

Union Calendar No. 478

114TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 5169

[Report No. 114–615, Part I]

To strengthen welfare research and evaluation, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 6, 2016

Mr. BUCHANAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, 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

JUNE 10, 2016

Reported from the Committee on Ways and Means with an amendment

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italic*]

JUNE 10, 2016

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform discharged; committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on May 6, 2016]

A BILL

To strengthen welfare research and evaluation, 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 “What Works to Move*
 5 *Welfare Recipients into Jobs Act”.*

6 **SEC. 2. STRENGTHENING WELFARE RESEARCH AND EVAL-**
 7 **UATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF A WHAT**
 8 **WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE.**

9 *Section 413 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 613)*
 10 *is amended to read as follows:*

11 **“SEC. 413. EVALUATION OF TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR**
 12 **NEEDY FAMILIES AND RELATED PROGRAMS.**

13 *“(a) EVALUATION OF THE IMPACTS OF TANF.—The*
 14 *Secretary shall conduct research on the effect of State pro-*
 15 *grams funded under this part and any other State program*
 16 *funded with qualified State expenditures (as defined in sec-*
 17 *tion 409(a)(7)(B)(i)) on employment, self-sufficiency, child*
 18 *well-being, unmarried births, marriage, poverty, economic*
 19 *mobility, and other factors as determined by the Secretary.*

20 *“(b) EVALUATION OF GRANTS TO IMPROVE CHILD*
 21 *WELL-BEING BY PROMOTING HEALTHY MARRIAGE AND RE-*
 22 *SPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD.—The Secretary shall conduct re-*
 23 *search to determine the effects of the grants made under sec-*
 24 *tion 403(a)(2) on child well-being, marriage, family sta-*

1 *bility, economic mobility, poverty, and other factors as de-*
 2 *termined by the Secretary.*

3 “(c) *DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.*—*The Sec-*
 4 *retary shall, in consultation with States receiving funds*
 5 *provided under this part, develop methods of disseminating*
 6 *information on any research, evaluation, or study con-*
 7 *ducted under this section, including facilitating the sharing*
 8 *of information and best practices among States and local-*
 9 *ities.*

10 “(d) *STATE-INITIATED EVALUATIONS.*—*A State shall*
 11 *be eligible to receive funding to evaluate the State program*
 12 *funded under this part or any other State program funded*
 13 *with qualified State expenditures (as defined in section*
 14 *409(a)(7)(B)(i)) if—*

15 “(1) *the State submits to the Secretary a descrip-*
 16 *tion of the proposed evaluation;*

17 “(2) *the Secretary determines that the design*
 18 *and approach of the proposed evaluation is rigorous*
 19 *and is likely to yield information that is credible and*
 20 *will be useful to other States; and*

21 “(3) *unless waived by the Secretary, the State*
 22 *contributes to the cost of the evaluation, from non-*
 23 *Federal sources, an amount equal to at least 25 per-*
 24 *cent of the cost of the proposed evaluation.*

25 “(e) *CENSUS BUREAU RESEARCH.*—

1 “(1) *The Bureau of the Census shall implement*
2 *or enhance household surveys of program participa-*
3 *tion, in consultation with the Secretary and the*
4 *Bureau of Labor Statistics and made available to*
5 *interested parties, to allow for the assessment of the*
6 *outcomes of continued welfare reform on the economic*
7 *and child well-being of low-income families with chil-*
8 *dren, including those who received assistance or serv-*
9 *ices from a State program funded under this part or*
10 *any other State program funded with qualified State*
11 *expenditures (as defined in section 409(a)(7)(B)(i)).*
12 *The content of the surveys should include such infor-*
13 *mation as may be necessary to examine the issues of*
14 *unmarried childbearing, marriage, welfare depend-*
15 *ency and compliance with work requirements, the be-*
16 *ginning and ending of spells of assistance, work,*
17 *earnings and employment stability, and the well-*
18 *being of children.*

19 “(2) *To carry out the activities specified in*
20 *paragraph (1), the Bureau of the Census, the Sec-*
21 *retary, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics shall con-*
22 *sider ways to improve the surveys and data derived*
23 *from the surveys to—*

1 “(A) address underreporting of the receipt
2 of means-tested benefits and tax benefits for low-
3 income individuals and families;

4 “(B) increase understanding of poverty
5 spells and long-term poverty, including by facili-
6 tating the matching of information to better un-
7 derstand intergenerational poverty;

8 “(C) generate a better geographical under-
9 standing of poverty such as through State-based
10 estimates and measures of neighborhood poverty;

11 “(D) increase understanding of the effects of
12 means-tested benefits and tax benefits on the
13 earnings of low-income families; and

14 “(E) improve how poverty and economic
15 well-being are measured, including through the
16 use of consumption measures.

