

110TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 5490

To reform the program for rental assistance under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 26, 2008

Mr. CHABOT introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services

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## A BILL

To reform the program for rental assistance under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937, 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 “Section 8 Reform, Re-  
5       sponsibility, and Accountability Act of 2007”.

6       **SEC. 2. PROHIBITION OF SECTION 8 RENTAL ASSISTANCE**  
7       **FOR FELONS AND ILLEGAL ALIENS.**

8       (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8 of the United States  
9       Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f) is amended by  
10      inserting after subsection (i) the following new subsection:

1       “(j) PROHIBITION OF ASSISTANCE FOR FELONS.—  
 2 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, assistance  
 3 under this section (including tenant- and project-based as-  
 4 sistance) may not be provided for any family that includes  
 5 an individual who—

6               “(1) at any time, has been convicted of a felony  
 7 under any State or Federal law; or

8               “(2) is unlawfully present in the United  
 9 States.”.

10       (b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by sub-  
 11 section (a) shall apply beginning upon the expiration of  
 12 the 24-month period that begins on the date of the enact-  
 13 ment of this Act.

14       **SEC. 3. 5-YEAR TIME LIMITATION ON SECTION 8 RENTAL**  
 15               **ASSISTANCE.**

16       Section 16 of the United States Housing Act of 1937  
 17 (42 U.S.C. 1437n) is amended by adding at the end the  
 18 following new subsection:

19       “(g) 5-YEAR TIME LIMITATION ON SECTION 8 AS-  
 20 SISTANCE.—

21               “(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise pro-  
 22 vided in this subsection and notwithstanding any  
 23 other provision of this Act, assistance under section  
 24 8 may not be provided on behalf of any family that  
 25 includes a member who has previously been provided

1 such assistance for 60 months (whether or not con-  
2 secutive) or longer.

3 “(2) EXCEPTION FOR ELDERLY AND DISABLED  
4 FAMILIES.—In determining the number of months  
5 for which an individual has been provided assistance  
6 under section 8, for purposes of paragraph (1), a  
7 public housing agency shall disregard any month  
8 during which such individual was a member of a dis-  
9 abled or elderly family so assisted.

10 “(3) APPLICABILITY.—

11 “(A) IN GENERAL.—This subsection shall  
12 apply beginning upon the expiration of the 24-  
13 month period that begins on the date of the en-  
14 actment of the Section 8 Reform, Responsi-  
15 bility, and Accountability Act of 2007.

16 “(B) TREATMENT OF ASSISTANCE BEFORE  
17 EFFECTIVE DATE OF LIMITATION.—Except as  
18 provided in subparagraph (C), any months that  
19 commenced before the expiration of such period  
20 shall be considered for purposes of determining,  
21 pursuant to paragraph (1), the number of  
22 months for which an individual has been pro-  
23 vided assistance under section 8.

24 “(C) TWO-YEAR SAFE HARBOR AFTER EF-  
25 FECTIVE DATE.—For purposes of paragraph

1           (1), the maximum number of months that com-  
 2           menced before the expiration of such 24-month  
 3           period that any individual may be considered to  
 4           have been provided assistance under section 8,  
 5           shall be 36.”.

6   **SEC. 4. WORK REQUIREMENTS FOR SECTION 8 RENTAL AS-**  
 7                           **SISTANCE.**

8           Section 16 of the United States Housing Act of 1937  
 9   (42 U.S.C. 1437n), as amended by the preceding provi-  
 10   sions of this Act, is further amendment by adding at the  
 11   end the following new subsection:

12           “(h) WORK REQUIREMENT FOR ASSISTED FAMILIES  
 13   RECEIVING SECTION 8 ASSISTANCE.—

14                   “(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in this  
 15           subsection and notwithstanding any other provision  
 16           of this Act, assistance under section 8 may not be  
 17           provided on behalf of any family, unless each mem-  
 18           ber of the family who is 18 years of age or older per-  
 19           forms not fewer than 20 hours of work activities (as  
 20           such term is defined in section 407(d) of the Social  
 21           Security Act (42 U.S.C. 607(d))) per week.

22                   “(2) EXEMPTIONS.—The Secretary of Housing  
 23           and Urban Development shall provide an exemption  
 24           from the applicability of paragraph (1) for any indi-  
 25           vidual family member who—

1           “(A) is 62 years of age or older;

2           “(B) is a blind or disabled individual, as  
3           defined under section 216(i)(1) or 1614 of the  
4           Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 416(i)(1);  
5           1382c), and who is unable to comply with this  
6           section, or is a primary caretaker of such indi-  
7           vidual;

8           “(C) meets the requirements for being ex-  
9           empted from having to engage in a work activ-  
10          ity under the State program funded under part  
11          A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42  
12          U.S.C. 601 et seq.) or under any other welfare  
13          program of the State in which the public hous-  
14          ing agency administering rental assistance de-  
15          scribed in paragraph (1) is located, including a  
16          State-administered welfare-to-work program;

17          “(D) is in a family receiving assistance  
18          under a State program funded under part A of  
19          title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.  
20          601 et seq.) or under any other welfare pro-  
21          gram of the State in which the public housing  
22          agency administering such rental assistance is  
23          located, including a State-administered welfare-  
24          to-work program, and has not been found by

1 the State or other administering entity to be in  
2 noncompliance with such program; or

3 “(E) is a single custodial parent caring for  
4 a child who has not attained 6 years of age,  
5 and the individual proves that the individual  
6 has a demonstrated inability (as determined by  
7 the State) to obtain needed child care, for one  
8 or more of the following reasons:

9 “(i) Unavailability of appropriate  
10 child care within a reasonable distance  
11 from the individual’s home or work site.

