

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3727

To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide emergency assistance to homeless veterans and their families affected by Hurricane Katrina, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 13, 2005

Mr. EVANS (for himself, Mr. FILNER, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. MICHAUD, Ms. HERSETH, Mr. STRICKLAND, Ms. HOOLEY, Mr. REYES, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. GUTIERREZ, and Mr. UDALL of New Mexico) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide emergency assistance to homeless veterans and their families affected by Hurricane Katrina, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. USE OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**
2 **FORECLOSED HOMES FOR VETERANS AND**
3 **DISPLACED PERSONS.**

4 (a) USE OF FORECLOSED HOMES.—(1) In the case
5 of any residential property on which the Department of
6 Veterans Affairs has foreclosed or which the Secretary of
7 Veterans Affairs has acquired pursuant to section 3732
8 of title 38, United States Code, that the Secretary deter-
9 mines to be suitable, the Secretary shall make such prop-
10 erty available to an entity described in paragraph (2) or
11 to another entity designated by the Director of the Federal
12 Emergency Management Agency for use as a temporary
13 residence for Hurricane Katrina-affected individuals. The
14 period for which such a property may be made available
15 for use as a temporary residence under this section may
16 not exceed two years.

17 (2) An entity referred to in paragraph (1) is an entity
18 described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of section
19 2041(a)(1) of title 38, United States Code.

20 (3) An entity to which a residential property is made
21 available under paragraph (1) shall give priority in pro-
22 viding shelter to those Hurricane Katrina-affected individ-
23 uals who are veterans, surviving spouses of veterans, and
24 children of veterans (as those terms are defined in section
25 101 of title 38, United States Code), and their families.

1 (4) In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary of
2 Veterans Affairs shall consult with the Under Secretary
3 of Homeland Security for Emergency Preparedness and
4 Response.

5 (b) REIMBURSEMENT OF CERTAIN EXPENDI-
6 TURES.—Consistent with section 304 of the Robert T.
7 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
8 (42 U.S.C. 5147), the Director of the Federal Emergency
9 Management Agency shall reimburse the Secretary of Vet-
10 erans Affairs for any expenditures of the Department of
11 Veterans Affairs relating to the repair, maintenance, or
12 management of properties owned by the Department of
13 Veterans Affairs to the extent that such repair, mainte-
14 nance, or management is for the purpose of making such
15 properties available as temporary residences for Hurricane
16 Katrina-affected individuals under the authority of section
17 3720 of title 38, United States Code.

18 (c) HURRICANE KATRINA-AFFECTED INDIVIDUAL
19 DEFINED.—For purposes of this Act, the term “Hurri-
20 cane Katrina-affected individual” means an individual who
21 as of August 28, 2005, resided in, or was employed in,
22 a county adversely affected by Hurricane Katrina in the
23 State of Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, or Alabama that
24 is designated for individual assistance or public assistance
25 by Federal Disaster Declaration notice 1602, 1603, 1604,

1 or 1605, respectively (as amended), issued by the Federal
2 Emergency Management Agency.

3 (d) PUBLICATION OF REGULATIONS.—The Secretary
4 is not required to publish in the Federal Register regula-
5 tions to carry out this section.

6 **SEC. 2. EMERGENCY GRANTS TO ORGANIZATIONS FOR**
7 **PROVISION OF SHELTER TO HOMELESS VET-**
8 **ERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES.**

9 (a) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
10 is authorized to make emergency grants to entities de-
11 scribed in section 1(a)(2) for the purpose of providing
12 housing assistance to homeless veterans (as defined in sec-
13 tion 2002 of title 38, United States Code) who are Hurri-
14 cane Katrina-affected individuals and their families for a
15 period not to exceed two years.

16 (b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive an emer-
17 gency grant under this subsection, such an entity shall
18 have the capacity (as determined by the Secretary) to ef-
19 fectively administer such a grant.

