

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 291

To authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to carry out a housing choice voucher mobility demonstration to encourage families receiving the voucher assistance to move to lower-poverty areas and expand access to opportunity areas.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 31, 2019

Mr. YOUNG (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. RUBIO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUNT, and Ms. HASSAN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to carry out a housing choice voucher mobility demonstration to encourage families receiving the voucher assistance to move to lower-poverty areas and expand access to opportunity areas.

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 “Housing Choice Vouch-
5 er Mobility Demonstration Act of 2019”.

1 **SEC. 2. HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER MOBILITY DEM-**
 2 **ONSTRATION.**

3 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

4 (1) FAMILIES; PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY.—The
 5 terms “families” and “public housing agency” have
 6 the meanings given those terms in section 3(b) of
 7 the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C.
 8 1437a(b)).

9 (2) HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER ASSISTANCE.—
 10 The term “housing choice voucher assistance”
 11 means voucher assistance provided under section
 12 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42
 13 U.S.C. 1437f(o)).

14 (3) PLAN.—The term “Plan” means a Regional
 15 Housing Mobility Plan submitted under subsection
 16 (d).

17 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
 18 the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

19 (b) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may carry out a mo-
 20 bility demonstration program to enable public housing
 21 agencies to administer housing choice voucher assistance
 22 in a manner designed to encourage families receiving that
 23 assistance to move to lower-poverty areas and expand ac-
 24 cess to opportunity areas.

25 (c) SELECTION OF PHAS.—

1 (1) REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall es-
2 tablish requirements for public housing agencies to
3 participate in the demonstration program under this
4 section, which shall provide that the following public
5 housing agencies may participate:

6 (A) Public housing agencies that to-
7 gether—

8 (i) serve areas with high concentra-
9 tions of families receiving housing choice
10 voucher assistance in poor, low-opportunity
11 neighborhoods; and

12 (ii) have an adequate number of mod-
13 erately priced rental units in higher-oppor-
14 tunity areas.

15 (B) Planned consortia or partial consortia
16 of public housing agencies that—

17 (i) include not less than 1 public
18 housing agency with a high-performing
19 Family Self-Sufficiency program carried
20 out under section 23 of the United States
21 Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437u);
22 and

23 (ii) will enable participating families
24 to continue in the Family Self-Sufficiency
25 program if the family relocates to the ju-

1 jurisdiction served by any other public hous-
 2 ing agency of the consortium.

3 (C) Planned consortia or partial consortia
 4 of public housing agencies that—

5 (i) serve jurisdictions within a single
 6 region;

7 (ii) include not less than 1 small pub-
 8 lic housing agency; and

9 (iii) will consolidate mobility-focused
 10 operations.

11 (D) Such other public housing agencies as
 12 the Secretary considers appropriate.

13 (2) SELECTION CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall
 14 establish competitive selection criteria for public
 15 housing agencies eligible under paragraph (1) to
 16 participate in the demonstration program under this
 17 section.

18 (3) RANDOM SELECTION OF FAMILIES.—The
 19 Secretary may require public housing agencies par-
 20 ticipating in the demonstration program under this
 21 section to use a randomized selection process to se-
 22 lect among the families eligible to receive assistance
 23 under the demonstration program.

24 (d) REGIONAL HOUSING MOBILITY PLAN.—The Sec-
 25 retary shall require each public housing agency applying

1 to participate in the demonstration program under this
2 section to submit a Regional Housing Mobility Plan, which
3 shall—

4 (1) identify the public housing agencies that
5 will participate under the Plan and the number of
6 vouchers each participating public housing agency
7 will make available out of their existing programs in
8 connection with the demonstration program;

9 (2) identify any community-based organizations,
10 nonprofit organizations, businesses, and other enti-
11 ties that will participate under the Plan and describe
12 the commitments for the participation made by each
13 such entity;

14 (3) identify any waivers or alternative require-
15 ments requested for the execution of the Plan;

16 (4) identify any specific actions that the public
17 housing agencies and other entities will undertake to
18 accomplish the goals of the demonstration program,
19 which shall include a comprehensive approach to en-
20 able a successful transition to opportunity areas and
21 may include counseling and continued support for
22 families;

23 (5) specify the criteria that the public housing
24 agencies would use to identify opportunity areas
25 under the Plan;

1 (6) provide for the establishment of priority and
 2 preferences for families receiving assistance under
 3 the demonstration program, including a preference
 4 for families with young children, as such term is de-
 5 fined by the Secretary, based on regional housing
 6 needs and priorities; and

7 (7) comply with any other requirements estab-
 8 lished by the Secretary.