12 “(ii) Unavailability or unsuitability of  
13 informal child care by a relative or under  
14 other arrangements.

15 “(iii) Unavailability of appropriate  
16 and affordable formal child care arrange-  
17 ments.

18 “(3) ADMINISTRATION.—A public housing  
19 agency providing rental assistance described in para-  
20 graph (1) may administer the work activities re-  
21 quirement under this subsection directly, through a  
22 resident organization, or through a contractor hav-  
23 ing experience in administering work activities pro-  
24 grams within the service area of the public housing

1 agency. The Secretary may establish qualifications  
 2 for such organizations and contractors.

3 “(4) PARTICIPATION OF NONPROFIT EMPLOY-  
 4 MENT AND WORK DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS.—

5 In administering this subsection, each public housing  
 6 agency shall provide for the active participation of  
 7 nonprofit employment assistance and training orga-  
 8 nizations and nonprofit work development organiza-  
 9 tions in assisting families receiving rental assistance  
 10 under section 8, in accordance with such require-  
 11 ments as the Secretary shall establish.

12 “(5) APPLICABILITY.—This subsection shall  
 13 apply beginning upon the expiration of the 24-month  
 14 period that begins on the date of the enactment of  
 15 the Section 8 Reform, Responsibility, and Account-  
 16 ability Act of 2007.”.

17 **SEC. 5. PREFERENCE FOR PROVIDING SECTION 8 RENTAL**  
 18 **ASSISTANCE TO VETERANS.**

19 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8 of the United States  
 20 Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f) is amended—

21 (1) in subsection (d)(1)(A)—

22 (A) by inserting after “except that” the  
 23 following: “each public housing agency shall  
 24 give preference to families that include a mem-  
 25 ber who is a veteran as such term is defined in

section 101 of title 38, United States Code)  
 who will reside in the dwelling unit assisted,  
 and except that”; and

(B) by inserting after “local preferences,”  
 the following: “which shall be subordinate to  
 the preference for veterans and shall be”; and  
 (2) in subsection (o)—

(A) in paragraph (6)(A)—

(i) in clause (ii)—

(I) by striking “this subpara-  
 graph” and inserting “clause (ii)”;  
 and

(II) by inserting before the pe-  
 riod at the end the following: “, and  
 shall be subordinate to the preference  
 established under clause (i)”;

(ii) by redesignating clauses (i) and  
 (ii) (as so amended) as clauses (ii) and  
 (iii), respectively; and

(iii) by inserting before clause (ii) (as  
 so redesignated by clause (ii) of this sub-  
 paragraph) the following new clause:

“(i) REQUIRED PREFERENCE FOR  
 VETERANS.—In making tenant-based as-  
 sistance under this subsection available on



1           behalf of eligible families, each public hous-  
2           ing agency shall give preference to families  
3           that include a member who is a veteran (as  
4           such term is defined in section 101 of title  
5           38, United States Code) who will reside in  
6           the dwelling unit assisted.”; and

7           (B) in paragraph (13)(J)—

8                 (i) by striking “The agency” and in-  
9                 serting the following: “In selecting families  
10                to receive project-based assistance pursu-  
11                ant to this paragraph, the agency shall  
12                give preference to families that include a  
13                member who is a veteran (as such term is  
14                defined in section 101 of title 38, United  
15                States Code) who will reside in the unit. In  
16                addition, the agency”; and

17               (ii) by inserting after “section 5A”  
18               the following: “, except that any such pref-  
19               erences established pursuant to this sen-  
20               tence shall be subordinate to the pref-  
21               erence established by the preceding sen-  
22               tence.”.

23           (b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by sub-  
24           section (a) shall apply beginning upon the date of the en-  
25           actment of this Act.

1 **SEC. 6. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS REGARDING THE MOV-**  
2 **ING TO WORK PROGRAM.**

3 It is the sense of the Congress that the Moving to  
4 Work demonstration program of the Department of Hous-  
5 ing and Urban Development under section 204 of the De-  
6 partments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban  
7 Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations  
8 Act, 1996 (42 U.S.C. 1437f note) should be expanded to  
9 include significantly more public housing agencies.

10 **SEC. 7. USE OF UNSPENT HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS**  
11 **CONTRACT AMOUNTS FOR COMPLIANCE**  
12 **MEASURES.**

13 Amounts provided by the Secretary of Housing and  
14 Urban Development to a public housing agency under an  
15 annual contributions contract for rental assistance under  
16 section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42  
17 U.S.C. 1437f) that remain unused for housing assistance  
18 payments contracts may be used by such agency for ac-  
19 tions—

20 (1) to monitor compliance of owners of housing  
21 assisted under such section and tenants of such  
22 housing with all laws and regulations relating to  
23 such assistance; and

24 (2) to enforce violations of such laws and regu-  
25 lations.

1 **SEC. 8. PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF PHA PLANS.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5A of the United States  
3 Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437c–1) is amended by  
4 adding at the end the following new subsection:

5 “(m) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF PLAN.—Each public  
6 housing agency that has a public housing agency plan ap-  
7 proved under this section shall make the approved plan  
8 (and any approved modifications and amendments to such  
9 plan) publicly available for inspection during regular busi-  
10 ness hours at the offices of the agency and in electronic  
11 form by means of the World Wide Web.”.

12 (b) APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (m) of section 5A of  
13 the United States Housing Act of 1937, as added by the  
14 amendment made by subsection (a), shall apply beginning  
15 upon the date of the enactment of this Act.

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