractor
12 standards, as determined by the relevant official
13 in the unit of local general government;

14 (D) provide compensation to such indi-
15 vidual equal to that which is paid to employees
16 who have been employed to perform similar
17 work prior to the date such individual was
18 hired; and

19 (E) if such employment is in construction,
20 provide compensation to any laborer or me-
21 chanic employed under the grant at rates not
22 less than those prevailing on similar construc-
23 tion in the locality as determined by the Sec-
24 retary of Labor in accordance with subchapter

1 IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States
2 Code.

3 (2) No individual whose employment is funded
4 under the grant may work for an employer at which
5 a collective bargaining agreement is in effect cov-
6 ering the same or similar work, unless—

7 (A) the consent of the union at such em-
8 ployer is obtained; and

9 (B) negotiations have taken place between
10 such union and the employer as to the terms
11 and conditions of such employment.

12 (3) An individual whose employment is funded
13 under this Act may not displace other employees
14 whose employment is not funded under this Act. A
15 grant recipient under this Act may not hire an em-
16 ployee or employees with funds under this Act for
17 any employment which the grant recipient would
18 otherwise hire an employee who has been furloughed.

19 (4) An individual whose employment is funded
20 under this Act shall be unemployed for not less than
21 30 days prior to beginning employment funded by a
22 grant, as verified by the State or local department
23 of labor, department of welfare, or similar office
24 charged with maintaining records of unemployment.

1 (5) Not less than 35 percent of whose employ-
2 ment is funded under this Act shall be members of
3 a targeted group (as described in section 51(d)(1) of
4 the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) as verified by
5 the State or local department of labor, department
6 of welfare, or similar office charged with maintain-
7 ing records of unemployment.

8 (g) AWARD OF GRANTS.—

9 (1) SELECTION CRITERIA.—In selecting a
10 project to receive funding for employing individuals
11 in employment funded under this Act, a grant recipi-
12 ent shall consider—

13 (A) the input of all participants in a pro-
14 posed project, including labor organizations,
15 community organizations, and employers;

16 (B) the needs of the community intended
17 to benefit from such project;

18 (C) the long-term goals and short term ob-
19 jectives to address such needs; and

20 (D) any recommendations for programs
21 and activities developed to meet such needs.

22 (2) PRIORITY GIVEN TO CERTAIN PROJECTS.—

23 A grant recipient under this section shall give pri-
24 ority to projects that—

1 (A) serve areas with the greatest level of
2 economic need, determined for each such area
3 by—

4 (i) the unemployment rate;

5 (ii) the rate of poverty;

6 (iii) the number of census tracts with
7 concentrated poverty;

8 (iv) the lowest median income;

9 (v) the percentage of vacant and
10 abandoned properties;

11 (vi) the percentage of home fore-
12 closures; and

13 (vii) the indicators of poor resident
14 health, including high rates of chronic dis-
15 ease, infant mortality, and life expectancy;

16 (B) integrate education and job skills
17 training, including basic skills instruction and
18 secondary education services;

19 (C) coordinate to the maximum extent fea-
20 sible with pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship
21 programs; and

22 (D) provide jobs in sectors where job
23 growth is most likely, as determined by the Sec-
24 retary, and in which career advancement oppor-
25 tunities exist to maximize long-term, sustain-

1 able employment for individuals after employ-
2 ment funded under this Act ends.

3 (h) ALLOCATION OF GRANTS.—

4 (1) GRANTS FOR INDIAN TRIBES AND DEPOSITS
5 INTO DISCRETIONARY FUND.—Not more than 5 per-
6 cent of the funds appropriated to carry out this Act
7 for any fiscal year shall be reserved for grants to In-
8 dian tribes and for deposit into a discretionary fund
9 established by the Secretary for national demonstra-
10 tion projects and multi-jurisdictional projects.

11 (2) GRANTS TO STATES.—Not more than 30
12 percent of funds appropriated to carry out this Act
13 for any fiscal year shall be allocated to States to dis-
14 tribute to units of general local government that do
15 not qualify for funds under paragraph (3).

16 (3) GRANTS TO UNITS OF GENERAL LOCAL
17 GOVERNMENT.—Grant funds that are not reserved
18 under paragraphs (1) and (2) shall be allocated to
19 metropolitan cities and urban counties using the for-
20 mula under section 106(b) of the Housing and Com-
21 munity Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C.
22 5306(b)).

23 (i) RULEMAKING.—The Secretary of Labor may issue
24 regulations as the Secretary determines necessary and ap-

1 appropriate to carry out the grant program authorized by
2 this Act.

3 (j) REPORTS.—

4 (1) REPORTS BY GRANT RECIPIENTS.—Not
5 later than 90 days after the last day of each fiscal
6 year in which assistance under this section is fur-
7 nished, a recipient of a grant under this section shall
8 submit to the Secretary a report containing the fol-
9 lowing:

10 (A) A description of the progress made in
11 accomplishing the objectives of this chapter.

12 (B) A summary of the use of the grant
13 during the preceding fiscal year.

14 (C) For units of general local government,
15 a listing of each entity receiving funds and the
16 amount of such grants, as well as a brief sum-
17 mary of the projects funded for each such unit,
18 the extent of financial participation by other
19 public or private entities, and the impact on
20 employment and economic activity of such
21 projects during the previous fiscal year.

22 (D) For States, a listing of each unit of
23 general local government receiving funds and
24 the amount of such grants, as well as a brief
25 summary of the projects funded for each such

1 unit, the extent of financial participation by
2 other public or private entities, and the impact
3 on employment and economic activity of such
4 projects during the previous fiscal year.

5 (E) The amount of money received and ex-
6 pended during the fiscal year.

7 (F) The number of individuals assisted
8 under the grant whose household income is low-
9 income, very low-income, or extremely low-in-
10 come (as such terms are used for purposes of
11 the Housing Act of 1937 and the regulations
12 thereunder (42 U.S.C. 1437 et seq.)).

13 (G) The amount expended on administra-
14 tive costs during the fiscal year.

15 (2) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—At least once
16 every 6 months, the Secretary shall submit to Con-
17 gress a report on the use of grants awarded under
18 this section and any progress in job creation.

19 (k) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

20 (1) The term “State” has the meaning given
21 such term in section 5302(2) of title 42, United
22 States Code.

23 (2) The term “unit of general local govern-
24 ment” has the meaning given such term in section
25 5302(1) of title 42, United States Code.

1 (3) The term “Indian tribe” has the meaning
2 given such term in section 5302(17) of title 42,
3 United States Code.

4 (4) The term “small business” has the meaning
5 given the term “small business concern” under sec-
6 tion 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632).

7 (5) The term “metropolitan city” has the mean-
8 ing given such term in section 5302(4) of title 42,
9 United States Code.

10 (6) The term “urban county” has the meaning
11 given such term in section 5302(6) of title 42,
12 United States Code.

13 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

14 There is authorized to be appropriated
15 \$200,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2012 and
16 \$150,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2013 to carry out this
17 Act. Amounts appropriated pursuant to this section shall
18 remain available until expended.

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