

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1928

To amend the National and Community Service Act of 1990 to establish a national climate service corps to help communities withstand and respond to changes in the Earth’s climate with respect to natural disasters, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 27, 2021

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To amend the National and Community Service Act of 1990 to establish a national climate service corps to help communities withstand and respond to changes in the Earth’s climate with respect to natural disasters, 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 “National Climate Serv-
5 ice Corps and Careers Network Act of 2021”.

1 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

2 The purpose of this Act is to establish a National
3 Climate Service Corps to carry out national service
4 projects under the National and Community Service Act
5 of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12501) in order to—

6 (1) promote climate adaptation, mitigation, and
7 resiliency;

8 (2) provide young adults with opportunities to
9 give back to their communities through meaningful
10 service to their communities and the Nation;

11 (3) mobilize youth and young adults, especially
12 disadvantaged youth, to promote environmental sus-
13 tainability and mitigate the threat of climate change
14 in their communities; and

15 (4) provide a pathway to employment in the
16 private sector or otherwise within the clean energy
17 economy, following completion of service in the Na-
18 tional Climate Service Corps.

19 **SEC. 3. NATIONAL CLIMATE SERVICE CORPS.**

20 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 122(a) of the National
21 and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12572(a))
22 is amended—

23 (1) by redesignating paragraphs (4) and (5) as
24 paragraphs (5) and (6), respectively; and

25 (2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the fol-
26 lowing new paragraph:

1 “(4) NATIONAL CLIMATE SERVICE CORPS.—

2 “(A) PURPOSE.—

3 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The recipient may
4 carry out national service projects through
5 a National Climate Service Corps that im-
6 proves community adaptation, mitigation,
7 preparedness, response, and recovery from
8 natural disaster and other trends related
9 to climate change through activities such
10 as those described in subparagraph (B)
11 and improves performance on the indica-
12 tors described in subparagraph (C).

13 “(ii) SELECTION PRIORITY.—The re-
14 cipient shall, where appropriate, identify
15 and select projects from communities that
16 are disproportionately impacted by climate
17 and severe weather events, including from
18 communities of color, low-income commu-
19 nities, and Tribal communities.

20 “(B) ACTIVITIES.—

21 “(i) IN GENERAL.—A Climate Service
22 Corps described in this paragraph may
23 carry out activities, including—

24 “(I) assessing community resil-
25 ience to the effects of climate change;

1 “(II) supporting climate adapta-
2 tion and mitigation of the negative ef-
3 fects of climate change;

4 “(III) environmental sustain-
5 ability and resiliency;

6 “(IV) emergency preparedness;

7 “(V) promoting sustainable and
8 resilient communities;

9 “(VI) assisting with recovery
10 from disasters to rebuild in a manner
11 that provides improved resilience or
12 adaptation for future climate impacts;

13 “(VII) assisting with prevention,
14 recovery, or restoration of wildland,
15 rangeland, and wildland-urban inter-
16 face areas from the effects of wildfire
17 and associated impacts due to the ef-
18 fects of climate change; or

19 “(VIII) other relevant activities,
20 as determined by the Corporation.

21 “(ii) PARTICIPATION.—In addition to
22 the requirements for participants under
23 section 137, in carrying out national serv-
24 ice projects under this paragraph, the re-
25 cipient shall, to the extent practicable—

1 “(I) select as participants—

2 “(aa) individuals who are at
3 least 17 but not more than 30
4 years of age at the time of begin-
5 ning the term of service, includ-
6 ing out of-school youth, disadvan-
7 tagged youth (such as individuals
8 who are aging out of foster care,
9 individuals who have limited
10 English proficiency, homeless in-
11 dividuals, and individuals with
12 disabilities), and youth from com-
13 munities of color and Tribal com-
14 munities; or

15 “(bb) veterans who have not
16 reached the age of 36, at the
17 time of beginning the term of
18 service; and

19 “(II) provide each participant
20 with team-based, highly structured,
21 and adult-supervised service experi-
22 ence, education, career guidance, and
23 counseling, and employment training,
24 support services, and mentoring.

