

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2258

To direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish a Parks, Jobs, and Equity Program to support job creation, economic revitalization, and park development for communities impacted by COVID–19.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 24, 2021

Mr. HICKENLOOPER (for himself, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish a Parks, Jobs, and Equity Program to support job creation, economic revitalization, and park development for communities impacted by COVID–19.

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 “Parks, Jobs, and Eq-
5 uity Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
2 ty” means—

3 (A) a city or town of a State or territory
4 of the United States, or an Indian Tribe,
5 that—

6 (i) represents or otherwise serves a
7 qualifying urban area; or

8 (ii) has a population of 30,000 or
9 more in the most recent census;

10 (B) a special purpose district serving—

11 (i) a qualifying urban area; or

12 (ii) a city or town with a population
13 of 30,000 or more in the most recent cen-
14 sus and managing open space for public
15 recreation; and

16 (C) the District of Columbia.

17 (2) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe”
18 has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the
19 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance
20 Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

21 (3) LOW-INCOME COMMUNITY.—The term “low-
22 income community” means any census block group
23 in which 51 percent or more households have an an-
24 nual income equal at or below 80 percent of the me-
25 dian income of the area in which the household is

1 located, as reported by the Department of Housing
2 and Urban Development.

3 (4) PARKS, JOBS AND EQUITY PROGRAM.—The
4 term “Parks, Jobs, and Equity Program” means the
5 program established under section 3(a).

6 (5) POVERTY LEVEL.—The term “poverty
7 level” means the income poverty guidelines for the
8 nonfarm population of the United States, as pre-
9 scribed by the Office of Management and Budget.

10 (6) QUALIFYING URBAN AREA.—The term
11 “qualifying urban area” means an area identified by
12 the Census Bureau as an area with a population of
13 30,000 or more in the most recent census.

14 (7) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
15 the Secretary of the Interior.

16 **SEC. 3. GRANTS AUTHORIZED.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish the
18 Parks, Jobs, and Equity Program to support park devel-
19 opment and delivery of recreation services, and in so
20 doing, help create or preserve jobs, and provide economic
21 stimulus in communities impacted by COVID–19.

22 (b) FUNDING.—The Secretary, acting through the
23 Parks, Jobs, and Equity Program, shall provide funding
24 to States, territories, the District of Columbia, and Indian
25 Tribes according to the following formula:

1 (1) 49 percent divided equally among the
2 States. For the purposes of this paragraph, the Dis-
3 trict of Columbia and the territories of the United
4 States shall collectively be treated as a single State
5 and shall receive shares of apportionment in propor-
6 tion to qualifying urban areas.

7 (2) 49 percent divided proportionally among
8 States based on each State's share of urban popu-
9 lation, as defined by the Census Bureau, to the total
10 urban population of the United States, based on the
11 most recent census.

12 (3) 2 percent for competitive grants to be
13 awarded by the Secretary to Indian Tribes that
14 qualify as an eligible entity.

15 **SEC. 4. ALLOCATION.**

16 (a) AMOUNTS TO STATES, TERRITORIES, AND THE
17 DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.—The Governor of a State or ter-
18 ritory (or a designated liaison officer) or the Mayor of the
19 District of Columbia shall distribute funds provided to the
20 State, territory, or District of Columbia under this Act
21 as follows:

22 (1) Not less than 50 percent of funds shall be
23 provided to eligible entities for eligible uses that ben-
24 efit a low-income community.

1 (2) Funds to eligible entities shall be not less
2 than \$50,000 and not more than \$1,000,000.

3 (3) Not more than 2.5 percent of funds may be
4 used for administrative expenses of the State, terri-
5 tory, or the District of Columbia.

6 (4) Not more than 10 percent of funds provided
7 to an eligible entity may be used for administrative
8 expenses.

9 (b) AMOUNTS TO INDIAN TRIBES.—

10 (1) AMOUNT.—Grant amounts under this Act
11 to an eligible Indian Tribe shall be not less than
12 \$50,000 and not more than \$1,000,000.

