

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5815

To amend the Head Start Act to expand and improve participation in Head Start programs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 28, 2023

Mr. SCHIFF (for himself, Mrs. HAYES, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. LANDSMAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To amend the Head Start Act to expand and improve participation in Head Start 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 “Head Start Expansion
5 and Improvement Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. EXPANDING ELIGIBILITY UNDER PUBLIC ASSIST-**
7 **ANCE.**

8 Section 637 of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9832)
9 is amended by adding at the end the following:

1 “(27) The term ‘public assistance’ means public
2 assistance programs including temporary assistance
3 for needy families established under part A of title
4 IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et
5 seq.), supplemental security income carried out
6 under title XVI of the Social Security Act (42
7 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.), the supplemental nutrition as-
8 sistance program under the Food and Nutrition Act
9 of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), special supple-
10 mental nutrition program for women, infants, and
11 children established under section 17 of the Child
12 Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786), and the
13 State children’s health insurance programs under
14 title XXI of the Social Security Act 1397aa et
15 seq.).”.

16 **SEC. 3. INCREASE FAMILY INCOME THRESHOLD.**

17 Section 645(a)(a)(1) of the Head Start Act (42
18 U.S.C. 9870(a)(a)(1)) is amended—

19 (1) in paragraph (A) by striking “(a)(a)(1)(A)”
20 and inserting “(a)(1)(A)”, and

21 (2) in subparagraph (B)—

22 (A) in clause (i) by inserting “138 per-
23 cent” after “below”, and

24 (B) in clause (iii)—

1 (i) by striking “include— (I)” and in-
2 serting “include”, and

3 (ii) by striking subclause (II).

4 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

5 Section 639 of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9834)
6 is amended by striking: “(other than section 657B)
7 \$7,350,000,000 for fiscal year 2008, \$7,650,000,000 for
8 fiscal year 2009, \$7,995,000,000 for fiscal year 2010, and
9 such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years
10 2011 and 2012” and inserting “(other than sections 657B
11 and 657C) \$36,000,000,000 for each of the fiscal years
12 2025 through 2030”.

13 **SEC. 5. GRANTS FOR HEAD START INFRASTRUCTURE.**

14 The Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.) is
15 amended by adding at the end the following:

16 **“SEC. 657C. GRANTS FOR HEAD START INFRASTRUCTURE.**

17 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF GRANT PROGRAM.—The
18 Secretary shall establish a program to make grants to
19 Head Start agencies (including Early Head Start agencies
20 to construct or improve facilities to provide Head Start
21 services (including Early Head Start services)).

22 “(b) ELIGIBILITY FOR GRANTS.—To be eligible to re-
23 ceive a grant under subsection (a), a Head Start agency
24 shall submit to the Secretary an application in such form,

1 and containing such information as the Secretary may re-
2 quire.

3 “(c) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall give priority for
4 grants requested by eligible applicants respect to facilities
5 that—

6 “(1) were built before 1970;

7 “(2) have not had a major renovation since its
8 construction;

9 “(3) have received 1 or more findings in the
10 safe and clean environments key performance area
11 (KPA);

12 “(4) have hazardous conditions, materials, or
13 equipment that may cause harm to children, fami-
14 lies, or staff;

15 “(5) have an environment that is not free of air
16 pollutants, including mold, smoke, lead, pesticides,
17 and herbicides, as well as soil and water pollutants;
18 and

19 “(6) lack preparedness for fire and other emer-
20 gencies.

21 “(d) USE OF FUNDS.—Eligible use of grant funds
22 to improve and update Head Start infrastructure in-
23 clude—

24 “(1) updates, renovations, and repairs to ad-
25 dress structural issues;

1 “(2) building or acquiring additional classroom
2 space, common areas, play areas;

3 “(3) updating heating, cooling, and ventilation
4 systems;

5 “(4) building and expanding playgrounds and
6 outdoor spaces;

7 “(5) removing, renovating, and acquiring fur-
8 nishings;

9 “(6) installing and updating bathroom facilities,
10 including the installation of child-size sinks and toi-
11 lets;

12 “(7) reducing or removing toxic industrial com-
13 pounds;

14 “(8) updates to safety and emergency prepared-
15 ness, such as upgrading sprinkler systems and in-
16 stalling emergency lighting;

17 “(9) weatherization;

18 “(10) improvements to water, sewer, and
19 plumbing systems; and

20 “(11) establishing, expanding, or improving
21 technology to support children’s academic and socio-
22 emotional learning.

