

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2329

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a transformational infrastructure competitive grant program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 3, 2017

Mr. HIGGINS of New York introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a transformational infrastructure competitive grant program, 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 “Nation Building Here
5 at Home Act of 2017”.

6 **SEC. 2. TRANSFORMATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE COMPETI-**
7 **TIVE GRANT PROGRAM.**

8 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 270 days after
9 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Trans-

1 portation shall establish a transformational infrastructure
2 competitive grant program.

3 (b) GRANT AUTHORITY.—In carrying out the pro-
4 gram established under subsection (a), the Secretary may
5 make a grant, on a competitive basis, to any of the fol-
6 lowing:

7 (1) A State government.

8 (2) A local government.

9 (3) A transit agency.

10 (4) A port authority.

11 (c) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—A grant made under sub-
13 section (b) may be used for any of the following, if
14 the Secretary determines that the project will signifi-
15 cantly impact a metropolitan area, a region, or all
16 of the United States:

17 (A) A highway or bridge project eligible
18 under title 23, United States Code, including
19 interstate rehabilitation, improvements to the
20 rural collector road system, the reconstruction
21 of overpasses and interchanges, bridge replace-
22 ments, bridge painting, seismic retrofit projects
23 for bridges, and road realignments.

24 (B) A public transportation project eligible
25 under chapter 53 of title 49, United States

1 Code, including investment in a project partici-
2 pating in the New Starts or Small Starts pro-
3 grams that will expedite the completion of that
4 project and its entry into revenue service.

5 (C) A passenger or freight rail transpor-
6 tation project.

7 (D) A port infrastructure investment, in-
8 cluding a project that connects ports to other
9 modes of transportation and improves the effi-
10 ciency of freight movement.

11 (E) An aviation infrastructure project.

12 (F) A water infrastructure project.

13 (2) COORDINATION.—With respect to a project
14 described in paragraph (1)(F), the Secretary shall
15 coordinate any grant for such a project with the Ad-
16 ministrator of the Environmental Protection Agency
17 and the Secretary of the Army (acting through the
18 Chief of Engineers).

19 (d) APPLICATIONS AND CRITERIA FOR GRANT
20 AWARDS.—

21 (1) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible for a grant
22 made under subsection (b), an entity described in
23 paragraph (1), (2), (3), or (4) of that subsection
24 shall submit to the Secretary an application in such

1 form, at such time, and containing such information
2 as the Secretary determines appropriate.

3 (2) CRITERIA FOR GRANT AWARDS.—Not later
4 than 90 days after the date of enactment of this
5 Act, the Secretary shall issue regulations specifying
6 the criteria that the Secretary will use to make
7 grants on a competitive basis under subsection (b).

8 (3) FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS.—The criteria
9 specified by the Secretary under paragraph (2) shall
10 include criteria for the consideration of—

11 (A) whether there are financial commit-
12 ments in place with respect to a proposed
13 project;

14 (B) the degree of certainty with respect to
15 such financial commitments; and

16 (C) whether such financial commitments
17 are from non-Federal sources.

18 (e) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost
19 of a project assisted with a grant made under subsection
20 (b) may not exceed 100 percent of that cost.

21 (f) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making grants under sub-
22 section (b), the Secretary shall ensure, to the extent prac-
23 ticable, that the grants—

24 (1) are distributed geographically in an equi-
25 table manner;

1 (2) address the needs of both urban and rural
2 areas appropriately;

3 (3) promote the training and employment of
4 veterans, including by having applicable contractors
5 provide to veterans a preference during the hiring
6 and referral of laborers;

7 (4) are utilized in a manner that ensures an ap-
8 propriate percentage of grant amounts are expended
9 through small business concerns owned and con-
10 trolled by socially and economically disadvantaged
11 individuals (as determined by the Secretary); and

12 (5) promote the utilization of participants in a
13 registered apprenticeship program, including by pro-
14 viding a preference to proposed projects that incor-
15 porate such utilization.

16 (g) APPLICABILITY OF TITLE 40.—Each project con-
17 ducted using funds provided with a grant made under sub-
18 section (b) shall comply with the requirements of sub-
19 chapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code.

20 (h) BUY AMERICA.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—None of the funds made
22 available for a project under this Act may be used
23 for the project unless all of the iron, steel, and man-
24 ufactured goods used in the project are produced in
25 the United States.

