

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1997

To authorize transitional sheltering assistance for individuals who live in areas with unhealthy air quality caused by wildfires, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 26, 2019

Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To authorize transitional sheltering assistance for individuals who live in areas with unhealthy air quality caused by wildfires, 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 “Wildfire Smoke Relief
5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. TRANSITIONAL SHELTERING ASSISTANCE.**

7 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

8 (1) INDIVIDUAL AT RISK OF WILDFIRE SMOKE
9 RELATED ILLNESS.—The term “individual at risk of

1 wildfire smoke related illness” means an individual,
2 living in an area where the air quality index is deter-
3 mined to be unhealthy for not less than 3 consecu-
4 tive days as a result of a wildfire, who is—

5 (A) a low-income individual;

6 (B) a parent or guardian with a child who
7 has not attained 19 years of age;

8 (C) a pregnant woman;

9 (D) an individual who is 65 years of age
10 or older;

11 (E) an individual with chronic respiratory
12 or cardiovascular illness; or

13 (F) an individual with a chronic disease
14 that is exacerbated by smoke inhalation.

15 (2) LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUAL.—The term “low-
16 income individual” means an individual from a fam-
17 ily whose taxable income (as defined in section 63 of
18 the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) for the pre-
19 ceding year did not exceed 200 percent of an
20 amount equal to the poverty level, as determined by
21 using criteria of poverty established by the Bureau
22 of Census.

23 (3) QUALIFIED ENTITY.—The term “qualified
24 entity” means—

25 (A) a State or unit of local government;

1 (B) a local public health authority; and

2 (C) a coordinated care organization.

3 (b) TRANSITIONAL SHELTERING ASSISTANCE PRO-
4 GRAM.—In carrying out the Transitional Sheltering As-
5 sistance Program of the Federal Emergency Management
6 Agency under section 403 of the Robert T. Stafford Dis-
7 aster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
8 5170b), the President shall—

9 (1) provide assistance to a qualified entity to
10 purchase and provide, to an individual at risk of
11 wildfire smoke related illness, smoke-inhalation pre-
12 vention equipment, including—

13 (A) a portable air filtration unit;

14 (B) an air filter;

15 (C) a face mask or respirator, such as—

16 (i) a N95 respirator;

17 (ii) a P100 respirator; or

18 (iii) other equipment certified by the
19 National Institute for Occupational Safety
20 and Health to protect from airborne par-
21 ticle exposure;

22 (D) low-cost equipment to keep smoke out
23 of a house, such as:

24 (i) a weather strip;

- 1 (ii) not more than 1 portable air-con-
2 ditioning unit per household;
3 (iii) ventilation equipment;
4 (iv) a screening and shading device; or
5 (v) a window covering; or
6 (E) other similarly effective devices; and
7 (2) in any case in which smoke-inhalation pre-
8 vention equipment is not sufficient to mitigate the
9 risk of illness, provide cost-efficient transitional shel-
10 ter assistance to an individual at risk of wildfire
11 smoke related illness.

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