

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 895

To provide for assistance to rural water, wastewater, and waste disposal systems affected by the COVID–19 pandemic, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 5, 2021

Mr. ROUZER (for himself and Mr. VELA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To provide for assistance to rural water, wastewater, and waste disposal systems affected by the COVID–19 pandemic, 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 “Emergency Assistance
5 for Rural Water Systems Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR RURAL WATER SYS-**
7 **TEMS.**

8 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

9 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
10 ty” means a rural water, wastewater, or waste dis-

posol facility with respect to which assistance may be provided under a water, wastewater, or waste disposal program under section 306(a), 306A, 306C, or 306D of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a), 1926a, 1926c, 1926d).

(2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture.

(b) EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may—

(1) provide a grant, a zero percent interest loan, or a 1 percent interest loan to, forgive principal or interest or modify any term or condition of an outstanding loan made to, or refinance part or all of any other loan (if the purpose of the loan is an eligible purpose under section 306(a)(1) or 306C of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(1), 1926c)) made to, an eligible entity; or

(2) reduce or eliminate any fee that is or would otherwise be required to be paid under section 306(a)(1) of that Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(1)) with respect to a loan guarantee provided to an eligible entity, on the condition that the eligible entity receives the benefit resulting from the reduction or elimination of the fee.

1 (c) LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may pro-
2 vide assistance to an eligible entity under subsection (b)
3 as the Secretary determines is necessary—

4 (1) to ensure that the eligible entity has the
5 necessary resources to maintain public health, safe-
6 ty, or order;

7 (2) to address financial hardships of the eligible
8 entity due to the COVID–19 public health emer-
9 gency; or

10 (3) to promote the financial stability of the eli-
11 gible entity.

12 (d) USE OF ASSISTANCE.—An eligible entity to which
13 assistance is provided under subsection (b) may use the
14 assistance—

15 (1) for any purpose for which the eligible entity
16 is eligible for assistance under the relevant provision
17 of law referred to in subsection (a)(1); or

18 (2) for any direct operational expenses of in-
19 curred by the eligible entity, as determined by the
20 Secretary.

21 (e) APPROPRIATION.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—Out of any amounts in the
23 Treasury not otherwise appropriated, there is appro-
24 priated to the Secretary \$1,000,000,000 to carry out
25 this section.

1 (2) RESERVATION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EX-
2 PENSES.—The Secretary shall reserve 3 percent of
3 the amount appropriated by paragraph (1) for ad-
4 ministrative expenses incurred by the Secretary in
5 carrying out this section.

6 (3) AVAILABILITY.—The amount appropriated
7 by paragraph (1) shall remain available through De-
8 cember 31, 2022.

○