1 (2) EXCEPTIONS.—Paragraph (1) shall not
2 apply in any case or category of cases in which the
3 Secretary finds that—

4 (A) applying paragraph (1) would be in-
5 consistent with the public interest;

6 (B) iron, steel, or the relevant manufac-
7 tured goods are not produced in the United
8 States in sufficient and reasonably available
9 quantities or to a satisfactory quality; or

10 (C) inclusion of iron, steel, and manufac-
11 tured goods produced in the United States will
12 increase the cost of the overall project by more
13 than 25 percent.

14 (3) JUSTIFICATIONS.—If the Secretary deter-
15 mines that it is necessary to waive the application of
16 paragraph (1) based on a finding under paragraph
17 (2), the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Reg-
18 ister a detailed justification for the waiver.

19 (4) INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS.—This sub-
20 section shall be applied in a manner consistent with
21 United States obligations under international agree-
22 ments.

23 (i) TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.—In car-
24 rying out the program established under subsection (a),
25 the Secretary shall—

1 (1) take actions to ensure that grants made
2 under subsection (b) are utilized as expeditiously
3 and efficiently as possible;

4 (2) make available to the public, on an appro-
5 priate Web site of the Department of Transpor-
6 tation, information on each grant made under sub-
7 section (b); and

8 (3) submit to Congress, not later than 1 year
9 after the first grant is made under subsection (b),
10 and annually thereafter, information on grants made
11 under subsection (b), including the progress made
12 on projects funded by such grants.

13 (j) ENVIRONMENTAL STREAMLINING.—The Sec-
14 retary shall coordinate, to the maximum extent prac-
15 ticable, with relevant Federal departments and agencies
16 to ensure that environmental reviews are conducted in a
17 manner that facilitates the accelerated delivery of projects
18 for which a grant is made under this section.

19 (k) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be
21 appropriated to the Secretary to make grants under
22 the program established under subsection (a)
23 \$1,263,000,000,000, in the aggregate, for fiscal
24 years 2018 through 2022.

1 (2) ELIGIBLE PROJECT USE.—From the
2 amounts made available under paragraph (1), the
3 Secretary shall use—

4 (A) 85 percent of the amounts to make
5 grants for projects described in subparagraph
6 (A), (B), or (C) of subsection (c)(1);

7 (B) 2 percent of the amounts to make
8 grants for projects described in subparagraph
9 (D) of subsection (c)(1);

10 (C) 4 percent of the amounts to make
11 grants for projects described in subparagraph
12 (E) of subsection (c)(1); and

13 (D) 9 percent of the amounts to make
14 grants for projects described in subparagraph
15 (F) of subsection (c)(1).

16 **SEC. 3. NATION BUILDING HERE AT HOME FINANCING INI-**
17 **TIATIVE.**

18 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after
19 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the
20 Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of Transpor-
21 tation, shall establish a Nation Building Here at Home
22 Financing Initiative in accordance with this section.

23 (b) AUTHORITY TO ISSUE BONDS.—In carrying out
24 the initiative established under subsection (a), the Sec-
25 retary of the Treasury may issue bonds. The aggregate

1 face amount of bonds issued under this subsection may
2 not exceed \$300,000,000,000.

3 (c) CHARACTERISTICS OF BONDS.—Bonds issued
4 under subsection (b) shall be issued in such amounts, bear
5 such rates of interest, and be subject to such terms and
6 conditions as the Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe.

7 (d) USE OF BOND PROCEEDS.—The Secretary of the
8 Treasury shall make available to the Secretary of Trans-
9 portation the proceeds resulting from bonds issued under
10 subsection (b). The Secretary of Transportation may use
11 such proceeds only to carry out the program established
12 under section 2(a) of this Act.

13 **SEC. 4. REPORT.**

14 Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment
15 of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall submit
16 to Congress a comprehensive report describing the trans-
17 portation needs of the United States for each of the fol-
18 lowing:

19 (1) The 20-year period beginning on the date of
20 enactment of this Act.

21 (2) The 30-year period beginning after the pe-
22 riod described in paragraph (1).

23 (3) The 50-year period beginning after the pe-
24 riod described in paragraph (2).

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