

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9701

To direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish a program whereby the Secretary shall convey certain Federal land to individuals who permanently waive eligibility for certain welfare programs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 30, 2022

Mr. GOHMERT introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, Agriculture, Energy and Commerce, Financial Services, Education and Labor, and the Judiciary, 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 direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish a program whereby the Secretary shall convey certain Federal land to individuals who permanently waive eligibility for certain welfare programs, 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 “Welfare Reform Act
5 of 2022”.

1 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

2 The purpose of this Act is to help break the chain
3 of a lifetime on welfare and give such a bold step up that
4 it will start recipients on the road to success and independ-
5 ence.

6 **SEC. 3. LAND CONVEYANCE PROGRAM.**

7 (a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—Not later than 1 year after
8 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall
9 establish a program whereby the Secretary shall convey
10 Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of the
11 Bureau of Land Management to each covered individual
12 who—

13 (1) applies for and is approved for participation
14 in the Program; and

15 (2) permanently waives eligibility for certain
16 Federal welfare programs pursuant to subsection
17 (d).

18 (b) **LAND TO BE CONVEYED.**—

19 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to the limitations in
20 paragraph (2), the Secretary shall determine the
21 amount and location of Federal land under the ad-
22 ministrative jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land
23 Management to be conveyed to each covered indi-
24 vidual who is approved for participation in the Pro-
25 gram.

26 (2) **LIMITATIONS.**—

1 (A) TYPE OF LAND.—In carrying out the
2 Program, the Secretary may only convey land
3 to a covered individual for one of the following
4 purposes:

5 (i) Residential purposes.

6 (ii) Agricultural purposes.

7 (B) RESIDENTIAL LAND.—In the case of
8 residential land (land to be conveyed under the
9 Program to be used for residential purposes),
10 the Secretary may only convey to each covered
11 individual land that is—

12 (i) not more than 1 acre; and

13 (ii) contiguous.

14 (C) AGRICULTURAL LAND.—In the case of
15 agricultural land (land to be conveyed under the
16 Program to be used for agricultural purposes),
17 the Secretary may only convey to each covered
18 individual land—

19 (i) that is not more than 50 acres;

20 (ii) that is contiguous; and

21 (iii) at least 50 percent of which is
22 suitable for farming.

23 (D) NON-USE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND.—

24 (i) IN GENERAL.—A covered indi-
25 vidual that receives agricultural land under

1 the Program shall, with respect to the por-
2 tions of such land that are suitable for
3 farming, use the land for agricultural pur-
4 poses for at least 10 years after receiving
5 the land.

6 (ii) REVERTER.—If a covered indi-
7 vidual fails to use agricultural land for ag-
8 ricultural purposes as described in clause
9 (i), all of the agricultural land conveyed to
10 such covered individual under the Program
11 shall—

12 (I) revert to the United States
13 for administration by the Secretary;
14 and

15 (II) be made available for convey-
16 ance to another covered individual
17 under the Program.

18 (iii) CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY FOR
19 THE PROGRAM.—If agricultural land re-
20 verts to the Secretary under clause (ii),
21 after the 3-year period beginning on the
22 date of such reversion, the covered indi-
23 vidual to whom the reversion applies may
24 apply for, and receive, residential land
25 under the Program.

1 (c) APPLICATION.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—A covered individual seeking
3 to participate in the Program shall submit to the
4 Secretary an application at such time, in such man-
5 ner, and containing such information as the Sec-
6 retary may require.

7 (2) AVAILABILITY OF LAND.—The Secretary
8 shall make available to covered individuals approved
9 for participation in the Program a list of available
10 land, including copies of the deeds to such land.

11 (3) ALLOCATION.—The Secretary shall have
12 final discretion as to the allocation of land to cov-
13 ered individuals participating in the Program, but
14 shall provide such covered individuals a means by
15 which to express their preference for available land
16 listed pursuant to paragraph (2), including whether
17 the land will be used for residential or agricultural
18 purposes.

