

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7985

To provide for assistance to rural water and waste disposal systems affected by the COVID–19 pandemic, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 7, 2020

Mr. ROUZER (for himself and Mr. VELA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To provide for assistance to rural water and waste disposal systems affected by the COVID–19 pandemic, 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 “Emergency Assistance
5 for Rural Water Systems Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR RURAL WATER SYS-** 7 **TEMS.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture (in
9 this section referred to as the “Secretary”) may—

1 (1) provide a grant, a zero interest loan, or a
2 1 percent loan to, forgive principal or interest or
3 modify any term or condition of an outstanding loan
4 made to, or refinance part or all of any other loan
5 (if the purpose of the loan is an eligible purpose
6 under section 306(a)(1) or 306C of the Consolidated
7 Farm and Rural Development Act) made to, a rural
8 water or waste disposal facility with respect to which
9 assistance may be provided under a water, waste-
10 water, or waste disposal program under section
11 306(a), 306A, 306C, or 306D of such Act; or

12 (2) reduce or eliminate any fee that is or would
13 otherwise be required to be paid under such section
14 306(a)(1) with respect to a loan guarantee provided
15 to any rural water, waste water, or waste disposal
16 facility, on the condition that the borrower receives
17 the benefit resulting from the reduction or elimi-
18 nation of the fee.

19 (b) LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may pro-
20 vide assistance to an entity under this section as the Sec-
21 retary determines is necessary to—

22 (1) ensure that the entity has the necessary re-
23 sources to maintain public health, safety, or order;

24 (2) address financial hardships of the entity
25 due to the COVID–19 public health emergency; and

1 (3) promote the financial stability of the entity.

2 (c) USE OF FUNDS.—An entity to which assistance
3 is provided under this section may use the assistance—

4 (1) for any purpose for which the entity is eligi-
5 ble for assistance under the relevant provision of law
6 referred to in subsection (a); or

7 (2) for any direct operational expenses of a
8 water, wastewater, or waste disposal facility incurred
9 by the entity, as determined by the Secretary.

10 (d) APPROPRIATION.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—Out of any money in the
12 Treasury of the United States not otherwise appro-
13 priated, there are appropriated \$1,000,000,000 to
14 carry out this section.

15 (2) RESERVATION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EX-
16 PENSES.—The Secretary shall reserve 3 percent of
17 the amount appropriated by paragraph (1) for ad-
18 ministrative expenses incurred in carrying out this
19 section.

20 (3) AVAILABILITY.—The amounts appropriated
21 in paragraph (1) shall remain available through De-
22 cember 31, 2021.

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