

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8577

To provide grants for Civic Justice Corps programs for court-involved, previously incarcerated, and otherwise disadvantaged youth and young adults.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 9, 2020

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (for herself and Ms. MENG) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To provide grants for Civic Justice Corps programs for court-involved, previously incarcerated, and otherwise disadvantaged youth and young adults.

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 “Kenneth P. Thompson
5 Civic Justice Corps Act of 2020”.

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

7 The purpose of this Act is to develop, implement, and
8 expand educational and work experience opportunities for
9 court-involved, previously incarcerated, and otherwise dis-
10 advantaged youth and young adults through service and

1 conservation corps and other community-based service or-
2 ganizations.

3 **SEC. 3. CIVIC JUSTICE CORPS GRANTS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall award
5 grants to one or more national intermediaries to develop,
6 implement, and collect data from Civic Justice Corps pro-
7 grams administered by no fewer than ten local sub-
8 grantees in the geographic regions established under sub-
9 section (k)(2).

10 (b) APPLICATION.—A national intermediary that de-
11 sires a grant under this section shall submit an application
12 to the Secretary at such time and in such manner as the
13 Secretary may require, including, at a minimum that—

14 (1) contains such agreements, assurances, and
15 information, is in such form, and is submitted in
16 such manner, as the Attorney General shall by rule
17 require;

18 (2) includes a long-term strategy and detailed
19 implementation plan that reflects consultation with
20 community groups and appropriate community
21 stakeholders;

22 (3) explains the national intermediary's inabil-
23 ity to address the need without Federal assistance;

1 (4) identifies related governmental and commu-
2 nity initiatives which compliment, or will be coordi-
3 nated with, the proposal;

4 (5) identifies jurisdictions where the national
5 intermediary intends to supervise local subgrantees,
6 and includes a description of the local service pro-
7 viders and nonprofit organizations that have sub-
8 stantial or significant experience dealing with court-
9 involved, previously incarcerated, and otherwise dis-
10 advantaged youth;

11 (6) provides details on the intended methodolo-
12 gies employing scientifically based research methods,
13 to be used for data collection purposes for current
14 participants and postprogram participants; and

15 (7) subject to paragraph (8), an assurance that,
16 if the local subgrantee or national intermediary re-
17 ceives a grant, or a renewal of such grant under this
18 section, the local subgrantee or national inter-
19 mediary will develop a plan to secure other public or
20 private funding resources to ensure the continued
21 operation and maintenance of the program after
22 funds under such grant, or renewal, are no longer
23 available.

24 (8) The Secretary shall waive the requirement
25 under paragraph (7) for the local subgrantee or na-

1 tional intermediary if the local grantee or national
2 intermediary demonstrates that complying with such
3 requirement would create an undue burden that
4 would result in significant disruption of the Civic
5 Justice Corps program.

6 (9) For the purposes of an application under
7 this subsection, the term “scientifically based re-
8 search methods” means research methods that—

9 (A) apply rigorous, systematic, and objec-
10 tive procedures to obtain valid knowledge rel-
11 evant to court-involved, previously incarcerated,
12 and otherwise disadvantaged youth and young
13 adults; and

14 (B) rely on measurements or observational
15 methods that provide data across multiple
16 measurements and observations.

17 (c) PREFERENTIAL CONSIDERATION OF APPLICA-
18 TIONS.—From among the applications submitted by na-
19 tional intermediaries under subsection (b), the Secretary
20 shall provide preference on the basis of—

21 (1) the effectiveness of the data collection meth-
22 odologies submitted under subsection (b)(6);

23 (2) the assurances made under subsection
24 (b)(1); and

1 (3) relevant data specific to the local jurisdic-
2 tions where the national intermediary intends to
3 enter into partnership with local subgrantees, which
4 illustrate the need for a Civic Justice Corps pro-
5 gram, including—

6 (A) unemployment rates;

7 (B) poverty rates;

8 (C) crime rates;

9 (D) other factors as the Attorney General,
10 after consultation with appropriate agencies of
11 the Government, may identify, including aver-
12 age household income, labor force participation,
13 and educational attainment; and

14 (E) additional criteria as determined by
15 the Attorney General.

16 (d) GRANT AND SUBGRANT PERIODS.—Each grant
17 awarded to a national intermediary, and each subgrant
18 awarded to a local subgrantee, under this section shall be
19 for a period of 5 years.

20 (e) USE OF GRANT FUNDS.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—Each national intermediary
22 receiving a grant under this section shall make at
23 least ten subgrants to local subgrantees to carry out
24 Civil Justice Corps programs that implement the

1 Civil Justice Corps Model described in section 4(1)
2 with the funds provided under such subgrant.

3 (2) RESERVATION.—Each national intermediary
4 receiving a grant under this section shall reserve—

5 (A) not less than 90 percent for subgrants
6 to local subgrantees; and

7 (B) not more than 10 percent for training
8 and technical assistance to, and data collection
9 from, such local subgrantees.

