

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 848

To establish digital services in State and local governments, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 14, 2019

Ms. HARRIS introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To establish digital services in State and local governments,
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 “Digital Service Act
5 of 2019”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act—

8 (1) the term “Administrator” means the Ad-
9 ministrator of the United States Digital Service;

1 (2) the term “digital service grant” means a
2 grant under section 3(a);

3 (3) the term “digital service team” means a
4 team of technologists, designers, civil servants, and
5 other relevant experts dedicated to modernizing the
6 delivery of government services to the public through
7 information technology;

8 (4) the term “eligible applicant” means a State,
9 Indian Tribe, or unit of local government that has
10 received not more than 1 digital service grant;

11 (5) the term “Indian Tribe” has the meaning
12 given the term “Indian tribe” in section 4(e) of the
13 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance
14 Act (25 U.S.C. 5304(e));

15 (6) the term “State” has the meaning given
16 that term in section 901 of title I of the Omnibus
17 Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34
18 U.S.C. 10251); and

19 (7) the term “unit of local government” means
20 a city, county, township, town, borough, parish, vil-
21 lage, or other general purpose political subdivision of
22 a State.

1 **SEC. 3. DIGITAL SERVICE GRANTS.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may make a
3 grant to an eligible applicant to establish or support a dig-
4 ital service team.

5 (b) APPLICATION.—An eligible applicant desiring a
6 digital service grant shall submit an application at such
7 time, in such manner, and containing such information as
8 the Administrator may specify.

9 (c) INITIAL GRANT PREFERENCE.—Among eligible
10 applicants that have not previously received a digital serv-
11 ice grant, the Administrator shall give preference to an
12 eligible applicant if—

13 (1) the chief executive officer of the eligible en-
14 tity has publicly demonstrated a commitment to
15 modernizing government technology and service de-
16 livery;

17 (2) the eligible entity has officially designated
18 an officer of the eligible entity to have responsibility
19 for functions relating to the digital services of the el-
20 ible entity, such as a Chief Technology Officer,
21 Chief Innovation Officer, or Chief Digital Services
22 Officer, and such functions are recognized as dis-
23 tinct from management and operations of traditional
24 information technology; or

25 (3) the eligible entity demonstrates a rigorous
26 commitment to digital delivery of government serv-

1 ices in such manner as the Administrator determines
2 appropriate.

3 (d) CONTINUING GRANTS.—The Administrator may
4 make not more than 1 additional digital service grant to
5 an eligible applicant that has previously received a digital
6 service grant if the eligible applicant—

7 (1) has a demonstrated record of successful dig-
8 ital delivery of government services, including
9 through the use of the first digital service grant; and

10 (2) articulates clearly the government service
11 delivery projects the eligible applicant would carry
12 out with the grant.

13 (e) GRANT PERIOD.—The Administrator shall award
14 digital service grants for a period of 2 years.

15 (f) CONTINUITY OF FUNDING.—To the maximum ex-
16 tent practicable, the Administrator shall award digital
17 service grants described in subsection (d) in a manner that
18 ensures that there is not a break in funding between the
19 initial digital service grant and the grant described in sub-
20 section (d).

21 (g) GRANT AMOUNT.—The annual amount of a dig-
22 ital service grant shall be equal to the lesser of—

23 (1) in dollars, the amount equal to the sum
24 of—

1 (A) the population served by the eligible
2 applicant; and

3 (B) 200,000; or
4 (2) \$2,500,000.

5 (h) USE OF FUNDS.—Not less than 50 percent of the
6 amount received under a digital service grant shall be used
7 for salary and benefits of the members of the digital serv-
8 ice team.

9 (i) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—The Federal share of
10 an activity carried out using a digital service grant shall
11 be not more than 80 percent.

12 **SEC. 4. REPORTING.**

13 (a) BY RECIPIENTS.—Not later than the end of the
14 period of a digital service grant, the recipient of the digital
15 service grant shall submit to the Administrator and make
16 publicly available on the website of the recipient a brief
17 report describing—

18 (1) the skills and areas of expertise of the mem-
19 bers of the digital service team established or sup-
20 ported using amounts made available under the
21 grant;

22 (2) projects undertaken using amounts made
23 available under the grant, including a discussion of
24 the impact of those projects;

1 (3) lessons learned from implementing the
2 projects described in paragraph (2);

3 (4) the information technology projects the re-
4 cipient intends to implement next; and

5 (5) any other information determined appro-
6 priate by the Administrator.

7 (b) TO CONGRESS AND PUBLIC.—Not later than Sep-
8 tember 30, 2022, and every 2 years thereafter, the Admin-
9 istrator shall submit to Congress and make publicly avail-
10 able on the website of the United States Digital Service
11 a report that summarizes—

12 (1) the digital service grants applied for and
13 made; and

14 (2) the uses and impacts of digital service
15 grants, based on the reports received under sub-
16 section (a).

17 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

18 (a) AMOUNTS TO CARRY OUT THIS ACT.—There are
19 authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator to
20 carry out this Act \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years
21 2020 through 2027.

22 (b) AMOUNTS TO CARRY OUT THE MISSION OF THE
23 USDS.—In addition to the amounts authorized to be ap-
24 propriated under subsection (a), there are authorized to
25 be appropriated to the Administrator to carry out the mis-

1 sion of the United States Digital Service \$50,000,000 for
2 each of fiscal years 2020 through 2027.

3 (c) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts made available pursu-
4 ant to subsections (a) and (b) shall remain available until
5 expended.

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