9 (e) FUNDING FOR MOBILITY-RELATED SERVICES.—

10 (1) USE OF ADMINISTRATIVE FEES.—Each
 11 public housing agency participating in the dem-
 12 onstration program under this section may use ad-
 13 ministrative fees under section 8(q) of the United
 14 States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(q)),
 15 any administrative fee reserves of the public housing
 16 agency, and funding from private entities to provide
 17 mobility-related services in connection with the dem-
 18 onstration program, including services such as coun-
 19 seling, portability coordination, landlord outreach,
 20 security deposits, and administrative activities asso-
 21 ciated with establishing and operating regional mo-
 22 bility programs.

23 (2) USE OF HOUSING ASSISTANCE FUNDS.—
 24 Each public housing agency participating in the
 25 demonstration program under this section may use

housing assistance payment contract funds under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)) for security deposits if necessary to enable families to lease units with housing choice voucher assistance in designated opportunity areas.

(f) WAIVERS; ALTERNATIVE REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) WAIVERS.—To allow for public housing agencies to implement and administer the Plan of the public housing agency under the demonstration program under this section, the Secretary may waive or specify alternative requirements for the following provisions of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437 et seq.):

(A) Paragraphs (7)(A) and (13)(E)(i) of section 8(o) (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)) (relating to the term of a lease and mobility requirements).

(B) Section 8(o)(13)(C)(i) (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(13)(C)(i)) (relating to the public housing agency plan).

(C) Section 8(r)(2) (42 U.S.C. 1437f(r)(2)) (relating to the responsibility of a public housing agency to administer portable assistance).

1 (2) ALTERNATIVE REQUIREMENTS.—The Sec-
2 retary shall provide additional authority for public
3 housing agencies in a selected region to form a con-
4 sortium that has a single housing assistance pay-
5 ment contract, or to enter into a partial consortium
6 to operate all or portions of the Plan, including pub-
7 lic housing agencies participating in the Moving To
8 Work demonstration program established under sec-
9 tion 204 of the Departments of Veterans Affairs and
10 Housing and Urban Development, and Independent
11 Agencies Appropriations Act, 1996 (Public Law
12 104–134; 110 Stat. 1321–281).

13 (3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Any waiver or alter-
14 native requirements pursuant to this subsection shall
15 not take effect before the date that is 10 days after
16 the date on which the date on which the Secretary
17 publishes a notice of the waiver or alternative re-
18 quirement in the Federal Register.

19 (g) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary may imple-
20 ment the demonstration program under this section, in-
21 cluding the terms, procedures, requirements, and condi-
22 tions of the demonstration, by notice.

23 (h) EVALUATION.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 years after
25 the implementation of the regional housing mobility

1 programs by public housing agencies participating in
2 the demonstration program under this section, the
3 Secretary shall submit to Congress and publish in
4 the Federal Register a report evaluating the effec-
5 tiveness of the strategies pursued under the dem-
6 onstration program, subject to the availability of
7 funding to conduct the evaluation.

8 (2) DISSEMINATION OF FINDINGS.—The Sec-
9 retary shall—

10 (A) through internet websites and other
11 means, disseminate interim findings relating to
12 the demonstration program under this section
13 as they become available; and

14 (B) if promising strategies are identified
15 through the findings described in subparagraph
16 (A), notify Congress of the amount of funds
17 that would be required to expand the testing of
18 these strategies in additional types of public
19 housing agencies and housing markets.

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