10 (f) USE OF SUBGRANTS.—An entity receiving a
11 subgrant under this section shall use the funds made
12 available through such subgrant to carry out a Civic Jus-
13 tice Corps program that implements the Civic Justice
14 Corps Model. Such program shall include the provision of
15 educational programming and support to participants,
16 which may include—

17 (1) basic instruction and remedial education;

18 (2) language instruction for individuals with
19 limited English proficiency;

20 (3) secondary education services and activities,
21 including dropout prevention, tutoring, and other ac-
22 tivities;

23 (4) preparation for and access to postsecondary
24 education opportunities, including counseling and as-
25 sistance with applying for student financial aid;

1 (5) work readiness training, which may in-
2 clude—

3 (A) development of basic skills, such as—

4 (i) arriving on time to work;

5 (ii) being prepared to work;

6 (iii) working independently;

7 (iv) working with others;

8 (v) working safely; and

9 (vi) demonstrating a commitment to
10 produce high-quality work;

11 (B) development of job-specific occupa-
12 tional skills and on-the-job training; and

13 (C) assessment of skills, career counseling,
14 and job search assistance; and

15 (6) development and monitoring of individual
16 education and career plans.

17 (g) RENEWAL OF GRANTS.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General may
19 renew a grant awarded under this Act with respect
20 to an eligible national intermediary if the national
21 intermediary—

22 (A) submits to the Attorney General an
23 application for renewal at such time, in such
24 manner, and containing such information as the
25 Secretary may require; and

1 (B) demonstrates in such application that
2 grant funds made available to the national
3 intermediary were used in a manner required
4 under the most recently approved application
5 under this Act. A grant made under this part
6 may be renewed, without limitations on the du-
7 ration of such renewal, to provide additional
8 funds, if the Attorney General determines that
9 the funds made available to the recipient were
10 used in a manner required under an approved
11 application and if the recipient can demonstrate
12 significant progress in achieving the objectives
13 of the initial application.

14 (2) DURATION.—An initial renewal under this
15 subsection shall, at minimum, be for a period of 3
16 years. Any subsequent renewal provided thereafter
17 shall be for a period of 1 year.

18 (h) NO-COST EXTENSIONS.—Notwithstanding sub-
19 section (g), the Attorney General may extend a grant pe-
20 riod, without limitations as to the duration of such exten-
21 sion, to provide additional time to complete the objectives
22 of the initial grant award.

23 (i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be
2 appropriated to carry out this section \$35,000,000
3 for each of the fiscal years 2020 through 2030.

4 (2) AVAILABILITY.—Funds authorized to be ap-
5 propriated under this section may remain available
6 until expended.

7 (j) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—Grant funds re-
8 ceived under this Act shall be used to supplement and not
9 supplant other Federal funds for the population estab-
10 lished under section 2.

11 (k) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—A national intermediary
13 shall select at least one local subgrantee located in
14 any of the geographic regions in paragraph (2).

15 (2) GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS.—A national inter-
16 mediary applying for a grant must provide a
17 subgrant to a local subgrantee in any one of the fol-
18 lowing geographic regions:

19 (A) Region I shall comprise the States of
20 Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New
21 Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

22 (B) Region II shall comprise the States of
23 New Jersey and New York, and the Virgin Is-
24 lands of the United States and Puerto Rico.

1 (C) Region III shall comprise the District
2 of Columbia, and the States of Maryland, Penn-
3 sylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.

4 (D) Region IV shall comprise the States of
5 Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mis-
6 sissippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and
7 Tennessee.

8 (E) Region V shall comprise the States of
9 Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio,
10 and Wisconsin.

11 (F) Region VI shall comprise the States of
12 Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma,
13 and Texas.

14 (G) Region VII shall comprise the States
15 of Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska.

16 (H) Region VIII shall comprise the States
17 of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South
18 Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

19 (I) Region IX shall comprise American
20 Samoa, Guam, and the States of Arizona, Cali-
21 fornia, Hawaii, and Nevada.

22 (J) Region X shall comprise the States of
23 Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.

24 (3) MINIMUM NUMBER OF GRANTS IN EACH RE-
25 GION.—The Secretary shall award not less than one

1 grant to any jurisdiction within each of the ten re-
2 gions specified under paragraph (2).

3 (4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this
4 Act shall be construed to limit an individual State
5 or local jurisdiction within a State, from receiving
6 multiple grants, renewals, or no-cost extensions,
7 under this Act.

