

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2733

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a pilot grant program to acquire and renovate abandoned homes for homeless veterans.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 25, 2017

Mr. SCHNEIDER (for himself, Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Ms. STEFANIK) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a pilot grant program to acquire and renovate abandoned homes for homeless veterans.

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 “Housing Our Heroes
5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF PILOT GRANT PROGRAM FOR**
7 **HOMELESS VETERANS.**

8 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than one year after
9 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of

1 Veterans Affairs shall commence a pilot grant program
2 to assess the feasibility and advisability of awarding
3 grants to eligible entities to purchase and renovate aban-
4 doned homes for homeless veterans.

5 (b) GRANTS.—

6 (1) AWARD.—In carrying out the pilot program
7 under subsection (a), the Secretary shall award
8 grants to eligible entities to purchase and renovate
9 abandoned homes for homeless veterans.

10 (2) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—The amount of a sin-
11 gle grant awarded under paragraph (1) shall not ex-
12 ceed \$1,000,000.

13 (3) NUMBER.—The Secretary may award to an
14 eligible entity more than one grant under paragraph
15 (1).

16 (c) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—The Secretary may award
17 a grant under subsection (b)(1) to any of the following:

18 (1) A veterans service agency.

19 (2) A veterans service organization.

20 (3) Homeless organizations.

21 (4) Any other nongovernmental organization.

22 (d) SELECTION OF GRANT RECIPIENTS.—

23 (1) APPLICATION.—Any eligible entity seeking
24 a grant under subsection (b)(1) shall submit to the
25 Secretary an application therefore in such form and

1 in such manner as the Secretary considers appro-
2 priate.

3 (2) REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary may only
4 award grants under subsection (b)(1) to an eligible
5 entity that demonstrates, as determined by the Sec-
6 retary—

7 (A) a record of financial stability; and

8 (B) experience in developing housing for
9 homeless veterans.

10 (3) SELECTION PRIORITY.—

11 (A) COMMUNITIES WITH GREATEST
12 NEED.—Subject to subparagraph (B), in ac-
13 cordance with regulations the Secretary shall
14 prescribe, the Secretary shall give priority in
15 the awarding of grants under subsection (b)(1)
16 to eligible entities who serve communities that
17 the Secretary determines have the greatest need
18 of homeless services.

19 (B) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—The
20 Secretary may give priority in the awarding of
21 grants under subsection (b)(1) to achieve a fair
22 distribution, as determined by the Secretary,
23 among homeless veterans in different geo-
24 graphical regions.

1 (C) OTHER AGREEMENTS.—In awarding a
2 grant under subsection (b)(1) to an eligible en-
3 tity in a location determined pursuant to sub-
4 paragraphs (A) and (B), the Secretary shall
5 give preference to eligible entities that are en-
6 tered into an agreement with the Secretary
7 under section 2041 of title 38, United States
8 Code.

9 (e) USE OF GRANT FUNDS.—

10 (1) PURPOSES.—A grantee may use amounts of
11 a grant awarded to the grantee under subsection
12 (b)(1) to purchase or renovate abandoned homes, in-
13 cluding homes that have been foreclosed.

14 (2) MAXIMUM PURCHASE AMOUNT.—The Sec-
15 retary shall establish maximum amounts, based on
16 geography, for grants awarded under subsection
17 (b)(1) that may be used for the purchase of a single
18 home.

19 (3) PAYMENT PROGRAM.—

20 (A) The United States shall not have any
21 ownership interest in a home that is purchased
22 by a grantee using amounts of a grant awarded
23 under subsection (b)(1).

24 (B) Each grantee shall ensure that, begin-
25 ning one year after the date on which a veteran

1 begins to reside in a home purchased or ren-
2 ovated by the grantee using a grant awarded
3 under subsection (b)(1), the veteran makes
4 monthly payments to the grantee in an amount
5 determined appropriate by the grantee that is
6 not less than 85 percent of the fair market rent
7 for such home.

8 (C) Each grantee shall determine whether
9 payments made by a veteran under subpara-
10 graph (B) shall be treated as rent or as a mort-
11 gage for the home for which the veteran is mak-
12 ing such payments. The Secretary, in coordina-
13 tion with the Secretary of Housing and Urban
14 Development, shall determine the requirements
15 for such payments.

16 (D) Each grantee shall pay to the Sec-
17 retary of Veterans Affairs not less than 80 per-
18 cent of each payment received under subpara-
19 graph (B).

20 (E) The Secretary may conduct an audit of
21 any grantee to ensure that the grantee carries
22 out this paragraph.

23 (4) VETERANS HOMELESSNESS GRANT FUND.—

24 (A) There is established in the Treasury a
25 fund to be known as the “Veterans Homeless-

1 ness Grant Fund” (in this paragraph referred
2 to as the “Fund”).

3 (B) The Secretary shall deposit into the
4 Fund the payments collected by the Secretary
5 under paragraph (3)(D).

6 (C) Amounts deposited into the Fund pur-
7 suant to subparagraph (B) shall be available to
8 the Secretary to carry out the pilot program
9 under subsection (a) without further appropria-
10 tion. The Secretary may not use such amounts
11 from the Fund for any other purpose unless
12 pursuant to a specific provision of law.

13 (f) DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the
14 pilot program under subsection (a) during the three-year
15 period beginning on the date of the commencement of the
16 pilot program.

17 (g) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary may consult
18 with nongovernmental entities in developing the pilot pro-
19 gram under subsection (a).

20 (h) ANNUAL REPORTS.—During each year in which
21 the Secretary carries out the pilot program under sub-
22 section (a), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a re-
23 port that details, with respect to the year covered by the
24 report, the number of grants awarded, the amounts so
25 awarded, the progress of home purchase and renovation

1 made by eligible entities using such grants, and the num-
2 ber of tenants currently paying rent towards such homes.

3 (i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
4 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary a total of
5 \$25,000,000 to carry out the pilot program under sub-
6 section (a).

7 (j) HOMELESS VETERAN DEFINED.—In this section,
8 the term “homeless veteran” means any of the following
9 veterans:

10 (1) A veteran who is eligible to receive housing,
11 clinical services, and case management assistance
12 under section 8(o)(19) of the United States Housing
13 Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(19)).

14 (2) A veteran who is receiving—

15 (A) assistance from, or is the beneficiary
16 of a service furnished by, a program that is in
17 receipt of a grant under section 2011 of title
18 38, United States Code; or

19 (B) services for which per diem payment is
20 received under section 2012 of such title.

21 (3) A veteran who is—

22 (A) a beneficiary of the outreach program
23 carried out under section 2022(e) of such title;

24 or

1 (B) in receipt of referral or counseling
2 services from the program carried out under
3 section 2023 of such title.

4 (4) A veteran who is receiving a service or as-
5 sistance under section 2031 of such title.

6 (5) A veteran who is residing in therapeutic
7 housing operated under section 2032 of such title.

8 (6) A veteran who is receiving domiciliary serv-
9 ices under section 2043 of such title or domiciliary
10 care under section 1710(b) of such title.

11 (7) A veteran who is receiving supportive serv-
12 ices under section 2044 of such title.

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