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(Original Signature of Member)

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R.

To provide for greater transparency in the HUD–VASH supported housing program for homeless veterans, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. PETERS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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# A BILL

To provide for greater transparency in the HUD–VASH supported housing program for homeless veterans, 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 “Homes for Our Heroes  
5 Act of 2019”.

6 **SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

1           (1) The Departments of Housing and Urban  
2           Development (HUD) and Veterans Affairs (VA)  
3           jointly support veterans experiencing homelessness  
4           by providing permanent supportive housing.

5           (2) The HUD–VA Supportive Housing voucher  
6           program (HUD–VASH) has successfully decreased  
7           the number of homeless veterans.

8           (3) Since the establishment of the HUD–VASH  
9           voucher program in 2008, more than 97,000 vouch-  
10          ers have been awarded to public housing agencies  
11          and more than 170,000 homeless veterans have been  
12          provided with vouchers.

13          (4) The number of veterans experiencing home-  
14          lessness has declined by over 30,000 since 2009, ac-  
15          cording to data from the annual Point-in-Time  
16          Homeless Count organized by HUD.

17          (5) Under the HUD–VASH program, veterans  
18          benefit from affordable housing and matching sup-  
19          portive services, such as mental health treatment,  
20          substance use counseling, and employment training.

21          (6) In the past year, some regions of the Nation  
22          have seen an increase in the numbers of veterans ex-  
23          periencing homelessness, particularly in high-cost  
24          housing markets where housing is becoming less af-  
25          fordable.

1           (7) HUD and VA allocate vouchers under the  
2 HUD–VASH program based on need, but do not  
3 disclose the formula that determines the allocation  
4 of vouchers.

5 **SEC. 3. REPORTS.**

6           (a) HUD.—

7           (1) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Paragraph (19) of sec-  
8 tion 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937  
9 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(19)) is amended by adding at  
10 the end the following new subparagraph:

11                   “(D) ANNUAL REPORTS.—

12                           “(i) INFORMATION REQUIRED.—Not  
13 later than the expiration of the 12-month  
14 period beginning on the date of the enact-  
15 ment of this subparagraph and not less  
16 often than annually thereafter, the Sec-  
17 retary shall submit to the Congress, as  
18 provided in clause (ii), and make publicly  
19 available, information identifying for the  
20 preceding year—

21                                   “(I) the public housing agencies,  
22 in partnership with the medical cen-  
23 ters of the Department of Veterans  
24 Affairs, for which vouchers for rental

1 assistance under this paragraph were  
2 allocated; and

3 “(II) the number of such vouch-  
4 ers allocated, disaggregated by the  
5 tenant-based vouchers and project-  
6 based vouchers, as awarded by the  
7 Department of Housing and Urban  
8 Development.

9 “(ii) JOINT REPORT.—The informa-  
10 tion required under clause (I) shall be sub-  
11 mitted—

12 “(I) in a joint report by the Sec-  
13 retary and the Secretary of Veterans  
14 Affairs, together with the information  
15 for such year required to be submitted  
16 under section 2003(c) of title 38,  
17 United States Code; and

18 “(II) to the Committees on Fi-  
19 nancial Services and Veterans’ Affairs  
20 of the House of Representatives and  
21 the Committees on Banking, Housing,  
22 and Urban Affairs and Veterans’ Af-  
23 fairs of the Senate.”.

24 (2) REPORT ON HISTORICAL DATA.—

1 (A) INFORMATION REQUIRED.—Not later  
2 than the expiration of the 90-day period begin-  
3 ning on the date of the enactment of this Act,  
4 the Secretary of Housing and Urban Develop-  
5 ment shall submit to the Congress, as provided  
6 in subparagraph (B), and make publicly avail-  
7 able, for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2019  
8 to the greatest extent possible the information  
9 described in subclauses (I) and (II) of section  
10 8(o)(19)(D)(i) of the United States Housing  
11 Act of 1937, as added by the amendment made  
12 by paragraph (1) of this subsection.

13 (B) JOINT REPORT.—The information re-  
14 quired under subparagraph (A) shall be sub-  
15 mitted—

16 (i) in a joint report by the Secretary  
17 and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, to-  
18 gether with the information required to be  
19 submitted under subsection (b)(2) of this  
20 section; and

21 (ii) to the Committees on Financial  
22 Services and Veterans' Affairs of the  
23 House of Representatives and the Commit-  
24 tees on Banking, Housing, and Urban Af-  
25 fairs and Veterans' Affairs of the Senate.

1 (b) VA.—

2 (1) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Section 2003 of title  
3 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at  
4 the end the following new subsection:

5 “(c) ANNUAL REPORTS ON CASE MANAGEMENT  
6 FUNDING.—

7 “(1) INFORMATION REQUIRED.—Not later than  
8 the expiration of the 6-month period beginning on  
9 the date of the enactment of this subsection and not  
10 less often than annually thereafter, the Secretary  
11 shall submit to the Congress, as provided in para-  
12 graph (2), and make publicly available, information  
13 identifying for the preceding year—

14 “(A) the medical centers of the Depart-  
15 ment of Veterans Affairs to which funds were  
16 provided pursuant to subsection (b) of this sec-  
17 tion for providing case managers under the sup-  
18 ported housing program carried out by the Sec-  
19 retary, in conjunction with the Department of  
20 Housing and Urban Development, pursuant to  
21 section 8(o)(19) of the United States Housing  
22 Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(19));

23 “(B) the eligible entities with which the  
24 Secretary of Veterans Affairs contracted to pro-  
25 vide case management services under such sup-

1 ported housing program pursuant to section  
2 304 of the ‘Honoring America’s Veterans and  
3 Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012  
4 (38 U.S.C. 2041 note);

5 “(C) for each such medical center and eli-  
6 gible entity, the number of full-time positions  
7 provided by such funding;

8 “(D) for caseworkers providing such case  
9 management services, the average number of  
10 veterans on the caseload for a caseworker;

11 “(E) the number of individuals who return  
12 to the supported housing program after leaving  
13 it;

14 “(F) the number of recipients of housing  
15 assistance vouchers under the supported hous-  
16 ing program by gender; and

17 “(G) the number of such voucher recipi-  
18 ents by service era.