8 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

9 In this Act:

10 (1) CIVIC JUSTICE CORPS MODEL.—The term
11 “Civic Justice Corps Model” refers to programs
12 that—

13 (A) intentionally recruit and primarily en-
14 roll as participants in the program court-in-
15 volved, previously incarcerated, and otherwise
16 disadvantaged youth and young adults between
17 the ages of 16 and 25;

18 (B) provide such participants with edu-
19 cational programming and support designed to
20 lead to a high school diploma or its recognized
21 equivalent;

22 (C) provide such participants with assess-
23 ment, career planning, workforce readiness, and
24 service or work experience designed to lead to
25 unsubsidized employment, enrollment in post-

1 secondary education or an apprenticeship pro-
2 gram, the obtainment of an industry-recognized
3 credential, or some other type of career path-
4 way program, including military service;

5 (D) demonstrate relationships with local
6 criminal, juvenile justice, and other social serv-
7 ice agencies and provide a range of supportive
8 and transitional services to participants;

9 (E) engage participants in relevant, nec-
10 essary, and team-based community service
11 projects designed to instill life and jobs skills
12 and long-term civic engagement;

13 (F) demonstrate relationships with local
14 boards (as such term is defined in section 101
15 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29
16 U.S.C. 2801)) and local employers and can pro-
17 vide participants with appropriate postprogram
18 placements;

19 (G) require participants to be enrolled in
20 the program for not less than 6 months, and
21 provide participants with at least 12 months of
22 postprogram support and services; and

23 (H) collect postprogram data for at least
24 the 12 months after such participants complete
25 the program.

1 (2) LOCAL SUBGRANTEE.—The term “local
2 subgrantee” refers to a service and conservation
3 corps or other community-based service organization
4 that—

5 (A) has been competitively selected by a
6 national intermediary to carry out a Civic Jus-
7 tice Corps program that implements the Civic
8 Justice Corps Model; and

9 (B) demonstrates—

10 (i) a local need for a Civic Justice
11 Corps program;

12 (ii) the ability to recruit and enroll
13 court-involved, previously incarcerated, and
14 otherwise disadvantaged youth and young
15 adults between the ages of 16 and 25;

16 (iii) the ability to provide the edu-
17 cation, workforce development, service and
18 work experience, and supportive and fol-
19 lowup services described in paragraph (1);

20 (iv) relationships with local criminal,
21 juvenile justice, and social service agencies;

22 (v) relationships with local boards (as
23 such term is defined in section 101 of the
24 Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29
25 U.S.C. 2801)) and employers and the abil-

1 ity to place participants upon program
2 completion; and

3 (vi) the ability to collect data and re-
4 port on the performance measures de-
5 scribed in section 5(b).

6 (3) NATIONAL INTERMEDIARY.—The term “na-
7 tional intermediary” means a national nonprofit or-
8 ganization that—

9 (A) has experience in developing and ad-
10 ministering programs that collaborate with
11 community-based organizations to deliver edu-
12 cation and work experience to court-involved,
13 formerly incarcerated, and otherwise disadvan-
14 taged youth;

15 (B) demonstrates an ability to administer
16 a competitive subgrant process that will result
17 in the selection of no less than ten geographi-
18 cally diverse local subgrantees to carry out Civil
19 Justice Corps programs that implement the
20 Civic Justice Corps Model;

21 (C) demonstrates an ability to provide
22 training and technical assistance to sub-
23 grantees; and

24 (D) has the ability to collect information
25 from the subgrantees on the performance meas-

1 ures described in section 5(b) and report such
2 information to the Attorney General on an an-
3 nual basis.

4 (4) SERVICE AND CONSERVATION CORPS.—The
5 term “service and conservation corps” means any
6 State or local service or conservation corps, includ-
7 ing a service or conservation corps carried out under
8 the national service laws.

9 **SEC. 5. REPORTS.**

10 (a) ANNUAL REPORTS TO THE ATTORNEY GEN-
11 ERAL.—Each national intermediary receiving a grant
12 under this Act shall submit a report annually to the Attor-
13 ney General at such time, in such manner, and providing
14 such information as the Attorney General may require, in-
15 cluding information on the performance measures re-
16 ported by subgrantees in accordance with subsection (b).

17 (b) SUBGRANTEE REPORTS ON PERFORMANCE
18 MEASURES.—Each entity receiving a subgrant under this
19 section shall annually report to the national intermediary
20 that awarded such subgrant on the following performance
21 measures of participant progress:

22 (1) The obtainment of a high school diploma, a
23 recognized equivalent, or some other industry-recog-
24 nized credential.

1 (2) Postprogram placement for each participant
2 in one of the following, and total postprogram place-
3 ment rates for each of the following:

4 (A) Unsubsidized employment.

5 (B) Postsecondary education.

6 (C) A registered apprenticeship or further
7 job training.

8 (D) A career pathway program, including
9 military service.

10 (3) Postprogram recidivism rates.

11 **SEC. 6. RULEMAKING.**

12 Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment
13 of this Act, the Attorney General shall, through notice and
14 comment rulemaking, establish a process for providing na-
15 tional intermediaries a fair hearing and appellate review
16 regarding any decision by the Attorney General to deny,
17 renew, or terminate a grant provided under this Act.

○