

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3614

To establish a pilot program to authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to make grants to nonprofit organizations to rehabilitate and modify homes of disabled and low-income veterans.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 21, 2012

Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. JOHANNIS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To establish a pilot program to authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to make grants to nonprofit organizations to rehabilitate and modify homes of disabled and low-income veterans.

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 “Housing Assistance
5 for Veterans Act of 2012” or the “HAVEN Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) DISABLED.—The term “disabled” means an
 2 individual with a disability, as defined by section
 3 12102 of title 42, United States Code.

4 (2) ELIGIBLE VETERAN.—The term “eligible
 5 veteran” means a disabled or low-income veteran.

6 (3) ENERGY EFFICIENT FEATURES OR EQUIP-
 7 MENT.—The term “energy efficient features or
 8 equipment” means features of, or equipment in, a
 9 primary residence that help reduce the amount of
 10 electricity used to heat, cool, or ventilate such resi-
 11 dence, including insulation, weatherstripping, air
 12 sealing, heating system repairs, duct sealing, or
 13 other measures.

14 (4) LOW-INCOME VETERAN.—The term “low-in-
 15 come veteran” means a veteran whose income does
 16 not exceed 80 percent of the median income for an
 17 area, as determined by the Secretary.

18 (5) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.—The term
 19 “nonprofit organization” means an organization that
 20 is—

21 (A) described in section 501(c)(3) or
 22 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code of
 23 1986; and

24 (B) exempt from tax under section 501(a)
 25 of such Code.

1 (6) PRIMARY RESIDENCE.—

2 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “primary res-
3 idence” means a single family house, a duplex,
4 or a unit within a multiple-dwelling structure
5 that is an eligible veteran’s principal dwelling
6 and is owned by such veteran or a family mem-
7 ber of such veteran.

8 (B) FAMILY MEMBER DEFINED.—For pur-
9 poses of this paragraph, the term “family mem-
10 ber” includes—

11 (i) a spouse, child, grandchild, parent,
12 or sibling;

13 (ii) a spouse of such a child, grand-
14 child, parent, or sibling; or

15 (iii) any individual related by blood or
16 affinity whose close association with a vet-
17 eran is the equivalent of a family relation-
18 ship.

19 (7) QUALIFIED ORGANIZATION.—The term
20 “qualified organization” means a nonprofit organiza-
21 tion that provides nationwide or State-wide pro-
22 grams that primarily serve veterans or low-income
23 individuals.

24 (8) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
25 the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

1 (9) VETERAN.—The term “veteran” has the
2 same meaning as given such term in section 101 of
3 title 38, United States Code.

4 (10) VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION.—The
5 term “veterans service organization” means any or-
6 ganization recognized by the Secretary of Veterans
7 Affairs for the representation of veterans under sec-
8 tion 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

9 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF A PILOT PROGRAM.**

10 (a) GRANT.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish
12 a pilot program to award grants to qualified organi-
13 zations to rehabilitate and modify the primary resi-
14 dence of eligible veterans.

15 (2) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall work
16 in conjunction with the Secretary of Veterans Af-
17 fairs to establish and oversee the pilot program and
18 to ensure that such program meets the needs of eli-
19 gible veterans.

20 (3) MAXIMUM GRANT.—A grant award under
21 the pilot program to any one qualified organization
22 shall not exceed \$1,000,000 in any one fiscal year,
23 and such an award shall remain available until ex-
24 pended by such organization.

25 (b) APPLICATION.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Each qualified organization
2 that desires a grant under the pilot program shall
3 submit an application to the Secretary at such time,
4 in such manner, and, in addition to the information
5 required under paragraph (2), accompanied by such
6 information as the Secretary may reasonably re-
7 quire.

8 (2) CONTENTS.—Each application submitted
9 under paragraph (1) shall include—

10 (A) a plan of action detailing outreach ini-
11 tiatives;

12 (B) the approximate number of veterans
13 the qualified organization intends to serve using
14 grant funds;

15 (C) a description of the type of work that
16 will be conducted, such as interior home modi-
17 fications, energy efficiency improvements, and
18 other similar categories of work; and

19 (D) a plan for working with the Depart-
20 ment of Veterans Affairs and veterans service
21 organizations to identify veterans and serve
22 their needs.

23 (3) PREFERENCES.—In awarding grants under
24 the pilot program, the Secretary shall give pref-
25 erence to a qualified organization—

1 (A) with experience in providing housing
2 rehabilitation and modification services for dis-
3 abled veterans; or

4 (B) that proposes to provide housing reha-
5 bilitation and modification services for eligible
6 veterans who live in rural areas (the Secretary,
7 through regulations, shall define the term
8 “rural areas”).

9 (c) CRITERIA.—In order to receive a grant award
10 under the pilot program, a qualified organization shall
11 meet the following criteria:

12 (1) Demonstrate expertise in providing housing
13 rehabilitation and modification services for disabled
14 or low-income individuals for the purpose of making
15 the homes of such individuals accessible, functional,
16 and safe for such individuals.

