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1ST SESSION

S. 1991

To authorize a new type of housing choice voucher to help achieve the goals of ending homelessness among families with children, increasing housing opportunities, and improving life outcomes of poor children.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 9, 2021

Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself and Mr. YOUNG) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To authorize a new type of housing choice voucher to help achieve the goals of ending homelessness among families with children, increasing housing opportunities, and improving life outcomes of poor children.

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 “Family Stability and
5 Opportunity Vouchers Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. FAMILY STABILITY AND OPPORTUNITY VOUCHERS.**

7 Section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of
8 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)), as amended by section

1 101(b)(2)(B) of division Q of the Consolidated Appropria-
2 tions Act, 2021 (Public Law 116–260), is amended by
3 adding at the end the following:

4 “(22) FAMILY STABILITY AND OPPORTUNITY
5 VOUCHERS.—

6 “(A) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

7 “(i) The term ‘area of concentrated
8 poverty’ means a census tract in which the
9 poverty rate is not less than 30 percent, as
10 most recently determined by the Bureau of
11 the Census.

12 “(ii) The term ‘at risk of homeless-
13 ness’ has the meaning given the term in
14 section 401 of the McKinney-Vento Home-
15 less Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11360).

16 “(iii) The term ‘eligible family’ means
17 a family that—

18 “(I) includes a pregnant woman
19 or a child under the age of 6;

20 “(II) meets all applicable eligi-
21 bility requirements under this sub-
22 section; and

23 “(III) is—

24 “(aa) homeless;

25 “(bb) unstably housed;

1 “(cc) living in an area of
2 concentrated poverty; or

3 “(dd) at risk of displace-
4 ment from—

5 “(AA) an opportunity
6 area for children; or

7 “(BB) an area rapidly
8 transitioning to become an
9 opportunity area for chil-
10 dren.

11 “(iv) The term ‘high-performing
12 school’ shall have the meaning given the
13 term by the Secretary, using the best avail-
14 able evidence.

15 “(v) The term ‘homeless’ has the
16 meaning given the term in section 103 of
17 the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance
18 Act (42 U.S.C. 11302).

19 “(vi) The term ‘opportunity area for
20 children’ shall have the meaning given the
21 term by the Secretary, using the best avail-
22 able evidence.

23 “(vii) The term ‘unstably housed’,
24 with respect to a family, means a family
25 who—

1 “(I) is at risk of homelessness;

2 “(II) has moved not less than
3 twice during the 12-month period end-
4 ing on the date on which a public
5 housing agency selects the family
6 from a waiting list to receive assist-
7 ance under this paragraph;

8 “(III) is living in a unit not ac-
9 cessible to a disabled family member;

10 “(IV) is fleeing, or attempting to
11 flee, domestic violence, dating vio-
12 lence, sexual assault, or stalking; or

13 “(V) is living in housing condi-
14 tions that are dangerous or life-
15 threatening.

16 “(B) COMPETITIVE AWARD.—

17 “(i) IN GENERAL.—In each fiscal year
18 for which amounts are authorized to be ap-
19 propriated under subparagraph (F), the
20 Secretary shall provide assistance to public
21 housing agencies on a competitive basis to
22 be used for—

23 “(I) incremental vouchers for eli-
24 gible families; and

1 “(II) additional fees for the cost
2 to the public housing agencies of pro-
3 viding mobility-related services to eli-
4 gible families.

5 “(ii) SELECTION.—For the second fis-
6 cal year in which the Secretary provides
7 assistance under this paragraph, and each
8 fiscal year thereafter, in selecting public
9 housing agencies to receive assistance
10 under this paragraph, the Secretary
11 shall—

12 “(I) consider the performance of
13 public housing agencies in imple-
14 menting this paragraph; and

15 “(II) give preference to public
16 housing agencies that partner with or-
17 ganizations that provide home visiting
18 services, such as the services author-
19 ized under section 511 of the Social
20 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711) or lo-
21 cally funded initiatives, if those serv-
22 ices are available in the service area of
23 the public housing agency.

24 “(C) SERVICES REQUIRED TO BE OFFERED
25 TO FAMILIES RECEIVING VOUCHERS.—

1 “(i) IN GENERAL.—A public housing
2 agency that receives assistance under this
3 paragraph—

4 “(I) shall offer, to each eligible
5 family that the agency selects to re-
6 ceive a voucher, mobility-related serv-
7 ices to help the family move to an op-
8 portunity area for children with access
9 to—

10 “(aa) a high-performing
11 school; or

12 “(bb) high-quality childcare
13 and early education;

14 “(II) may not require an eligible
15 family to participate in the mobility-
16 related services described in subclause
17 (I) as a condition of receipt of a
18 voucher; and

19 “(III) shall adopt mobility-related
20 policies, to be specified by the Sec-
21 retary.

