

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To provide emergency relief to youth, children, and families experiencing homelessness, in light of the health and economic consequences of COVID–19.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. MANCHIN, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. SINEMA, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. CASEY, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. KELLY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To provide emergency relief to youth, children, and families experiencing homelessness, in light of the health and economic consequences of 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 “Emergency Family
5 Stabilization Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) CURRENT ACF GRANT OR SUBGRANT RE-
2 CIPIENT.—The term “current ACF grant or
3 subgrant recipient” means an Indian Tribe, Tribal
4 organization, Native Hawaiian organization, local
5 educational agency, or a local public, private, or In-
6 dian nonprofit agency or organization (including cul-
7 turally specific community-based and faith-based or-
8 ganizations) that, as of the date of application for
9 a grant under section 3, is also receiving another
10 grant or subgrant administered by the Administra-
11 tion for Children and Families.

12 (2) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means
13 the Director of the Office of Community Services of
14 the Department of Health and Human Services.

15 (3) DIRECT SERVICES.—

16 (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
17 subparagraph (B), the term “direct services”
18 does not include providing referrals or oper-
19 ating a coordinated entry system or homeless
20 management information system, by itself.

21 (B) INDIAN TRIBES, TRIBAL ORGANIZA-
22 TIONS, OR NATIVE HAWAIIAN ORGANIZA-
23 TIONS.—An Indian Tribe, Tribal organization,
24 or Native Hawaiian organization that provides
25 referrals or assists other service providers with

1 direct services shall be considered as providing
2 direct services for purposes of this Act.

3 (4) FAMILY STABILIZATION AGENCY.—The
4 term “family stabilization agency” means—

5 (A) a current ACF grant or subgrant re-
6 cipient;

7 (B) an Indian Tribe or Tribal organiza-
8 tion;

9 (C) an urban Indian organization;

10 (D) a Native Hawaiian organization,

11 (E) a local educational agency; or

12 (F) a local public, private, or Indian non-
13 profit agency or organization (including com-
14 munity-based and faith-based organizations),
15 with expertise and demonstrated experience
16 providing direct services to 1 or more of the fol-
17 lowing populations:

18 (i) Children experiencing homeless-
19 ness, including children under age 6.

20 (ii) Unaccompanied homeless youth
21 under the age of 18.

22 (iii) Unaccompanied homeless youth
23 between the ages of 18 and 25.

1 (iv) Pregnant women, and pregnant or
2 parenting youth, experiencing homeless-
3 ness.

4 (v) Families experiencing homeless-
5 ness.

6 (vi) Survivors of dating violence, do-
7 mestic violence, family violence, or traf-
8 ficking.

9 (5) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe”
10 means an Indian tribe, as defined in section 4 of the
11 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance
12 Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

13 (6) NATIVE HAWAIIAN ORGANIZATION.—The
14 term “Native Hawaiian organization” has the mean-
15 ing given that term in section 6207 of the Elemen-
16 tary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20
17 U.S.C. 7517).

18 (7) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The term
19 “local educational agency” has the meaning given
20 the term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Sec-
21 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

22 (8) RURAL.—The term “rural” means a unit of
23 local government with a population of less than
24 50,000.

1 (9) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
2 the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

3 (10) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term “Trib-
4 al organization” means a tribal organization, as de-
5 fined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination
6 and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

7 (11) URBAN INDIAN ORGANIZATION.—The term
8 “urban Indian organization” has the meaning given
9 the term “Urban Indian organization” in section 4
10 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25
11 U.S.C. 1603).

12 (12) YOUTH, CHILD, OR FAMILY EXPERIENCING
13 HOMELESSNESS.—The term “youth, child, or family
14 experiencing homelessness” means—

15 (A) a homeless child or youth, as defined
16 in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento
17 Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
18 11434a(2)), who is under the age of 25;

19 (B) an unaccompanied youth, as defined in
20 section 725(6) of the McKinney-Vento Home-
21 less Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a(6)), who
22 is under the age of 25; or

23 (C) a household of not less than 2 people
24 that includes not less than 1 person under age
25 22 who is a homeless child or youth, as defined

1 in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento
2 Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
3 11434a(2)).

4 **SEC. 3. GRANTS TO FAMILY STABILIZATION AGENCIES.**

5 (a) GRANT PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—From amounts made avail-
7 able under section 4 and not reserved under sub-
8 section (b), the Secretary, acting through the Direc-
9 tor, shall, on a competitive basis in accordance with
10 subsection (d), award grants to family stabilization
11 agencies (including current ACF grant or subgrant
12 recipients and entities that have not previously re-
13 ceived grants from the Administration for Children
14 and Families) to enable the family stabilization
15 agencies to carry out the activities described in sub-
16 section (e).