17 “(f) *RESEARCH AND EVALUATION CONDUCTED UNDER*
18 *THIS SECTION.*—Research and evaluation conducted under
19 this section designed to determine the effects of a program
20 or policy (other than research conducted under subsection
21 (e)) shall use experimental designs using random assign-
22 ment or other reliable, evidence-based research methodolo-
23 gies that allow for the strongest possible causal inferences
24 when random assignment is not feasible.

1 “(g) *DEVELOPMENT OF WHAT WORKS CLEARING-*
2 *HOUSE OF PROVEN AND PROMISING APPROACHES TO MOVE*
3 *WELFARE RECIPIENTS INTO WORK.*—

4 “(1) *IN GENERAL.*—*The Secretary, in consulta-*
5 *tion with the Secretary of Labor, shall develop a*
6 *database (which shall be referred to as the ‘What*
7 *Works Clearinghouse of Proven and Promising*
8 *Projects to Move Welfare Recipients into Work’)* *of the*
9 *projects that used a proven approach or a promising*
10 *approach in moving welfare recipients into work,*
11 *based on independent, rigorous evaluations of the*
12 *projects. The database shall include a separate listing*
13 *of projects that used a developmental approach in de-*
14 *livering services and a further separate listing of the*
15 *projects with no or negative effects. The Secretary*
16 *shall add to the What Works Clearinghouse of Proven*
17 *and Promising Projects to Move Welfare Recipients*
18 *into Work data about the projects that, based on an*
19 *independent, well-conducted experimental evaluation*
20 *of a program or project, using random assignment or*
21 *other research methodologies that allow for the strong-*
22 *est possible causal inferences, have shown they are*
23 *proven, promising, developmental, or ineffective ap-*
24 *proaches.*

1 “(2) *CRITERIA FOR EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVE-*
 2 *NESS OF APPROACH.*—*The Secretary, in consultation*
 3 *with the Secretary of Labor and organizations with*
 4 *experience in evaluating research on the effectiveness*
 5 *of various approaches in delivering services to move*
 6 *welfare recipients into work, shall—*

7 “(A) *establish criteria for evidence of effec-*
 8 *tiveness; and*

9 “(B) *ensure that the process for establishing*
 10 *the criteria—*

11 “(i) *is transparent;*

12 “(ii) *is consistent across agencies;*

13 “(iii) *provides opportunity for public*
 14 *comment; and*

15 “(iv) *takes into account efforts of Fed-*
 16 *eral agencies to identify and publicize effec-*
 17 *tive interventions, including efforts at the*
 18 *Department of Health and Human Services,*
 19 *the Department of Education, and the De-*
 20 *partment of Justice.*

21 “(3) *DEFINITIONS.*—*In this subsection:*

22 “(A) *APPROACH.*—*The term ‘approach’*
 23 *means a process, product, strategy, or practice*
 24 *that is—*

1 “(i) research-based, based on the results
2 of 1 or more empirical studies, and linked
3 to program-determined outcomes; and

4 “(ii) evaluated using rigorous research
5 designs.

6 “(B) *PROVEN APPROACH*.—The term ‘prov-
7 en approach’ means an approach that—

8 “(i) meets the requirements of a prom-
9 ising approach; and

10 “(ii) has demonstrated significant
11 positive outcomes at more than 1 site in
12 terms of increasing work and earnings of
13 participants, reducing poverty and depend-
14 ence, or strengthening families.

15 “(C) *PROMISING APPROACH*.—The term
16 ‘promising approach’ means an approach—

17 “(i) that meets the requirements of sub-
18 paragraph (D)(i);

19 “(ii) that has been evaluated using
20 well-designed and rigorous randomized con-
21 trolled or quasi-experimental research de-
22 signs;

23 “(iii) that has demonstrated signifi-
24 cant positive outcomes at only 1 site in
25 terms of increasing work and earnings of

1 *participants, reducing poverty and depend-*
 2 *ence, or strengthening families; and*

3 *“(iv) under which the benefits of the*
 4 *positive outcomes have exceeded the costs of*
 5 *achieving the outcomes.*

6 *“(D) DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH.—The*
 7 *term ‘developmental approach’ means an ap-*
 8 *proach that—*

9 *“(i) is research-based, grounded in rel-*
 10 *evant empirically-based knowledge, and*
 11 *linked to program-determined outcomes;*

12 *“(ii) is evaluated using rigorous re-*
 13 *search designs; and*

14 *“(iii) has yet to demonstrate a signifi-*
 15 *cant positive outcome in terms of increasing*
 16 *work and earnings of participants in a*
 17 *cost-effective way.”.*

18 **SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

19 *The amendment made by this Act shall take effect on*
 20 *October 1, 2016.*

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