20 (c) PROVISION OF NOTICE.—The Secretary shall pro-
21 vide notice of the availability of emergency grants on the
22 Internet website of the Department of Veterans Affairs and
23 use such other means of notice as the Secretary may de-
24 termine are appropriate.

1 (d) REPORT.—Not later than 30 days after the date
 2 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit
 3 to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of
 4 Representatives and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs
 5 of the Senate a report specifying the number of grants
 6 awarded under this section and the identity of each grant
 7 recipient.

8 (e) PUBLICATION OF REGULATIONS.—The Secretary
 9 is not required to publish in the Federal Register regula-
 10 tions to carry out this section.

11 (f) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—The authority of
 12 the Secretary to make grants under this section shall ter-
 13minate on September 30, 2007.

14 **SEC. 3. USE OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FA-**
 15 **CILITIES FOR HOMELESS VETERANS AND**
 16 **THEIR FAMILIES.**

17 (a) AUTHORITY FOR USE OF UNDERUTILIZED DE-
 18 PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PROPERTY AS TEM-
 19 PORARY VETERAN HOUSING.—Subchapter I of chapter 81
 20 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at
 21 the end the following new section:

22 **“§ 8119. Underutilized property: housing for veterans**
 23 **during emergency**

24 “(a) AUTHORITY.—Notwithstanding any other provi-
 25 sion of this title or of any other law, during or following

1 a period of emergency or disaster declared by the Presi-
 2 dent pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
 3 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.),
 4 the Secretary may use underutilized Department property
 5 that is habitable or that can be rendered habitable with
 6 limited resources, as determined by the Secretary, to
 7 house, for a period not to exceed 180 days, veterans and
 8 their dependents who are displaced as a result of such
 9 emergency or disaster.

10 “(b) UNDERUTILIZED DEPARTMENT PROPERTY.—
 11 For purposes of this section, the term ‘underutilized De-
 12 partment property’ means an asset of the Department
 13 that is so identified by the Capital Asset Realignment for
 14 Enhanced Services or otherwise identified by the Sec-
 15 retary.”.

16 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
 17 at the beginning of chapter 81 of title 38, United States
 18 Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to
 19 section 8118 the following new item:

“8119. Underutilized property: housing for veterans during emergency.”.

20 **SEC. 4. EMERGENCY GRANTS FOR REPLACEMENT OR RE-**
 21 **PAIR OF HOMELESS VETERAN FACILITIES.**

22 (a) EMERGENCY GRANT AUTHORITY.—Subchapter II
 23 of chapter 20 of title 38, United States Code, is amended
 24 by adding at the end the following new section:

1 **“§ 2014. Emergency grants for repair or replacement**
2 **of homeless veteran facilities**

3 “(a) **AUTHORITY.**—The Secretary may make emer-
4 gency grants to eligible entities providing care for home-
5 less veterans for the purpose of repairing or replacing fa-
6 cilities used for the provision of such care that are dam-
7 aged or destroyed by a disaster.

8 “(b) **ELIGIBLE ENTITY.**—In this section, the term
9 ‘eligible entity’ has the meaning given that term in section
10 2011(d) of this title.

11 “(c) **ESTABLISHMENT OF CRITERIA AND REQUIRE-**
12 **MENTS.**—The Secretary shall establish criteria and re-
13 quirements for grants under this section and shall publish
14 such criteria and requirements in the Federal Register.

15 “(d) **DISASTER.**—In this section, the term ‘disaster’
16 means any hurricane, tornado, storm, flood, high water,
17 wind-driven water, tidal wave, tsunami, earthquake, vol-
18 canic eruption, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, drought,
19 fire, explosion, or other catastrophe in any part of the
20 United States which causes, or which may cause, substan-
21 tial damage or injury to civilian property or persons.”.

22 (b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections
23 at the beginning of chapter 20 of such title is amended
24 by inserting after the item relating to section 2013 the
25 following new item:

“2014. Emergency grants for repair or replacement of homeless veteran facilities.”.

