

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8674

To establish a Housing Stabilization Fund to provide emergency housing assistance to extremely low-income renters and homeowners, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 23, 2020

Mr. TED LIEU of California introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services

A BILL

To establish a Housing Stabilization Fund to provide emergency housing assistance to extremely low-income renters and homeowners, 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 “Prevent Homelessness
5 Act of 2020”.

6 **SEC. 2. HOUSING STABILIZATION FUND.**

7 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Housing
8 and Urban Development, acting through the Office of Spe-
9 cial Needs Assistance Programs of the Office of Commu-

1 nity Planning and Development, shall establish and ad-
 2 minister a fund to be known as the Housing Stabilization
 3 Fund.

4 (b) GRANTS.—Amounts in the Fund shall be avail-
 5 able, to the extent provided in advance in appropriations
 6 Acts, only for making annual grants under this section,
 7 in the amount determined pursuant to subsection (f), to
 8 continua of care to provide short-term assistance under
 9 emergency housing assistance programs that the Secretary
 10 determines, pursuant to applications under subsection (e),
 11 meet the requirements of subsection (c).

12 (c) EMERGENCY HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
 13 REQUIREMENTS.—An emergency housing assistance pro-
 14 gram shall be considered to meet the requirements of this
 15 subsection only if the program—

16 (1) is carried out by a continuum of care or
 17 other agency, organization, or entity selected by a
 18 continuum of care;

19 (2) operates within the geographical area served
 20 by the continuum of care;

21 (3) provides financial assistance only on behalf
 22 of extremely low-income families who—

23 (A) are unable to meet housing-related ob-
 24 ligations (as described in subsection (d) of this
 25 section) due to a financial hardship, which shall

1 include the situations described in clause (i) of
2 section 3(a)(3)(B) of the United States Hous-
3 ing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a(a)(3)(B)(i)),
4 a family or health crisis, unexpected expenses,
5 unsafe or unhealthy living conditions, and such
6 other situations as the Secretary may provide;
7 and

8 (B) provide evidence of such inability to
9 meet housing related obligations, which may in-
10 clude past-due utilities or rent notices, eviction
11 notices, and such other evidence as the Sec-
12 retary may provide, except that a continuum of
13 care may, in consultation with the Secretary,
14 provide for additional manners of identifying in-
15 ability to meet housing related obligations in
16 situations in which such notices are not avail-
17 able;

18 (4) provides for coordination with any local
19 homeless prioritization criteria, including the Coordi-
20 nated Entry System or any other evidence-based
21 analytic targeting tool, applicable within the area in
22 which the program will be carried out, in accordance
23 with such requirements as the Secretary shall pro-
24 vide; and

1 (5) meets such other requirements as the Sec-
2 retary may establish.

3 (d) ELIGIBLE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—Amounts
4 from grants under this section for an emergency housing
5 assistance program shall be used to provide financial as-
6 sistance only to meet housing-related obligations, includ-
7 ing—

8 (1) rent due, including amounts past due, ex-
9 cept that such assistance may not—

10 (A) be provided for a family for more than
11 8 months (whether consecutive or not) within
12 the preceding 12 months; and

13 (B) may not exceed on a monthly basis the
14 amount that the Secretary determines is rea-
15 sonable in comparison with rents charged for
16 comparable dwelling units located in the same
17 area in the private, unassisted local market;

18 (2) mortgage payments due, including amounts
19 past due, except that such assistance may not be
20 provided for a household for more than 8 months
21 (whether consecutive or not) within the preceding 12
22 months and may not exceed on a monthly basis such
23 amount as the Secretary shall determine;

24 (3) utility payments due, including amounts
25 past due;

1 (4) housing repairs necessary to make the
2 premises habitable, including installing insulation,
3 window repair, door repair, roof repair, and other re-
4 pairs;

5 (5) costs of obtaining services for behavioral,
6 emotional, and mental health issues, domestic vio-
7 lence issues, child welfare issues, employment coun-
8 seling, substance abuse treatment, or other services;

9 (6) costs of obtaining housing counseling or ad-
10 vice, including outreach, mediation, and case man-
11 agement;

12 (7) costs of obtaining legal assistance relating
13 to eviction, foreclosure, and other issues relating to
14 a family retaining its housing; and

15 (8) other short-term costs the payment of which
16 increase housing stability for an extremely low-in-
17 come family, including costs for gas, groceries, auto-
18 motive repair, public transportation, furniture, appli-
19 cation fees, reunification services, and such other
20 costs as the Secretary may provide.

