

111TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 5913

To establish a pilot program for law enforcement agencies to use anonymous texts from citizens to augment their anonymous tip hotlines.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 28, 2010

Mr. PAULSEN (for himself and Mr. LANGEVIN) introduced the following bill;  
which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

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## A BILL

To establish a pilot program for law enforcement agencies to use anonymous texts from citizens to augment their anonymous tip hotlines.

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 “Text a Tip Act of  
5       2010”.

6       **SEC. 2. A PILOT PROGRAM FOR TEXTING CRIME TIPS.**

7       (a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General may make  
8       grants to State or local law enforcement agencies to imple-  
9       ment an anonymous tip program using cell phone text  
10      messaging that comply with the requirements of this Act.

1 (b) USE OF FUNDS.—A State or local law enforce-  
2 ment agency that receives a grant under this Act shall  
3 use amounts provided under the grant to develop, imple-  
4 ment, or expand the anonymous tip system using cell  
5 phone text messaging which may include payment of the  
6 following expenses:

7 (1) Salaries, personnel, training, technology,  
8 and other costs directly related to the operation of  
9 the program, including reward money.

10 (2) Promotion of the program including public  
11 service announcements, printed advertisements, and  
12 other forms of marketing.

13 (c) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of a grant  
14 under this Act shall not exceed 75 percent of the cost of  
15 the program.

16 (d) SUPPLEMENT AND NOT SUPPLANT.—Grant  
17 amounts received under this Act shall be used to supple-  
18 ment, and not supplant, non-Federal funds that would  
19 otherwise be available for activities funded under this Act.

20 **SEC. 3. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.**

21 A texting tip program of a State or local law enforce-  
22 ment agency eligible for a grant under this Act shall com-  
23 ply with the following requirements:

24 (1) The State or local law enforcement agency  
25 shall administer the program.

1           (2) The incoming text messages shall be  
2           stripped of any identifying information before it is  
3           transmitted to the law enforcement agency through  
4           a verifiable technology or third party.

5           (3) The text tip shall not be traceable by any  
6           means.

7           (4) The texting program shall not replace any  
8           existing 1–800 tip hotlines.

9           (5) The law enforcement agency shall train suf-  
10          ficient personnel to intercept and respond to the text  
11          tips.

12          (6) The law enforcement agency shall, to the  
13          extent possible, make this program compatible with  
14          most mobile phone providers.

15          (7) The texting program should include a un-  
16          identifiable code that can be given to the tipster if  
17          they want to send follow up information to the law  
18          enforcement agency, allowing for increased con-  
19          tinuity and more accurate information.

20          (8) The texting program shall include a feature  
21          to abort a tip while it is in the process of being  
22          given.

23          (9) The law enforcement agency shall not im-  
24          pose any additional fees on the tipster’s mobile

1 phone. Only standard messaging rates from the tip-  
2 ster's mobile phone provider shall apply.

3 (10) The law enforcement agency shall, to the  
4 extent possible, promote the texting program to en-  
5 courage citizens, especially youth, to participate in  
6 the program.

7 **SEC. 4. APPLICATIONS.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—To request a grant under this  
9 Act, a State or local law enforcement agency shall submit  
10 an application to the Attorney General in such form and  
11 containing such information as the Attorney General may  
12 reasonably require.

13 (b) CERTIFICATIONS.—Each application for a grant  
14 under this Act shall contain the certification of the State  
15 or local law enforcement agency that the program for  
16 which the grant is requested meets each of the require-  
17 ments of this Act.

18 **SEC. 5. REPORTS AND EVALUATIONS.**

19 (a) RECIPIENTS.—For each fiscal year, each recipient  
20 of a grant under this Act during that fiscal year shall sub-  
21 mit to the Attorney General a report on a date specified  
22 by the Attorney General—

23 (1) regarding the effectiveness of activities car-  
24 ried out using that grant; and

1           (2) including an evaluation in such form and  
2           containing such information as the Attorney General  
3           may reasonably require.

4           (b) ATTORNEY GENERAL.—The Attorney General  
5           shall submit a yearly report on the effectiveness on the  
6           activities carried out under this Act to the Committees on  
7           the Judiciary of the Senate and the House of Representa-  
8           tives.

9   **SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.**

10          In this Act:

11           (1) The term “texting tip program” means a  
12           program that—

13                   (A) allows citizens to text tips anony-  
14                   mously to a law enforcement agency to aid in  
15                   criminal justice;

16                   (B) strips texts of identifying information;  
17                   and

18                   (C) is used by a law enforcement agency to  
19                   prevent and solve crimes.

20           (2) The term “texting” means sending written  
21           messages from a mobile phone. Texts is the plural  
22           form of text messages.

1 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2       There are authorized to be appropriated to the Attor-  
3   ney General to carry out this Act \$5,000,000 for each of  
4   fiscal years 2011 through 2016.

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