

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1609

To direct the Election Assistance Commission to establish a program to make grants to States to provide increased pay for election workers, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 16, 2023

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. WARNER, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. WELCH, Mr. BROWN, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. SMITH, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration

A BILL

To direct the Election Assistance Commission to establish a program to make grants to States to provide increased pay for election workers, 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 “Support Our Election
5 Workers Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. PROGRAM FOR GRANTS TO SUPPORT ELECTION**
 2 **WORKERS.**

3 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.—Subtitle D of
 4 title II of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C.
 5 21001 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
 6 lowing:

7 **“PART 7— PAYMENTS TO HELP SUPPORT**
 8 **ELECTION WORKERS**

9 **“SEC. 297. ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF GRANT**
 10 **PROGRAM.**

11 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall establish
 12 and operate a program under which the Commission shall
 13 make payments to eligible States for providing increased
 14 pay for election workers, including individuals serving as
 15 election officials or poll workers on a temporary or unpaid
 16 basis.

17 “(b) AMOUNT OF PAYMENT.—

18 “(1) AMOUNT.—The amount of a payment
 19 made to a State under the program established
 20 under this part shall be equal to the greater of—

21 “(A) the reasonable costs the State expects
 22 to incur in providing increased pay for election
 23 workers, as determined by the Commission tak-
 24 ing into account the information provided by
 25 the State in the plan described in section 297A;
 26 or

1 “(B) the minimum payment amount de-
2 scribed in paragraph (2) with respect to the fis-
3 cal year.

4 “(2) MINIMUM PAYMENT AMOUNT.—The min-
5 imum payment amount described in this paragraph
6 with respect to a fiscal year is equal to one-half of
7 1 percent of the aggregate amount made available
8 during the fiscal year for payments under the pro-
9 gram established under this part.

10 “(c) APPLICATION.—In order to be eligible to receive
11 a payment under the program established under this part,
12 a State shall submit to the Commission, at such time and
13 in such form as the Commission may require, an applica-
14 tion containing a description of a plan for how the State
15 will use the payment to provide increased pay to election
16 workers, as described in section 297A, together with such
17 other information and assurances as the Commission may
18 require.

19 “(d) REPORTS.—A State receiving a payment under
20 the program established under this part shall submit to
21 the Commission such reports on the State’s use of the pay-
22 ment as the Commission may require.

1 **“SEC. 297A. STATE PLAN FOR PROVIDING INCREASED PAY**
2 **TO ELECTION WORKERS.**

3 “(a) **ELEMENTS OF PLAN.**—A State’s plan for pro-
4 viding increased pay to election workers shall include the
5 following elements:

6 “(1) A description of how the State will use in-
7 creased pay to retain qualified election workers and
8 to recruit new election workers.

9 “(2) The requirements an individual must meet
10 in order to be eligible to receive increased pay under
11 the plan.

12 “(3) The amount of the reasonable costs the
13 State expects to incur in providing increased pay for
14 such eligible individuals.

15 “(4) The procedures for carrying out the plan,
16 including the extent to which State and local election
17 officials will be responsible for carrying out the plan.

18 “(b) **OPPORTUNITY OF ALL ELECTION WORKERS TO**
19 **RECEIVE PAY.**—Under the State’s plan, the State may
20 not treat an election worker as ineligible to receive in-
21 creased pay solely because the individual does not interact
22 directly with voters, individuals attempting to vote, or in-
23 dividuals attempting to register to vote.

1 **“SEC. 297B. COVERAGE OF COMMONWEALTH OF NORTH-**
 2 **ERN MARIANA ISLANDS.**

3 “In this part, the Commonwealth of the Northern
 4 Mariana Islands shall be considered a State.

5 **“SEC. 297C. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

6 “There are authorized to be appropriated for pay-
 7 ments under this part such sums as may be necessary for
 8 fiscal year 2024 and each succeeding fiscal year.”.

9 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents
 10 of such Act is amended by adding at the end of the items
 11 relating to subtitle D of title II the following:

“PART 7— PAYMENTS TO HELP SUPPORT ELECTION WORKERS

“Sec. 297. Establishment and operation of grant program.

“Sec. 297A. State plan for providing increased pay to election workers.

“Sec. 297B. Coverage of Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands.

“Sec. 297C. Authorization of appropriations.”.

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