21 (e) APPLICATIONS.—The Secretary shall require, for
22 a continuum of care to receive a grant under this section
23 for a fiscal year, that the continuum of care submit to
24 the Secretary, and the Secretary approve, an application
25 containing such information as the Secretary considers

1 necessary to ensure that grant amounts are used in ac-
2 cordance with this section.

3 (f) AMOUNT OF GRANTS.—

4 (1) ALLOCATION.—

5 (A) FISCAL YEAR 2021.—For fiscal year
6 2021, any amounts made available from the
7 Fund for grants under this section shall be allo-
8 cated for grants to continua of care according
9 to the formula established pursuant to para-
10 graph (2).

11 (B) SUCCEEDING FISCAL YEARS.—For
12 each fiscal year thereafter, of any amounts
13 made available from the Fund for grants under
14 this section—

15 (i) 80 percent shall be allocated for
16 grants to continua of care according to the
17 formula established pursuant to paragraph
18 (2); and

19 (ii) 20 percent shall be allocated for
20 grants to continua of care according to a
21 competition pursuant to paragraph (3).

22 (2) FORMULA.—

23 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, by
24 regulation, establish a formula for use to allo-
25 cate amounts in the Fund for grants for a fiscal

1 year, in accordance with paragraph (1), for
2 continua of care whose applications for such
3 year for such assistance have been approved
4 pursuant to subsection (e).

5 (B) FACTORS.—The formula required by
6 subparagraph (A) shall be designed to take into
7 consideration, for the area served by a con-
8 tinuum of care—

9 (i) the extent of the population that
10 are extremely low-income families, includ-
11 ing the homeless population that is
12 unsheltered, who are severely cost-bur-
13 dened by housing-related costs, including
14 obligations described in subsection (d); and

15 (ii) such other factors as the Sec-
16 retary may provide.

17 The Secretary shall determine data to be used
18 for the factors considered under the formula
19 based on the most recently conducted Point-In-
20 Time Homeless Count administered by the Sec-
21 retary.

22 (3) COMPETITION.—The Secretary shall, by
23 regulation, establish a competition for use to allocate
24 amounts in the Fund for grants for a fiscal year for

1 continua of care pursuant to paragraph (1)(B)(ii),
2 which shall be based on measurable criteria that—

3 (A) to the greatest extent possible, are re-
4 quired to be collected and reported to the De-
5 partment of Housing and Urban Development
6 or any other Federal agency under other provi-
7 sions of law already in effect or otherwise do
8 not impose new burdens on continua of care;

9 (B) provide for targeting of assistance
10 made available under an emergency housing as-
11 sistance program to households having the low-
12 est incomes;

13 (C) encourage the leveraging of other non-
14 Federal funds for providing assistance under an
15 emergency housing assistance program;

16 (D) encourage emergency housing assist-
17 ance programs assisted with grants under this
18 section to provide preventive assistance to avoid
19 homelessness; and

20 (E) encourage problem-solving and diver-
21 sion methods, including the applicant's capacity
22 and interest in providing innovative delivery of
23 housing stability interventions and connecting
24 households to other public benefits that pro-
25 mote housing stability.

1 (g) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this Act, the fol-
2 lowing definitions shall apply:

3 (1) CONTINUUM OF CARE.—The term “con-
4 tinuum of care” means a collaborative applicant es-
5 tablished and operating for a geographic area for
6 purposes of the Continuum of Care Program under
7 subtitle C of title IV of the McKinney-Vento Home-
8 less Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11381 et seq.).

9 (2) FUND.—The term “Fund” means the
10 Housing Stabilization Fund established under sub-
11 section (a).

12 (3) EXTREMELY LOW-INCOME FAMILY.—The
13 term “extremely low-income family” has the mean-
14 ing given such term in section 3(b) of the United
15 States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a(b)).

16 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
17 the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

18 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
19 authorized to be appropriated for the Fund \$100,000,000
20 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2025.

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