22 “(ii) MINIMUM ASSORTMENT OF SERV-
23 ICES AND POLICIES.—The Secretary shall
24 establish a minimum assortment of types
25 of mobility-related services that a public

1 housing agency shall offer, and mobility-re-
2 lated policies that a public housing agency
3 shall adopt, under clause (i) based on
4 promising practices and evidence of the ef-
5 fectiveness of the services and policies.

6 “(iii) SPECIFIC SERVICES.—The types
7 of mobility-related services required to be
8 offered under clause (i)—

9 “(I) shall include a customized
10 approach to enable a successful tran-
11 sition to opportunity areas for chil-
12 dren; and

13 “(II) may include counseling and
14 continued supportive services for fami-
15 lies.

16 “(iv) OPPORTUNITY AREAS FOR CHIL-
17 DREN; HIGH-PERFORMING SCHOOLS; HIGH-
18 QUALITY CHILD CARE AND EARLY EDU-
19 CATION.—The Secretary shall establish cri-
20 teria for areas, schools, and child care and
21 early education to qualify as opportunity
22 areas for children, high-performing schools,
23 and high-quality child care and early edu-
24 cation, respectively.

1 “(v) MANNER OF PROVIDING SERV-
2 ICES.—A public housing agency may pro-
3 vide mobility-related services as required
4 under clause (i) directly or through a local
5 partnership or contract.

6 “(D) OTHER REQUIREMENTS.—

7 “(i) TURNOVER.—Upon turnover of a
8 voucher issued by a public housing agency
9 using assistance received under this para-
10 graph, the public housing agency shall
11 issue the voucher to another eligible family
12 under this paragraph.

13 “(ii) RECAPTURE AND REALLOCATION
14 BY SECRETARY.—If a public housing agen-
15 cy that receives assistance to be used for
16 vouchers under this paragraph determines
17 that it no longer has an identified need for
18 the assistance, the public housing agency
19 shall notify the Secretary, who may recap-
20 ture the assistance and reallocate the as-
21 sistance in accordance with this paragraph.

22 “(iii) RELATION TO OTHER LAWS.—
23 Notwithstanding any other provision of
24 law, with respect to a voucher authorized
25 under this paragraph—

1 “(I) the Secretary may not waive
2 any provision of this paragraph or
3 subsection (r); and

4 “(II) subsection (b) of section 16
5 shall apply, except as provided under
6 subsection (d) of that section.

7 “(E) IMPLEMENTATION.—

8 “(i) DEFINITIONS.—Not later than
9 180 days after the date of enactment of
10 this paragraph, the Secretary shall publish
11 a notice for public comment in the Federal
12 Register that includes any definitions or
13 other specifications required or authorized
14 under this paragraph.

15 “(ii) ALLOCATION OF FUNDING.—

16 “(I) INITIAL YEAR.—For the
17 first fiscal year for which amounts are
18 appropriated to be provided to public
19 housing agencies for incremental
20 vouchers under this paragraph, the
21 Secretary shall allocate the amounts
22 to public housing agencies not later
23 than 2 years after the date on which
24 the amounts are appropriated.

1 “(II) SUBSEQUENT YEARS.—For
2 any fiscal year after the fiscal year de-
3 scribed in subclause (I), the Secretary
4 shall allocate amounts to public hous-
5 ing agencies for incremental vouchers
6 under this paragraph not later than
7 180 days after the date on which the
8 amounts are appropriated.

9 “(F) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIA-
10 TIONS.—There are authorized to be appro-
11 priated to the Secretary for each of fiscal years
12 2022 through 2026 such sums as may be nec-
13 essary to provide assistance to public housing
14 agencies under this paragraph to be used for—

15 “(i) not more than 100,000 incre-
16 mental vouchers each fiscal year, as de-
17 scribed in subparagraph (B)(i)(I);

18 “(ii) fees for the cost of administering
19 the incremental vouchers described in sub-
20 paragraph (B)(i)(I); and

21 “(iii) additional fees for mobility-re-
22 lated services, as described in subpara-
23 graph (B)(i)(II).”.

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