

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4718

To require each public housing agency to establish and maintain an online portal for tenants and applicants, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 18, 2023

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS (for herself, Ms. MENG, Mr. BACON, Ms. CLARKE of New York, and Ms. SALAZAR) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services

A BILL

To require each public housing agency to establish and maintain an online portal for tenants and applicants, 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 “Housing Transparency
5 Improvement Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

8 (1) COVERED HOUSING.—The term “covered
9 housing” means—

1 (A) low-income housing; and

2 (B) any property with assistance converted
3 under the Rental Assistance Demonstration
4 program authorized under title II of the Con-
5 solidated and Further Continuing Appropria-
6 tions Act, 2012 (Public Law 112–55; 125 Stat.
7 673).

8 (2) FAMILIES; LOW-INCOME HOUSING.—The
9 terms “families” and “low-income housing” have the
10 meanings given those terms in section 3(b) of the
11 United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C.
12 1437a(b)).

13 (3) PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY.—The term
14 “public housing agency”—

15 (A) has the meaning given the term in sec-
16 tion 3(b) of the United States Housing Act of
17 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a(b)); and

18 (B) includes any owner of low-income
19 housing that enters into a housing assistance
20 payments contract under section 8 of the
21 United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C.
22 1437o).

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

1 (5) SMALL PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY.—The
2 term “small public housing agency” means a public
3 housing agency that—

4 (A) owns, assists, or operates not more
5 than 50 covered housing dwelling units; and

6 (B) predominantly operates in a rural
7 area, as described in section
8 1026.35(b)(2)(iv)(A) of title 12, Code of Fed-
9 eral Regulations, or any successor regulation.

10 **SEC. 3. ONLINE PORTAL.**

11 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after
12 the date of enactment of this Act, each public housing
13 agency shall establish and maintain an online portal on
14 the website of the public housing agency through which
15 families residing in and applicants for a covered housing
16 dwelling owned, assisted, or operated by the public hous-
17 ing agency may—

18 (1) access information, including contact infor-
19 mation, relating to the performance evaluation, man-
20 agement, and control of the covered housing dwell-
21 ing;

22 (2) access a plain language list of the legal
23 rights of each family residing in or applying for the
24 covered housing dwelling, which shall be available for
25 translation; and

1 (3) track inquiries related to service requests
2 and complaints submitted to the public housing
3 agency through a tracking system described in sub-
4 section (b).

5 (b) TRACKING SYSTEM.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—Each public housing agency
7 shall establish, using existing software or through
8 new software, a request tracking system, including
9 for inquiry on the status of an application, short-
10 term and long-term capital improvements, service re-
11 quests, and complaints, submitted by a family resid-
12 ing in a covered housing dwelling owned, assisted, or
13 operated by the public housing agency through
14 which the families and applicants may track re-
15 quests with real-time updates provided by the public
16 housing agency.

17 (2) TICKET DATABASE.—

18 (A) ASSIGNMENT OF NUMBER.—The
19 tracking system described in paragraph (1)
20 shall contain a ticket database under which the
21 public housing agency shall assign each inquiry,
22 service request, or complaint submitted to a
23 public housing agency by a family residing in or
24 applicant for a covered housing dwelling owned,

1 assisted, or operated by the public housing
2 agency a ticket number.

3 (B) REQUIRED INFORMATION.—Each tick-
4 et number described in subparagraph (A)
5 shall—

6 (i) be searchable through the tracking
7 system described in paragraph (1);

8 (I) include a description of—

9 (II) the nature of the inquiry,
10 complaint, or request;

11 (III) the most recent status of
12 the inquiry, complaint, or request;

13 (IV) whether or not the inquiry,
14 complaint, or request is open or
15 closed;

16 (V) any action taken on the in-
17 quiry, complaint, or request, and any
18 next steps to be taken; and

19 (VI) any additional information
20 as the public housing agency deter-
21 mines appropriate; and

22 (ii) not publicly disclose any personal
23 information relating to the inquiry, com-
24 plaint, or request, including the unit num-
25 ber, name of the resident or applicant, or

1 any other identifying information that is
2 prohibited from disclosure under applicable
3 laws.

4 (c) UPDATES.—Each public housing agency shall en-
5 sure that the online portal established under subsection
6 (a) is updated on a regular basis and contains the most
7 recent information regarding inquiries, service requests,
8 and complaints described in subsection (a)(3).

9 (d) REPORTING.—Each public housing agency shall,
10 on an annual basis, develop a fact sheet for tenants resid-
11 ing in and applicants for a covered housing dwelling
12 owned, assisted, or operated by the public housing agency
13 that—

14 (1) includes, in a clear and easily discernible
15 manner—

16 (A) the total amount and type of Federal.
17 State, and local funds received for the fiscal
18 year;

19 (B) the funding streams for ongoing and
20 upcoming capital improvement projects;

21 (C) the most recent inspection date and
22 score;

23 (D) any major renovation, capital, or rede-
24 velopment plans; and

1 (E) the name and contact information for
2 the manager or management of the dwelling, if
3 operating independently; and

4 (2) is posted on the website of the public hous-
5 ing agency, is available in paper format, is available
6 for translation, is available upon request, and is sub-
7 mitted as an addendum as part of the public hous-
8 ing agency plan required under section 5A of the
9 United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C.
10 1437c-1) and as part of any other reporting require-
11 ment related to the civil rights obligations of the
12 public housing agency.

13 (e) GRANTS.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make
15 grants to public housing agencies in the amount nec-
16 essary for the public housing agency to purchase, es-
17 tablish, and maintain the online portal required
18 under this section.

19 (2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
20 There is authorized to be appropriated such sums as
21 may be necessary to carry out this subsection.

22 (f) REPORTING.—Each public housing agency shall,
23 on a quarterly basis, submit to the Secretary information
24 on grants made under subsection (e), including how the

1 amounts were used related to the online portal required
2 under this section.

3 (g) INCENTIVES.—The Secretary shall consider the
4 implementation and maintenance by a public housing
5 agency of the online portal required under this section in
6 the annual public housing assessment system described in
7 part 902 of title 24, Code of Federal Regulations, or any
8 successor regulation.

9 (h) EXEMPTIONS.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—The requirement to create
11 and maintain an online portal under this section
12 shall not apply to small public housing agencies.

13 (2) ALTERNATE METHOD.—A small public
14 housing agency that is exempted under paragraph
15 (1) shall develop and implement and submit to the
16 Secretary alternate methods for fulfilling the re-
17 quirements under subsections (a) through (d).

○