“(C) NATIONAL CLIMATE SERVICE CORPS INDICATORS.—The indicators for a National Climate Service Corps program described in this paragraph are—

“(i) the number of acres, homes, buildings or infrastructure projects built, retrofitted, improved, treated, or restored for improved resilience, adaptation, or current and future disaster recovery;

“(ii) the number of individuals educated about, prepared for, and receiving training about natural disasters, other trends related to climate change, or environmentally conscious practices;

“(iii) the number of individuals assisted, including those rescued, evacuated, or provided shelter;

“(iv) the number of homes or buildings treated, including those boarded up, tarped, mucked, or gutted during disaster response;

“(v) the number of trees and plants planted;

“(vi) the number of new technologies that participants receive training on, and

that are utilized and incorporated into resiliency projects;

“(vii) any additional indicator relating to natural disaster and other trends that the Corporation establishes, in consultation (as appropriate), with the Secretaries of the Departments of the Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, and Defense, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency; and

“(viii) any additional local indicator applicable to a particular recipient and on which an improvement in performance is needed related to climate change.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 122 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12572), as amended by subsection (a), is further amended—

(1) in paragraph (b)(3), by striking “or (5)” and inserting “(5), or (6)”; and

(2) in paragraph (c)(1), by striking “(5)” and inserting “(6)”.

1 **SEC. 4. COOPERATION AMONG STATES FOR EMERGENCY**
 2 **RESPONSE.**

3 (a) AGREEMENTS BETWEEN STATES.—States that
 4 provide subgrants to State or nonprofit entities that en-
 5 gage in National Climate Service Corps activities under
 6 section 122(a)(4) or States that have nonprofit organiza-
 7 tions receiving funding under the national service laws and
 8 that are engaging in similar activities (referred to as “par-
 9 ticipating States”) may enter into a compact with other
 10 participating States to provide for mutual cooperation to
 11 manage any emergency or disaster that is duly declared
 12 by the affected State.

13 (b) PARTICIPATING STATE RESPONSIBILITIES.—

14 (1) REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE.—The author-
 15 ized representative of a participating State may re-
 16 quest assistance of the National Climate Service
 17 Corps or of such nonprofit organizations of another
 18 participating State by contacting the authorized rep-
 19 resentative of that State. The provisions of the com-
 20 pact described in subsection (a) shall only apply to
 21 requests for assistance made by and to such author-
 22 ized representatives.

23 (2) CONSULTATION.—The State officials of par-
 24 ticipating States shall ensure—

25 (A) that there is frequent consultation be-
 26 tween State officials who are assigned emer-

1 agency management responsibilities, and other
 2 appropriate representatives of the participating
 3 States, with the relevant officials of affected ju-
 4 risdictions and with the relevant officials of the
 5 Federal Government; and

6 (B) the free exchange of information,
 7 plans, and resource records relating to emer-
 8 gency capabilities.

9 **SEC. 5. CLIMATE RESILIENCY AMERICORPS VISTA.**

10 Section 103(a) of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act
 11 of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4953(a)) is amended—

12 (1) in paragraph (12), by striking “and” at the
 13 end;

14 (2) in paragraph (13), by striking the period at
 15 the end and inserting “; and”; and

16 (3) after subsection (13), by adding the fol-
 17 lowing:

18 “(14) in addressing the capacity of low-income
 19 communities to implement projects that increase re-
 20 silience, adaptation, and mitigation to changes to the
 21 environment, including changes due to natural disas-
 22 ters.”.

