

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 2316

To expand eligibility for certain housing programs for qualified volunteer first responders.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 12, 2021

Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. CRAMER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

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## A BILL

To expand eligibility for certain housing programs for qualified volunteer first responders.

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 “Volunteer First Re-  
5 sponder Housing Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

8 (1) BONA FIDE VOLUNTEER; ELIGIBLE EM-  
9 PLOYER; QUALIFIED SERVICES.—The terms “bona  
10 fide volunteer”, “eligible employer”, and “qualified

1 services” have the meanings given those terms in  
2 section 457(e) of the Internal Revenue Code of  
3 1986.

4 (2) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe”  
5 has the meaning given the term “Indian tribe” in  
6 section 501(b) of the Housing Act of 1949 (42  
7 U.S.C. 1471(b)).

8 (3) QUALIFIED VOLUNTEER FIRST RE-  
9 SPONDER.—The term “qualified volunteer first re-  
10 sponder” means any individual who—

11 (A) is a bona fide volunteer performing  
12 qualified services for an eligible employer;

13 (B) continuously served as a volunteer for  
14 the eligible employer during the 2-year period  
15 preceding the date on which the individual sub-  
16 mits a verification letter under section 3(b) or  
17 4(b);

18 (C) during each of the 2 years described in  
19 subparagraph (B)—

20 (i) met the minimum requirements for  
21 active membership established by the eligi-  
22 ble employer; or

23 (ii) if the eligible employer did not es-  
24 tablish minimum requirements, volunteered  
25 for not less than 200 hours; and

1 (D) is certified as a firefighter or other  
2 first responder in the State, political subdivision  
3 of a State, or jurisdiction of an Indian Tribe in  
4 which the individual is serving as volunteer.

5 **SEC. 3. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE SINGLE FAMILY**  
6 **HOUSING GUARANTEED LOAN PROGRAM.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—A qualified volunteer first re-  
8 sponder who submits to the Secretary of Agriculture (re-  
9 ferred to in this section as the “Secretary”) a verification  
10 letter in accordance with subsection (b) shall be eligible  
11 for a deduction in annual income under section  
12 3555.152(c) of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations (or  
13 any successor regulation), in the amount of \$18,000.

14 (b) VERIFICATION LETTER.—To be eligible for a de-  
15 duction under subsection (a), a qualified volunteer first  
16 responder shall submit to the Secretary a verification let-  
17 ter from the head of the eligible employer for which the  
18 qualified volunteer first responder volunteers, which  
19 shall—

20 (1) include the date on which the qualified vol-  
21 unteer first responder joined the eligible employer as  
22 a volunteer;

23 (2) attest to the Secretary that the qualified  
24 volunteer first responder meets the requirements

1 under subparagraphs (B) and (C) of section 2(3);  
2 and

3 (3) include a copy of the certification described  
4 in section 2(3)(D).

5 **SEC. 4. GOOD NEIGHBOR NEXT DOOR SALES PROGRAM**  
6 **AND SIMILAR PROGRAMS.**

7 (a) **ELIGIBILITY.**—A qualified volunteer first re-  
8 sponder who submits to the Secretary of Housing and  
9 Urban Development (referred to in this section as the  
10 “Secretary”) a verification letter in accordance with sub-  
11 section (b) shall qualify as a firefighter or emergency med-  
12 ical technician for purposes of any single family property  
13 disposition program carried out by the Secretary by regu-  
14 lation under section 204(g) of the National Housing Act  
15 (12 U.S.C. 1710(g)) that offers discounted home prices  
16 to firefighters or emergency medical technicians.

17 (b) **VERIFICATION LETTER.**—To qualify to purchase  
18 a home under a single family property disposition program  
19 referred to in subsection (a), a qualified first responder  
20 shall submit to the Secretary a verification letter from the  
21 head of the eligible employer for which the qualified volun-  
22 teer first responder volunteers, which shall—

23 (1) include the date on which the qualified vol-  
24 unteer first responder joined the eligible employer as  
25 a volunteer;

1           (2) attest to the Secretary that the qualified  
2 volunteer first responder meets the requirements  
3 under subparagraphs (B) and (C) of section 2(3);

4           (3) include a copy of the certification described  
5 in section 2(3)(D); and

6           (4) include a certification from the qualified  
7 volunteer first responder of the responder's good  
8 faith intention to continue serving as a volunteer for  
9 the eligible employer for not less than 1 year fol-  
10 lowing the date of closing.

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