

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2230

To require the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to improve services for survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 14, 2017

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

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to improve services for survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

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 “Help End Abusive Liv-
5 ing Situations Act” or the “HEALS Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act—

8 (1) the term “domestic violence project” means
9 a project administered by a victim service provider

1 designed to meet the needs of survivors of domestic
2 violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking;

3 (2) the term “homeless” has the meaning given
4 the term in section 103 of the McKinney-Vento
5 Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302);

6 (3) the terms “homeless individual with a dis-
7 ability”, “permanent housing”, “tenant-based”,
8 “transitional housing”, and “victim service provider”
9 have the meanings given those terms in section 401
10 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42
11 U.S.C. 11360);

12 (4) the term “rapid re-housing project” means
13 supportive services and short- or medium-term ten-
14 ant-based rental assistance, as necessary, to help a
15 homeless individual or family, with or without a dis-
16 ability, move as soon as possible into permanent
17 housing and achieve stability in that housing; and

18 (5) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary
19 of Housing and Urban Development.

20 **SEC. 3. STRENGTHENING HOUSING RESOURCES PROTEC-**
21 **TIONS FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIO-**
22 **LENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT,**
23 **AND STALKING.**

24 Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment
25 of this Act, the Secretary shall take the following measures

1 to improve services provided to survivors of domestic vio-
2 lence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking:

3 (1) EQUAL CONSIDERATION.—For purposes of
4 scoring applicants in the notice of funding avail-
5 ability for the Continuum of Care program author-
6 ized under subtitle C of title IV of the McKinney-
7 Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11381 et
8 seq.) in any fiscal year, the Secretary shall give
9 equal consideration to—

10 (A) rapid re-housing projects;

11 (B) projects that provide permanent sup-
12 portive housing; and

13 (C) domestic violence projects that maxi-
14 mize client choice, including transitional hous-
15 ing that provide services and help participants
16 to secure permanent housing.

17 (2) TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROJECTS.—

18 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall au-
19 thorize any defunded transitional housing
20 project to reapply for funding.

21 (B) TREATMENT AS RAPID RE-HOUSING
22 PROJECT.—The Secretary shall consider a pro-
23 gram receiving funds under section 40299 of
24 the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (34

1 U.S.C. 12351) to be a rapid re-housing project
2 if the program—

3 (i) provides not less than 6 months of
4 housing assistance to survivors; and

5 (ii) meets other criteria established by
6 the Secretary.

7 (3) EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall de-
8 velop—

9 (A) measurable criteria upon which appli-
10 cants are evaluated to demonstrate their col-
11 laboration with victim service providers to de-
12 velop local policy priorities focused on survivors
13 of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual as-
14 sault, or stalking, including survivor-centered
15 coordinated entry processes that appropriately
16 assess and prioritize those survivors and take
17 into account the safety and confidentiality
18 needs of those survivors; and

19 (B) mechanisms that promote the provi-
20 sion of technical assistance and support for pro-
21 grams to improve outcomes instead of reallo-
22 cating or not awarding funds.

23 (4) RESEARCH AGENDA.—The Secretary shall
24 develop a research agenda that focuses on survivors
25 of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault,

1 and stalking and the housing modalities that best
 2 support them, especially the critical safety concerns
 3 and the link between trauma and residential sta-
 4 bility.

5 **SEC. 4. INCREASING ACCESS TO SAFE HOUSING FOR SUR-**
 6 **VIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VI-**
 7 **OLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, AND STALKING.**

8 Section 427(b)(1) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless
 9 Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11386a(b)(1)) is amended—

10 (1) in subparagraph (A)—

11 (A) by redesignating clauses (vii) and (viii)
 12 as clauses (viii) and (ix), respectively; and

13 (B) by inserting after clause (vi) the fol-
 14 lowing:

15 “(vii) success in addressing the safety
 16 needs of homeless survivors of domestic vi-
 17 olence, dating violence, sexual assault, and
 18 stalking;”;

19 (2) in subparagraph (B)—

20 (A) in clause (iv)(VI), by striking “and” at
 21 the end;

22 (B) by redesignating clause (v) as clause
 23 (vi); and

24 (C) by inserting after clause (iv)(VI) the
 25 following:

1 “(v) how the recipient will measure
2 the success of the victim service providers
3 in meeting the housing, safety, and trauma
4 needs of victims of domestic violence, dat-
5 ing violence, sexual assault, or stalking,
6 with an explanation of how the recipient
7 will allow flexibility on other metrics that
8 may be impacted by the needs of survivors;
9 and”;

10 (3) in subparagraph (F)(ii), by striking “, and”
11 at the end;

12 (4) by redesignating subparagraph (G) as sub-
13 paragraph (H); and

14 (5) by inserting after subparagraph (F) the fol-
15 lowing:

16 “(G) success of the recipient in meeting
17 the housing, safety, and trauma needs of sur-
18 vivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sex-
19 ual assault, or stalking, including access to safe
20 housing; and”.

21 **SEC. 5. REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

22 Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment
23 of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a re-
24 port on—

1 (1) the trends in allocating resources to address
2 the housing needs of survivors of domestic violence,
3 dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking; and

4 (2) the increase in the allocation of resources
5 for domestic violence projects beginning after the
6 date of enactment of this Act.

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