23 **SEC. 6. NONCOMPETITIVE HIRING AUTHORITY.**

24 A qualified member of the National Climate Service
 25 Corps under section 122 of the National and Community

1 Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12572) shall be eligible
 2 for appointment in the competitive service in the same
 3 manner as a Peace Corps volunteer as prescribed in Exec-
 4 utive Order 11103 (22 U.S.C. 2504 note, relating to Pro-
 5 viding for the Appointment of Former Peace Corps Volun-
 6 teers to the Civilian Career Services).

7 **SEC. 7. CLIMATE CAREERS NETWORK.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—As part of the Corporation’s Em-
 9 ployers of National Service initiative, the Corporation shall
 10 establish a program, in consultation with the Departments
 11 of Energy, Agriculture, Education, Labor, Interior, Trans-
 12 portation, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Na-
 13 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and other
 14 relevant Federal agencies, as determined to be appropriate
 15 by the Corporation, to be known as the Climate Careers
 16 Network, to—

17 (1) address the challenge of job placement in a
 18 clean energy economy; and

19 (2) support individuals who have completed
 20 service in the National Climate Service Corps, as
 21 well as individuals in the United States of all ages
 22 and backgrounds who want to get involved in grow-
 23 ing green industries.

24 (b) ACTIVITIES OF THE CLIMATE CAREERS NET-
 25 WORK.—As part of the Climate Careers Network program,

1 the Corporation, in consultation with the Federal agencies
2 described in subsection (a), shall carry out the following
3 activities:

4 (1) Create and maintain a database that out-
5 lines opportunities for individuals who have com-
6 pleted service in the National Climate Service Corps
7 and other individuals, and that includes information
8 related to opportunities for those individuals in a
9 clean energy economy.

10 (2) Establish direct partnerships between the
11 Climate Careers Network program and existing in-
12 frastructure for relevant training and job placement
13 in order to connect individuals with new jobs and
14 lifelong careers, such as partnerships with 2 or more
15 of the following:

16 (A) Labor organizations or joint labor
17 management organizations.

18 (B) Employers.

19 (C) High schools and adult education pro-
20 grams.

21 (D) Nonprofit organizations with dem-
22 onstrated success in areas of clean energy and
23 climate change mitigation activities.

24 (E) Institutions of higher education.

25 (F) Community development organizations.

1 (G) State and local workforce development
 2 boards established under title I of the Work-
 3 force Innovation and Opportunity Act (29
 4 U.S.C. 3111 et seq.).

5 (H) Career and technical education pro-
 6 viders, including those that award credentials
 7 and build career pathways.

8 (I) Other entities that may provide rel-
 9 evant direct employment opportunities.

10 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

11 (1) CORPORATION.—The term “Corporation”
 12 means the Corporation for National and Community
 13 Service established under section 191 of the Na-
 14 tional and Community Service Act of 1990 (42
 15 U.S.C. 12651).

16 (2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
 17 term “institution of higher education” has the
 18 meaning given the term in section 101(a) of the
 19 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)).

20 (3) NATIONAL CLIMATE SERVICE CORPS.—The
 21 term “National Climate Service Corps” means the
 22 National Climate Service Corps described in section
 23 122(a)(4) of the National and Community Service
 24 Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12572(a)(4)), as added by
 25 section 3.

1 **SEC. 8. MATCHING FUNDS WAIVER.**

2 Any otherwise applicable matching funds require-
3 ments, including under section 212(a)(1) of the Public
4 Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1729(a)(1)) and
5 under section 121(e) of the National and Community
6 Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12571(e)), shall be waived
7 for projects carried out using amounts made available
8 under this Act.

9 **SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

10 There are authorized to be appropriated—

11 (1) \$2,000,000,000 for each of fiscal years
12 2022 through 2026 to carry out section 3;

13 (2) \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2022
14 through 2026 to carry out section 7; and

15 (3) for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2026,
16 such sums as may be necessary to provide national
17 service educational awards under subtitle D of title
18 I of the National and Community Service Act of
19 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12601 et seq.) for the members of
20 the National Climate Service Corps for such fiscal
21 year.

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