17 (2) Have established outreach initiatives that—

18 (A) would engage eligible veterans and vet-
19 erans service organizations in projects utilizing
20 grant funds under the pilot program; and

21 (B) identify eligible veterans and their
22 families and enlist veterans involved in skilled
23 trades, such as carpentry, roofing, plumbing, or
24 HVAC work.

1 (3) Have an established nationwide or State-
2 wide network of affiliates that are—

3 (A) nonprofit organizations; and

4 (B) able to provide housing rehabilitation
5 and modification services for eligible veterans.

6 (4) Have experience in successfully carrying out
7 the accountability and reporting requirements in-
8 volved in the proper administration of grant funds,
9 including funds provided by private entities or Fed-
10 eral, State, or local government entities.

11 (d) USE OF FUNDS.—A grant award under the pilot
12 program shall be used—

13 (1) to modify and rehabilitate the primary resi-
14 dence of an eligible veteran, and may include—

15 (A) installing wheelchair ramps, widening
16 exterior and interior doors, reconfiguring and
17 re-equipping bathrooms (which includes install-
18 ing new fixtures and grab bars), removing door-
19 way thresholds, installing special lighting, add-
20 ing additional electrical outlets and electrical
21 service, and installing appropriate floor cov-
22 erings to—

23 (i) accommodate the functional limita-
24 tions that result from having a disability;
25 or

1 (ii) if such residence does not have
2 modifications necessary to reduce the
3 chances that an elderly, but not disabled
4 person, will fall in their home, reduce the
5 risks of such an elderly person from fall-
6 ing;

7 (B) rehabilitating such residence that is in
8 a state of interior or exterior disrepair; and

9 (C) installing energy efficient features or
10 equipment if—

11 (i) an eligible veteran's monthly utility
12 costs for such residence is more than 5
13 percent of such veteran's monthly income;
14 and

15 (ii) an energy audit of such residence
16 indicates that the installation of energy ef-
17 ficient features or equipment will reduce
18 such costs by 10 percent or more;

19 (2) in connection with modification and reha-
20 bilitation services provided under the pilot program,
21 to provide technical, administrative, and training
22 support to an affiliate of a qualified organization re-
23 ceiving a grant under such pilot program; and

24 (3) for other purposes as the Secretary may
25 prescribe through regulations.

1 (e) OVERSIGHT.—The Secretary shall direct the over-
2 sight of the grant funds for the pilot program so that such
3 funds are used efficiently until expended to fulfill the pur-
4 pose of addressing the adaptive housing needs of eligible
5 veterans.

6 (f) MATCHING FUNDS.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—A qualified organization re-
8 ceiving a grant under the pilot program shall con-
9 tribute towards the housing modification and reha-
10 bilitation services provided to eligible veterans an
11 amount equal to not less than 50 percent of the
12 grant award received by such organization.

13 (2) IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS.—In order to
14 meet the requirement under paragraph (1), such or-
15 ganization may arrange for in-kind contributions.

16 (g) LIMITATION COST TO THE VETERANS.—A quali-
17 fied organization receiving a grant under the pilot pro-
18 gram shall modify or rehabilitate the primary residence
19 of an eligible veteran at no cost to such veteran (including
20 application fees) or at a cost such that such veteran pays
21 no more than 30 percent of his or her income in housing
22 costs during any month.

23 (h) REPORTS.—

24 (1) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Secretary shall
25 submit to Congress, on an annual basis, a report

1 that provides, with respect to the year for which
2 such report is written—

3 (A) the number of eligible veterans pro-
4 vided assistance under the pilot program;

5 (B) the socioeconomic characteristics of
6 such veterans, including their gender, age, race,
7 and ethnicity;

8 (C) the total number, types, and locations
9 of entities contracted under such program to
10 administer the grant funding;

11 (D) the amount of matching funds and in-
12 kind contributions raised with each grant;

13 (E) a description of the housing rehabilita-
14 tion and modification services provided, costs
15 saved, and actions taken under such program;

16 (F) a description of the outreach initiatives
17 implemented by the Secretary to educate the
18 general public and eligible entities about such
19 program;

20 (G) a description of the outreach initiatives
21 instituted by grant recipients to engage eligible
22 veterans and veteran service organizations in
23 projects utilizing grant funds under such pro-
24 gram;

1 (H) a description of the outreach initia-
2 tives instituted by grant recipients to identify
3 eligible veterans and their families; and

4 (I) any other information that the Sec-
5 retary considers relevant in assessing such pro-
6 gram.

7 (2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 6 months
8 after the completion of the pilot program, the Sec-
9 retary shall submit to Congress a report that pro-
10 vides such information that the Secretary considers
11 relevant in assessing the pilot program.

12 (i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
13 are authorized to be appropriated for carrying out this Act
14 \$4,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2013 through 2017.

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