

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6942

To authorize the Attorney General to make grants to States to provide the right to counsel in civil actions related to eviction, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 27, 2018

Ms. DELAURO introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To authorize the Attorney General to make grants to States to provide the right to counsel in civil actions related to eviction, 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 “Eviction Prevention
5 Act of 2018”.

6 **SEC. 2. GRANTS FOR STATES TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO**
7 **COUNSEL IN CIVIL ACTIONS RELATED TO**
8 **EVICTION.**

9 (a) **AUTHORIZATION.**—The Attorney General, acting
10 through the Office for Access to Justice, is authorized to

1 make grants to States to provide eligible individuals with
2 access to counsel in civil actions related to eviction.

3 (b) USE OF FUNDS.—A State that receives a grant
4 under this section shall use such funds to hire attorneys
5 in positions that are dedicated solely to providing counsel
6 described in subsection (a).

7 (c) APPLICATION.—A State seeking an application
8 under this section shall submit an application to the Attor-
9 ney General at such time, in such manner, and containing
10 such information as the Attorney General may reasonably
11 require, including—

12 (1) the rate of eviction for that State; and

13 (2) during the previous year, the number of in-
14 dividuals subject to eviction in that State who were
15 not represented by an attorney in eviction pro-
16 ceedings.

17 (d) AMOUNT OF GRANT.—Subject to the availability
18 of appropriations, a grant under this section shall be in
19 an amount that is not less than \$1,000,000, and which
20 amount is determined based on the rate of eviction in that
21 State, compared to the national average rate of eviction,
22 as determined by the rates of eviction included with each
23 application under subsection (c).

24 (e) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—In this section, the term
25 “eligible individual” means an individual whose income is

1 less than the area median income, as calculated by the
2 Department of Housing and Urban Development, for the
3 area in which the individual resides.

4 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
5 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
6 \$125,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023.

7 **SEC. 3. GAO STUDY.**

8 Not later than one year after the date of the enact-
9 ment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United
10 States shall conduct a study and submit a report to Con-
11 gress on evictions in the United States, including an anal-
12 ysis of ways in which the legal system fails to provide suf-
13 ficient protections from eviction for tenants, the rate of
14 representation of tenants and landlords, the effect of full
15 representation on default rates, case outcomes, and evic-
16 tion dockets as compared to cases where the tenant lacks
17 representation or has pro se assistance, and the potential
18 cost savings from providing representation.

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