23 “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
24 is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section

1 \$1,000,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2025 through
2 2030.”.

3 **SEC. 6. LOAN FORGIVENESS FOR HEAD START AND EARLY**
4 **HEAD START CHILDCARE WORKERS.**

5 Part D of title IV of the Higher Education Act of
6 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087a et seq.) is amended by adding at
7 the end the following:

8 **“SEC. 460A. LOAN CANCELLATION FOR HEAD START AND**
9 **EARLY HEAD START CHILDCARE WORKERS.**

10 “(a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary shall
11 carry cancel the balance of interest, principal, and fees
12 due, in accordance with subsection (b), on any eligible
13 Federal Direct Loan not in default for a borrower who
14 for a 3-year (consecutive or non-consecutive) period after
15 the date of enactment of the Head Start Expansion and
16 Improvement Act of 2023—

17 “(1) has been employed, on a full-time basis, by
18 a Head Start program or an Early Head Start pro-
19 gram carried out under the Head Start Act (42
20 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.); and

21 “(2) pursuant to such employment, has pro-
22 vided care or instruction to children enrolled in such
23 program.

24 “(b) LOAN CANCELLATION AMOUNT.—After the con-
25 clusion of the 3-year period described in subsection (a),

1 the Secretary shall cancel the obligation to repay the bal-
2 ance of principal, interest, and fees due as of the time
3 of such cancellation, on the eligible Federal Direct Loans
4 made to the borrower under this part.

5 “(c) INELIGIBILITY FOR DOUBLE BENEFITS.—No
6 borrower may, for the same service, receive a reduction
7 of loan obligations under both this section and section
8 428J, 455(m), or 460.

9 “(d) APPLICATION.—The Secretary shall develop and
10 make publicly available an application for borrowers who
11 wish to receive loan forgiveness under this section, which
12 shall—

13 “(1) be made readily available for qualifying
14 childcare workers to file for loan forgiveness; and

15 “(2) include any certification requirements that
16 the Secretary determines are necessary to verify
17 qualifying service.

18 “(e) ELIGIBLE FEDERAL DIRECT LOAN DEFINED.—
19 The term ‘eligible Federal Direct Loan’ means a Federal
20 Direct Stafford Loan, Federal Direct PLUS Loan, or
21 Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan, or a Federal
22 Direct Consolidation Loan.”.

1 **SEC. 7. HEAD START EMPLOYEE SALARY-INCREASE GRANT**
2 **PROGRAM.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
4 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health
5 and Human Services shall establish and carry out a pro-
6 gram to make grants for the purpose of supplementing,
7 not supplanting, the compensation paid by Head Start
8 agencies to the employees of such agencies.

9 (b) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—The Secretary shall
10 develop a formula to determine grant amounts, taking into
11 consideration—

12 (1) the gaps between the compensation paid by
13 the respective Head Start agency to its employees
14 and the employee compensation paid by other early
15 childhood education employers in the relevant geo-
16 graphical area,

17 (2) the cost of living in the geographical area
18 in which such agency is located, including median in-
19 come and housing costs, and

20 (3) the number of employee vacancies of such
21 agency.

22 (c) USE OF FUNDS.—A Head Start agency that re-
23 ceives a grant shall use grant funds to supplement, and
24 not to supplant, the compensation paid to the employees
25 of such agency.

1 (d) APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be ap-
2 propriated to carry out this section \$6,800,000,000 for
3 each of the fiscal years 2025 through 2030.

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