17 (2) DISTRIBUTION TIMING.—

18 (A) CURRENT ACF GRANT OR SUBGRANT
19 RECIPIENTS.—The Secretary shall award grants
20 under this section, in accordance with sub-
21 section (d), to family stabilization agencies that
22 are current ACF grant or subgrant recipients
23 by not later than the date that is 45 days after
24 the date of enactment of this Act.

1 (B) ADDITIONAL GRANTEES.—The Sec-
2 retary shall award grants under this section, in
3 accordance with subsection (d), to family sta-
4 bilization agencies that are not current ACF
5 grant or subgrant recipients by not later than
6 the date that is 130 days after the date of en-
7 actment of this Act.

8 (3) DISSEMINATION OF APPLICATIONS.—The
9 Secretary shall—

10 (A) ensure the application for grants under
11 this Act is broadly disseminated, including
12 through public posting on the website of the
13 Administration for Children and Families and
14 sharing with current ACF grant or subgrant re-
15 cipients; and

16 (B) make special dissemination efforts to
17 rural areas and among Indian Tribes, Tribal
18 organizations, and Native Hawaiian organiza-
19 tions.

20 (b) RESERVATION.—The Secretary shall reserve not
21 less than 1 percent and not more than 1.5 percent of the
22 amount appropriated under this Act to be used for admin-
23 istration, oversight, and technical assistance activities
24 through the Administration for Children and Families.

1 (c) APPLICATION.—A family stabilization agency that
2 desires to receive a grant under this Act shall submit an
3 application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner,
4 and containing or accompanied by such information as the
5 Secretary may reasonably require. Such application shall
6 include the following:

7 (1) A description of the housing, education,
8 health, mental and behavioral health, employment,
9 and other needs of youth, children, and families ex-
10 perencing homelessness, in the area served by such
11 agency, specifically including youth, children, and
12 families who are sharing the housing of other per-
13 sons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or
14 a similar reason.

15 (2) Available data on the extent of youth, child,
16 and family homelessness in the area served by such
17 agency, including data available from local edu-
18 cational agencies and data on child poverty in the
19 area.

20 (3) A description of barriers youth, children,
21 and families experiencing homelessness face in ac-
22 cessing services, including barriers related to dating
23 violence, domestic violence, family violence, poverty,
24 lack of employment, lack of transportation, lack of

1 telephone and internet connectivity, educational
2 needs, and language accessibility.

3 (4) A description of such agency's direct service
4 expertise and experience with youth, child, or family
5 homelessness, specifically including youth, children,
6 and families who are sharing the housing of other
7 persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship,
8 or a similar reason.

9 (5) A description of the area served by such
10 agency, including whether the service area is urban,
11 suburban, rural, or Tribal. If the applicant claims to
12 cover a Tribal service area but is not an Indian
13 Tribe or Tribal organization, the applicant shall pro-
14 vide evidence of having consulted with the Indian
15 Tribe or Tribal organization whose service area the
16 applicant claims to cover and provide proof that the
17 Indian Tribe or Tribal organization supports the ap-
18 plicant's application.

19 (6) A description of such agency's existing part-
20 nerships with other agencies or organizations with
21 experience serving youth, children, and families ex-
22 periencing homelessness.

23 (7) A description of how funds received under
24 the grant will be used to provide emergency relief to

1 youth, children, and families experiencing homeless-
2 ness, specifically including—

3 (A) youth, children, and families who are
4 sharing the housing of other persons due to loss
5 of housing, economic hardship, or a similar rea-
6 son; and

7 (B) youth, children, and families experi-
8 encing homelessness who are not receiving serv-
9 ices through the Continuum of Care program
10 under subpart C of title IV of the McKinney-
11 Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
12 11381 et seq.) as of the date of the application.

13 (d) AWARD BASIS.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
15 grants under this section on the basis of—

16 (A) the need in the area served by each ap-
17 plicant;

18 (B) the quality of each application; and

19 (C) the distribution and priority require-
20 ments under paragraphs (4) and (5).

21 (2) NEED.—In determining need under para-
22 graph (1)(A), the Secretary shall consider—

23 (A) the extent of children, youth, and fam-
24 ilies experiencing homelessness in the area
25 served by the family stabilization agency, in-

1 including data available from local educational
2 agencies and data on child poverty;

3 (B) the extent to which the proposed uses
4 of funds will provide emergency relief to meet
5 unmet needs of youth, children, and families ex-
6 periencing homelessness, specifically including
7 youth, children, and families who are sharing
8 the housing of other persons due to loss of
9 housing, economic hardship, or a similar rea-
10 son;

11 (C) the extent to which the proposed uses
12 of funds will provide emergency relief to youth,
13 children, and families experiencing homeless-
14 ness who are not currently receiving services
15 through the Continuum of Care program under
16 subpart C of title IV of the McKinney-Vento
17 Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11381 et
18 seq.); and

19 (D) the extent to which the application ad-
20 dresses the particular needs of pregnant
21 women, pregnant and parenting youth, Indian
22 or Native Hawaiian women, children under age
23 6, children with disabilities, families experi-
24 encing domestic violence, survivors of sexual as-
25 sult or human trafficking, or historically

1 marginalized and underserved communities of
2 color.