19 (d) ELIGIBILITY FOR CERTAIN FEDERAL WELFARE
20 PROGRAMS WAIVED.—Notwithstanding any other provi-
21 sion of law, upon receiving land under the Program, a cov-
22 ered individual waives eligibility for, and may not receive
23 benefits from, the following welfare programs:

1 (1) The supplemental nutrition assistance pro-
2 gram under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7
3 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.).

4 (2) The special supplemental nutrition program
5 for women, infants, and children under section 17 of
6 the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786).

7 (3) The emergency food assistance program
8 under the Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983
9 (7 U.S.C. 7501 et seq.).

10 (4) The program of block grants to States for
11 temporary assistance for needy families under part
12 A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
13 601 et seq.).

14 (5) Programs or activities funded through the
15 block grant program under title V of the Social Se-
16 curity Act (42 U.S.C. 701 et seq.).

17 (6) The tax credit allowable under section 32 of
18 the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

19 (7) The National Family Planning Program
20 (title X of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C.
21 300 et seq.; relating to family planning)).

22 (8) The Community Development Block Grant
23 program under title I of the Housing and Commu-
24 nity Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et
25 seq.).

1 (9) The Project-Based Rental Assistance pro-
2 gram under section 8 of the United States Housing
3 Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f).

4 (10) The Housing Choice Voucher program
5 under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act
6 of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)).

7 (11) The weatherization assistance program es-
8 tablished under part A of title IV of the Energy
9 Conservation and Production Act (42 U.S.C. 6861
10 et seq.).

11 (12) Programs and activities carried out under
12 the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of
13 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8621 et seq.).

14 (13) The education of migratory children pro-
15 gram authorized under part C of title I of the Ele-
16 mentary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20
17 U.S.C. 6391 et seq.).

18 (14) The refugee assistance program authorized
19 under chapter 2 of title IV of the Immigration and
20 Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1521 et seq.).

21 (e) PROGRAM COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall
22 update the head of each Federal department or agency
23 with administrative jurisdiction over a welfare program
24 described in subsection (d) of the following:

1 (1) Not later than 30 days after receiving an
2 application from a covered individual to participate
3 in the Program, that such covered individual has ap-
4 plied to the Program.

5 (2) Not later than 30 days after approving the
6 application of a covered individual, that such covered
7 individual has been approved to participate in the
8 Program.

9 (3) Not later than 30 days after conveying land
10 to a covered individual under the Program, that
11 such covered individual has received land under the
12 Program and is no longer eligible for certain Federal
13 welfare programs pursuant to subsection (d).

14 (f) PARTICIPATION LIMITED TO INDIVIDUAL.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—No individual, including a
16 guardian or fiduciary, may—

17 (A) submit an application under subsection
18 (c)(1) on behalf of another individual; or

19 (B) waive the eligibility of another indi-
20 vidual with respect to a welfare program under
21 this section.

22 (2) SURVIVOR BENEFITS.—If a covered indi-
23 vidual participates in the Program, a survivor of
24 such covered individual shall continue to be eligible

1 for the welfare programs described in subsection (d),
2 unless such survivor participates in the Program.

3 (g) TAX IMPLICATIONS FOR MARRIED COVERED IN-
4 DIVIDUALS.—In the case of married covered individual
5 who participates in the Program, section 32 of the Inter-
6 nal Revenue Code of 1986 shall be applied by treating any
7 income of such individual which would otherwise be earned
8 income (within the meaning of such section) as other than
9 earned income.

10 (h) SALE OF LAND PROHIBITED FOR 10 YEARS.—
11 Federal land conveyed under this section may not be sold
12 for the 10-year period immediately following the convey-
13 ance of that land and the deed conveying such land shall
14 include a provision stating the same.

15 (i) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

16 (1) COVERED INDIVIDUAL.—The term “covered
17 individual” means an individual who is—

18 (A) a citizen of the United States;

19 (B) 21 years of age or older; and

20 (C) notwithstanding the restrictions set
21 forth in this Act, eligible to receive benefits
22 under a welfare program described in sub-
23 section (d).

24 (2) PROGRAM.—The term “Program” means
25 the program established under subsection (a).

1 (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
2 the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bu-
3 reau of Land Management.

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