

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8032

To authorize the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program, and
for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 16, 2024

Mr. SORENSEN (for himself, Mrs. CHAVEZ-DEREMER, Ms. SCHRIER, and Mrs. GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To authorize the Low-Income Household Water Assistance
Program, 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 “Low-Income House-
5 hold Water Assistance Program Establishment Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLD WATER ASSISTANCE**
7 **PROGRAM.**

8 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Adminis-
2 trator” means the Administrator of the Environ-
3 mental Protection Agency.

4 (2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
5 ty” means a State, or Indian tribe, that is eligible
6 to receive or previously received a grant under the
7 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981
8 (42 U.S.C. 8621 et seq.).

9 (3) HOUSEHOLD.—The term “household”
10 means any individual or group of individuals who
11 are living together as 1 economic unit.

12 (4) LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLD.—The term
13 “low-income household” means a household—

14 (A) in which 1 or more individuals are re-
15 ceiving—

16 (i) assistance under the State pro-
17 gram funded under part A of title IV of
18 the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et
19 seq.);

20 (ii) supplemental security income pay-
21 ments under title XVI of the Social Secu-
22 rity Act (42 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.);

23 (iii) supplemental nutrition assistance
24 program benefits under the Food and Nu-

1 trition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et
2 seq.);

3 (iv) payments under—

4 (I) section 1315, 1521, 1541, or
5 1542 of title 38, United States Code;
6 or

7 (II) section 306 of the Veterans'
8 and Survivors' Pension Improvement
9 Act of 1978 (38 U.S.C. 1521 note;
10 Public Law 95–588); or

11 (v) assistance under the Low-Income
12 Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981; or

13 (B) that has an income that, as deter-
14 mined by the State or Indian tribe, does not ex-
15 ceed the greatest of—

16 (i) an amount equal to 150 percent of
17 the poverty level;

18 (ii) an amount equal to 60 percent of
19 the State median income for that State or
20 the State in which the Indian tribe is pri-
21 marily located; and

22 (iii) an amount equal to 60 percent of
23 the area median income for the area in
24 which the household is located.

1 (5) POVERTY LEVEL.—The term “poverty
2 level” means the poverty line determined pursuant
3 to section 673 of the Community Services Block
4 Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902).

5 (6) PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM.—The term “public
6 water system” has the meaning given the term in
7 section 1401 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42
8 U.S.C. 300f).

9 (7) QUALIFIED NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.—
10 The term “qualified nonprofit organization” includes
11 a nonprofit organization described in section
12 680(a)(3)(B) of the Community Services Block
13 Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9921(a)(3)(B)).

14 (8) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
15 the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

16 (9) STATE.—The term “State” means any of
17 the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Com-
18 monwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the United States
19 Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Common-
20 wealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

21 (10) TREATMENT WORKS.—The term “treat-
22 ment works” has the meaning given the term in sec-
23 tion 212 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act
24 (33 U.S.C. 1292).

25 (b) ESTABLISHMENT.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consulta-
2 tion with the Administrator, shall establish the Low-
3 Income Household Water Assistance Program to
4 award grants, in accordance with paragraph (2), to
5 eligible entities to provide funds to owners and oper-
6 ators of public water systems or treatment works to
7 assist low-income households in paying arrearages
8 and other rates charged to such households for
9 drinking water or wastewater services.

10 (2) FORMULA.—In awarding grants under this
11 subsection to eligible entities, the Secretary shall—

12 (A) allot amounts made available for
13 grants under this subsection to an eligible enti-
14 ty that is a State or Indian tribe based on—

15 (i) the percentage of households in the
16 State, or under the jurisdiction of the In-
17 dian tribe, with income equal to or less
18 than 150 percent of the poverty level; or

19 (ii) the percentage of households in
20 the State, or under the jurisdiction of the
21 Indian tribe, that spend more than 30 per-
22 cent of monthly income on housing; and

23 (B) reserve up to 3 percent of amounts
24 made available for grants under this subsection
25 to eligible entities that are Indian tribes.

1 (c) RURAL, UNDERSERVED, AND INDIAN TRIBE AC-
2 CESS GRANTS.—The Secretary shall provide grants to
3 qualified nonprofit organizations to assist owners or oper-
4 ators of public water systems or treatment works, in rural
5 or underserved areas or in the jurisdiction of an Indian
6 tribe, in accessing funds through the Low-Income House-
7 hold Water Assistance Program.

8 (d) APPLICATIONS.—Each eligible entity seeking a
9 grant under subsection (b), and each qualified nonprofit
10 organization seeking a grant under subsection (c), shall
11 submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in
12 such manner, and containing such information as the Sec-
13 retary shall require.

14 (e) LIMITATIONS.—A recipient of a grant under sub-
15 section (b) or (c)—

16 (1) shall not use the funds from the grant to
17 supplant any other funds for any program that as-
18 sists low-income households in maintaining access to
19 affordable drinking water or wastewater services;
20 and

21 (2) may use the funds from the grant to supple-
22 ment or otherwise enhance any such program that
23 satisfies the requirements under this section.

24 (f) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR ELIGIBILITY RE-
25 QUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall provide technical as-

1 sistance to eligible entities receiving a grant under sub-
2 section (b) for such eligible entities to establish data shar-
3 ing agreements to streamline categorical eligibility re-
4 quirements for low-income households.

5 (g) TRANSFER TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTEC-
6 TION AGENCY.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—On the date on which the
8 final report described in section 50109(d) of the In-
9 frastructure Investment and Jobs Act (42 U.S.C.
10 300j–19a note; Public Law 117–58; 135 Stat. 1148)
11 is submitted to Congress under such section, the
12 Secretary, in coordination with the Administrator,
13 shall transfer the Low-Income Household Water As-
14 sistance Program established under this section to
15 the Environmental Protection Agency for adminis-
16 tration of such program by the Administrator in ac-
17 cordance with this section.

18 (2) ADMINISTRATION.—

19 (A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the date
20 described in paragraph (1)—

21 (i) the Administrator shall carry out
22 all functions of the Secretary under this
23 section; and

24 (ii) for purposes of administering the
25 program established under this section,

1 each reference in subsection (b)(2), (c),
2 (d), and (f) to the Secretary shall be
3 deemed a reference to the Administrator.

4 (B) GRANTS PREVIOUSLY AWARDED.—
5 Notwithstanding paragraph (1) and subpara-
6 graph (A), the Secretary shall continue, after
7 the transfer under paragraph (1), administering
8 each grant awarded under this section prior to
9 such transfer until the expiration of the term of
10 such grant.

11 (3) UNOBLIGATED BALANCES.—On the date de-
12 scribed in paragraph (1) and subject to section 1531
13 of title 31, United States Code, the Secretary shall
14 transfer all unobligated balances of appropriations,
15 authorizations, allocations, or other funds available
16 to the Low-Income Household Water Assistance
17 Program established under this section (except for
18 any such balances related to grants awarded prior to
19 the transfer under paragraph (1)) to the Adminis-
20 trator. The amounts of any such unobligated bal-
21 ances so transferred shall be used only for the pur-
22 poses for which the amounts were originally author-
23 ized and appropriated.

1 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
2 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
3 \$1,100,000,000.

○