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(Original Signature of Member)

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To expand public access to tenant financial assistance programs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. BUSH introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To expand public access to tenant financial assistance programs, 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 “ERAP Improvement
5 Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. COLLABORATION WITH PUBLIC ENTITIES.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 501 of subtitle A of title
8 V of Division M of the Consolidated Appropriations Act,
9 2021 (15 U.S.C. 9058a) is amended—

1 (1) in subsection (c)(5)(A)—

2 (A) by striking “10 percent” and inserting
3 “15 percent”; and

4 (B) by striking “related to such funds.”
5 and inserting “related to such funds and for
6 collaboration with public entities as described in
7 subsection (n).”.

8 (2) by adding at the end the following:

9 “(n) COLLABORATION WITH PUBLIC ENTITIES.—

10 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the
11 Treasury shall, not later than 30 days after the en-
12 actment of this subsection, issue guidance designed
13 to instruct eligible grantees with respect to how best
14 to collaborate with public entities to provide applica-
15 tion assistance services.

16 “(2) USE OF AMOUNTS PAID TO ELIGIBLE
17 GRANTEE.—Notwithstanding subsection (c)(5), an
18 eligible grantee that collaborates with public entities
19 pursuant to the guidance issued by the Secretary of
20 the Treasury pursuant to paragraph (1) may use
21 amounts available for administrative costs under sec-
22 tion (c)(5) to, in coordination with one or more pub-
23 lic entities, develop any administrative infrastructure
24 necessary to provide application assistance services,
25 including—

1 “(A) training the employees of a public en-
2 tity or other designated institutional representa-
3 tive of a public entity about how to complete
4 the emergency rental application process;

5 “(B) maintaining physical and electronic
6 copies of all documents needed to apply for as-
7 sistance;

8 “(C) establishing methods of communica-
9 tion between eligible grantees, public entities,
10 community organizations, and individual house-
11 holds;

12 “(D) providing language translation serv-
13 ices;

14 “(E) developing community outreach mate-
15 rials, programs, and initiatives; and

16 “(F) collecting and storing relevant docu-
17 mentation on-site at the public entity, or with
18 a third party in a manner that complies with
19 Federal, State, and local law.

20 “(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

21 “(A) APPLICATION ASSISTANCE SERV-
22 ICES.—The term ‘application assistance serv-
23 ices’ means—

1 “(i) distributing applications for as-
2 sistance to individuals that may qualify for
3 assistance; and

4 “(ii) assisting individuals applying or
5 assistance.

6 “(B) PUBLIC ENTITY.—The term public
7 entity includes—

8 “(i) public elementary schools and
9 public secondary schools (as such terms
10 are defined under section 8101 of the Ele-
11 mentary and Secondary Education Act of
12 1965);

13 “(ii) public libraries;

14 “(iii) HUD-approved housing coun-
15 seling agencies and other entities receiving
16 funds under section 3204 of the American
17 Rescue Plan Act of 2021;

18 “(iv) courts that handle eviction re-
19 lated matters;

20 “(v) public housing agencies;

21 “(vi) public transit systems;

22 “(vii) State departments of motor ve-
23 hicles;

24 “(viii) the United States Postal Serv-
25 ice; and

1 “(ix) Federal, State, and local social
2 service providers.”; and

3 (b) COLLABORATION WITH PUBLIC ENTITIES.—Sec-
4 tion 3201 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 is
5 amended by adding at the end the following:

6 “(i) COLLABORATION WITH PUBLIC ENTITIES.—

7 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the
8 Treasury shall, not later than 30 days after the en-
9 actment of this subsection, issue guidance designed
10 to instruct eligible grantees with respect to how best
11 to collaborate with public entities to provide applica-
12 tion assistance services.

13 “(2) USE OF AMOUNTS PAID TO ELIGIBLE
14 GRANTEE.—An eligible grantee that collaborates
15 with public entities pursuant to the guidance issued
16 by the Secretary of the Treasury pursuant to para-
17 graph (1) may use not more than 15 percent of the
18 amount paid to such eligible grantee under this sec-
19 tion to, in coordination with one or more public enti-
20 ties, develop any administrative infrastructure nec-
21 essary to provide application assistance services, in-
22 cluding—

23 “(A) training the employees of a public en-
24 tity or other designated institutional representa-

1 tive of a public entity about how to complete
2 the emergency rental application process;

3 “(B) maintaining physical and electronic
4 copies of all documents needed to apply for as-
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14 cles;

15 “(vi) the United States Postal Service;

16 and

17 “(vii) Federal, State, and local social
18 service providers.”.