3 (3) QUALITY.—In determining quality under
4 paragraph (1)(B), the Secretary shall consider, for
5 both current ACF grant or subgrant recipients and
6 not current ACF grant or subgrant recipients, the
7 following:

8 (A) The family stabilization agency’s needs
9 assessment under subsection (c)(1) and the
10 likelihood that the program presented in the ap-
11 plication will meet such needs.

12 (B) The types, intensity, and coordination
13 of the emergency relief to be provided under the
14 program to youth, children, and families experi-
15 encing homelessness.

16 (C) The extent of the family stabilization
17 agency’s demonstrated expertise and experience
18 providing direct services to youth, children, and
19 families experiencing homelessness who are
20 sharing the housing of other persons due to loss
21 of housing, economic hardship, or a similar rea-
22 son.

23 (D) The robustness of such agency’s plan
24 to reach youth, children, and families experi-
25 encing homelessness who are sharing the hous-

1 ing of other persons due to loss of housing, eco-
2 nomic hardship, or a similar reason, including
3 those who have lost a caregiver or family mem-
4 ber to COVID-19.

5 (E) The extent of such agency's dem-
6 onstrated expertise and experience in providing
7 direct services to youth, children, and families
8 experiencing homelessness specifically.

9 (F) The extent to which the program pre-
10 sented in the application represents a multi-
11 generational approach to supporting youth, chil-
12 dren, and families experiencing homelessness.

13 (G) The extent to which the application re-
14 flects coordination with local educational agen-
15 cies and public or private nonprofit agencies or
16 organizations with experience serving youth,
17 children, and families experiencing homeless-
18 ness.

19 (H) The extent to which the family sta-
20 bilization agency is, has been, or has specific
21 plans to partner with, a recipient of a grant or
22 subgrant administered by the Administration
23 for Children and Families.

24 (4) DISTRIBUTION OF AWARDS.—

1 (A) DISTRIBUTION AMONG TYPES OF COM-
2 MUNITIES.—In awarding grants under sub-
3 section (a), the Secretary shall ensure that
4 funds are distributed according to the following
5 allocation percentages:

6 (i) Not less than 10 percent of the
7 funds available for grants under this sec-
8 tion shall be awarded to family stabiliza-
9 tion agencies that are Indian Tribes, Trib-
10 al organizations, or Native Hawaiian orga-
11 nizations serving youth, children, and fami-
12 lies experiencing homelessness.

13 (ii) Not less than 36 percent of the
14 funds available for grants under this Act
15 shall be awarded to family stabilization
16 agencies serving predominantly rural areas.

17 (iii) Not less than 30 percent of the
18 funds available for grants under this Act
19 shall be awarded to family stabilization
20 agencies serving predominantly suburban
21 areas.

22 (iv) Not more than 24 percent of the
23 funds available for grants under this Act
24 shall be awarded to family stabilization

1 agencies serving predominantly urban
2 areas.

3 (B) DISTRIBUTION TO EXPERIENCED
4 GRANTEES.—In awarding grants under sub-
5 section (a), the Secretary shall ensure that—

6 (i) 80 percent of the funds available
7 for grants under this section are distrib-
8 uted to family stabilization agencies—

9 (I) that are current ACF grant
10 or subgrant recipients; and

11 (II) which may apply in partner-
12 ship with local educational agencies,
13 Tribal educational agencies, public
14 housing agencies, tribally designated
15 housing entities, community develop-
16 ment financial institutions, State
17 housing finance agencies, programs
18 that provide shelter to youth experi-
19 encing homelessness who are pregnant
20 or parenting, public health agencies,
21 domestic violence, dating violence, and
22 family violence organizations, institu-
23 tions of higher education as defined in
24 section 101 of the Higher Education
25 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001), Native

1 Hawaiian organizations, urban Indian
2 organizations, or other community
3 partners; and

4 (ii) 20 percent of the funds are dis-
5 tributed as grants to family stabilization
6 agencies that are not current ACF grant
7 or subgrant recipients.