13 (2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—An Indian
14 Tribe may not retain more than 10 percent of each
15 grant received under this Act for administrative ex-
16 penses.

17 (c) TIMING.—

18 (1) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—The Secretary
19 shall distribute funds made available to carry out
20 this Act not more than 45 days after such funds are
21 made available to the Secretary.

22 (2) APPLICATION PROCEDURES.—The Gov-
23 ernors or Executive Officers of States and territories
24 and the governing body of each Indian Tribe shall—

1 (A) devise accelerated application proce-
2 dures by which eligible entities may apply for
3 funds under this Act;

4 (B) inform eligible entities and low-income
5 communities about the opportunity to apply for
6 funds under this Act, the application proce-
7 dures by which eligible entities may apply for
8 funds, and the eligible uses for funding;

9 (C) distribute funds to eligible entities not
10 later than 180 days after distribution from the
11 Secretary; and

12 (D) direct each eligible entity that receives
13 funds under this Act to spend such funds not
14 later than 2 years after the funds are made
15 available to that eligible entity.

16 (3) EXTENSION.—Governors and Executive Of-
17 ficers of a State or territory and the governing body
18 of an Indian Tribe may grant extensions of the
19 deadlines in this subsection for not more than 180
20 additional days for good cause shown.

21 **SEC. 5. ELIGIBLE USES.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—A grant recipient may use a grant
23 awarded under this Act—

1 (1) to acquire land or water that will be used
2 to provide outdoor recreation opportunities to the
3 public;

4 (2) to develop or renovate outdoor recreational
5 facilities that provide outdoor recreation opportuni-
6 ties to the public;

7 (3) to improve delivery of recreation services to
8 the public (including supporting park personnel,
9 training, recreation programming, and purchase of
10 recreation equipment and supplies); and

11 (4) to develop native event sites and cultural
12 gathering spaces.

13 (b) PRIORITIES.—Priority shall be given to projects
14 that—

15 (1) create or significantly enhance park and
16 recreational opportunities for a community in a
17 qualifying urban area that lacks parks and/or out-
18 door recreation areas within one-half mile or a 10-
19 minute walk;

20 (2) improve outdoor recreation opportunities for
21 high-need populations based on income, age, or other
22 measures of vulnerability and need;

23 (3) provide opportunities for employment or job
24 training either in park construction or rehabilitation
25 or delivery of recreation services;

1 (4) engage and empower underserved commu-
2 nities and youth; and

3 (5) take advantage of coordination among var-
4 ious levels of government.

5 (c) LIMITATIONS ON USE.—A grant recipient may
6 not use grant funds for—

7 (1) maintenance activities;

8 (2) facilities that support semiprofessional or
9 professional athletics;

10 (3) indoor facilities such as recreation centers
11 or facilities that support primarily nonoutdoor pur-
12 poses;

13 (4) activities that are not in accordance with
14 Comprehensive State Plans under section 200305 of
15 title 54, United States Code; or

16 (5) acquisition of land or interests in land that
17 restrict access to specific persons.

18 **SEC. 6. REPORTING.**

19 (a) REQUIREMENT.—Each year that a State or Ter-
20 ritory that receives a grant under this Act shall submit
21 to the Secretary performance and financial reports that—

22 (1) summarize the status of and activities con-
23 ducted under each subgrant during the report pe-
24 riod; and

1 (2) provide a description of each subgrant
2 project's accomplishments and impact during the re-
3 port period, such as new park access opportunities,
4 new recreation opportunities (facilities and services),
5 jobs created, and other community benefits.

6 (b) AVAILABILITY TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary
7 shall make such reports submitted under subsection (a)
8 available to the House Committee on Natural Resources
9 and Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

10 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

11 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
12 retary for the purposes of this Act, \$500,000,000, to re-
13 main available until expended.

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