8 (C) SPECIAL EXCEPTION FOR GRANTS TO
9 INDIAN TRIBES, TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS, OR
10 NATIVE HAWAIIAN ORGANIZATIONS.—

11 (i) IN GENERAL.—In awarding grants
12 to family stabilization agencies that are In-
13 dian Tribes, Tribal organizations, or Na-
14 tive Hawaiian organizations pursuant to
15 subparagraph (A)(i), the Secretary may
16 waive any requirements of paragraph (2)
17 or (3) or subsection (c).

18 (ii) ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS.—
19 In awarding grants pursuant to subpara-
20 graph (A)(i), the Secretary shall consider
21 family stabilization agencies that are In-
22 dian Tribes, Tribal organizations, or Na-
23 tive Hawaiian organizations that provide
24 services that address child abuse and ne-
25 glect.

1 (5) PRIORITY IN AWARDS.—In awarding grants
2 under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall give pri-
3 ority to applications that will provide emergency re-
4 lief to youth, children, and families experiencing
5 homelessness who are sharing the housing of other
6 persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship,
7 or a similar reason, while ensuring the distribution
8 of awards in accordance with paragraph (4).

9 (e) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—Family stabilization
10 agencies may use funds awarded under this section to pro-
11 vide emergency relief to youth, children, and families expe-
12 riencing homelessness, including the following:

13 (1) The provision of personnel necessary to pro-
14 vide emergency relief and ensure services, resources,
15 and assistance reach youth, children, and families
16 experiencing homelessness, whether such personnel
17 are employees of the family stabilization agency or
18 a nonprofit community partner.

19 (2) The provision of personal protective equip-
20 ment, hygiene supplies, and other supplies deter-
21 mined to be necessary to mitigate the spread of
22 Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID–19) by the Cen-
23 ters for Disease Control and Prevention, the Occu-
24 pational Safety and Health Administration, a State,
25 an Indian Tribe, Tribal organization, or Native Ha-

1 waiian organization, or a locality for personnel deliv-
2 ering services and for youth, children, and families
3 experiencing homelessness.

4 (3) Payments to meet shelter and housing-re-
5 lated needs to support safety and health, including
6 payments for—

7 (A) security deposits;

8 (B) eviction prevention;

9 (C) utility connection fees and payments;

10 (D) outstanding rental, utility, motel, and
11 other bills as needed to enter housing or con-
12 nect utilities;

13 (E) motel or hotel stays;

14 (F) housing placement;

15 (G) records expungement; and

16 (H) other assistance.

17 (4) The provision of food and equipment needed
18 to prepare food.

19 (5) The provision of medical and dental health
20 services, including preventive care.

21 (6) The provision of mental and behavioral
22 health services, including preventive care.

23 (7) The provision of clothing, access to laundry
24 facilities, clothes washers and dryers, detergent, and
25 personal hygiene supplies.

1 (8) The provision of transportation, including
2 payments for gas, emergency vehicle repairs, re-
3 quired insurance, driver's education and driver's li-
4 cense fees, public transportation, and other trans-
5 portation appropriate for Tribal and rural locations.

6 (9) The provision of support to meet commu-
7 nications and connectivity needs, including internet
8 connectivity, outstanding internet or telephone bills
9 as needed to connect communications services, elec-
10 tronic and connected devices, hotspots, portable
11 chargers, pre-paid phone cards, calling minutes and
12 data plans, and costs to ship items and supplies.

13 (10) The provision of support to meet edu-
14 cational and employment needs, including academic
15 support, distance learning support, resources, and
16 access, child care, social and emotional supports, ca-
17 reer and technical education, employment training
18 and placement, and similar supports.

19 (11) The purchase and distribution of store
20 cards, gift cards, prepaid debit cards, and vouchers
21 to allow youth, children, and families experiencing
22 homelessness to purchase any items or services that
23 constitute emergency relief.

24 (12) The provision of mentorship and service
25 coordination.

1 (13) The provision of services and supports to
2 meet the particular needs of pregnant women, preg-
3 nant and parenting youth, and children birth to age
4 five, experiencing homelessness.

5 (14) The provision of services and supports to
6 meet the particular needs of unaccompanied youth
7 experiencing homelessness.

8 (15) The provision of services and supports to
9 meet the particular needs of survivors of domestic
10 violence, sexual assault, or trafficking.

11 (16) The provision of assistance in accessing
12 advance refunds payable under section 6428(f) of
13 the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (commonly re-
14 ferred to as “economic impact payments”), unem-
15 ployment compensation, and other benefits provided
16 by Federal, State and local governments.

17 (17) The provision of services and supports to
18 prevent and respond to child abuse and neglect.

19 (18) The provision of other extraordinary or
20 emergency assistance needed to promote the safety
21 and self-sufficiency of youth, children, and families
22 experiencing homelessness.

23 (19) Other purposes as determined by the Sec-
24 retary.

1 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out

3 this Act \$800,000,000.