19 “(2) JOINT REPORT.—The information required  
20 under paragraph (1) shall be submitted—

21 “(A) in a joint report by the Secretary and  
22 the Secretary of Housing and Urban Develop-  
23 ment, together with the information for such  
24 year required to be submitted under section

1 8(o)(19)(D) of the United States Housing Act  
2 of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(19)(D)); and

3 “(B) to the Committees on Veterans’ Af-  
4 fairs and Financial Services of the House of  
5 Representatives and the Committees on Vet-  
6 erans’ Affairs and Banking, Housing, and  
7 Urban Affairs of the Senate”.

8 (2) REPORT ON HISTORICAL DATA.—

9 (A) INFORMATION REQUIRED.—Not later  
10 than the expiration of the 6-month period be-  
11 ginning on the date of the enactment of this  
12 Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall  
13 submit to the Congress, as provided in subpara-  
14 graph (B), and make publicly available, for  
15 each of fiscal years 2014 through 2019 to the  
16 greatest extent possible the information de-  
17 scribed in subparagraphs (A) through (G) of  
18 section 2003(c)(1) of title 38, United States  
19 Code, as added by the amendment made by  
20 paragraph (1) of this subsection.

21 (B) JOINT REPORT.—The information re-  
22 quired under subparagraph (A) shall be sub-  
23 mitted—

24 (i) in a joint report by the Secretary  
25 and the Secretary of Housing and Urban



1 Development, together with the informa-  
2 tion required to be submitted under sub-  
3 section (a)(2) of this section; and

4 (ii) to the Committees on Financial  
5 Services and Veterans' Affairs of the  
6 House of Representatives and the Commit-  
7 tees on Banking, Housing, and Urban Af-  
8 fairs and Veterans' Affairs of the Senate.

9 **SEC. 4. STUDY OF BARRIERS TO ADMINISTRATION IN HIGH**  
10 **HOUSING COST AREAS.**

11 (a) STUDY.—The Secretaries of Housing and Urban  
12 Development and Veterans Affairs, in consultation with  
13 the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness,  
14 shall jointly conduct a study to identify barriers to car-  
15 rying out the HUD–VASH supported housing program  
16 under section 8(o)(19) of the United States Housing Act  
17 of 1937 in areas having high housing costs. Such study  
18 shall—

19 (1) be carried out with respect to not less than  
20 15 housing market areas used for purposes of fair  
21 market rents established under the rental assistance  
22 program under section 8 of the United States Hous-  
23 ing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f), as selected by  
24 such Secretaries, that—

1 (A) have high rates of veterans experi-  
2 encing homelessness, as identified by the Sec-  
3 retary of Housing and Urban Development;

4 (B) have high housing costs, as identified  
5 by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Devel-  
6 opment;

7 (C) have at least one public housing agen-  
8 cy and one medical center of the Department of  
9 Veterans Affairs located within the area; and

10 (D) include housing market areas for  
11 which fair market rents are calculated using the  
12 Small Area Fair Market Rents and include  
13 housing areas that are not calculated using  
14 such rents;

15 (2) for each housing market area covered by the  
16 study, collect data with respect to only one public  
17 housing agency and one medical center of the De-  
18 partment of Veterans Affairs located in the area;  
19 and

20 (3) identify for such high housing cost areas—

21 (A) the average amount of time elapsed be-  
22 tween a veteran receiving a voucher for rental  
23 assistance under the program and signing a  
24 lease for a residence to be assisted using such  
25 voucher;

1 (B) administrative burdens to the use of  
2 project-based voucher assistance under such  
3 program, including any State and local regula-  
4 tions that make project-based vouchers more  
5 difficult to use;

6 (C) ways in which public housing agencies  
7 leverage private resources with public funds  
8 under such program and difficulties developers  
9 may experience under such program in the use  
10 of project-based vouchers;

11 (D) how public housing agencies and med-  
12 ical centers of the Department of Veterans Af-  
13 fairs define the term “unused vouchers”;

14 (E) the process for reallocation of any such  
15 unused vouchers; and

16 (F) any best practices for administration  
17 of vouchers under the program in such high  
18 housing cost areas.

19 (b) REPORT.—Not later than the expiration of the  
20 12-month period beginning on the date of the enactment  
21 of this Act, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Develop-  
22 ment and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall jointly  
23 submit to the Congress a report setting forth the findings  
24 of the study under subsection (a) and any recommenda-  
25 tions resulting from such study.

1 **SEC. 5. APPEARANCES BEFORE CONGRESS.**

2 Not later than the expiration of the 90-day period  
3 beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the  
4 Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and the  
5 Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall each appear before the  
6 Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Rep-  
7 resentatives and the Senate to provide information regard-  
8 ing—

9 (1) the formula used to allocate vouchers for  
10 rental assistance under the HUD–VASH supported  
11 housing program under section 8(o)(19) of the  
12 United States Housing Act of 1937 among medical  
13 centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs;

14 (2) how such Secretaries use existing data, in-  
15 cluding requests from medical facilities of the De-  
16 partment of Veterans Affairs and partnering public  
17 housing agencies and voucher utilization rates, to  
18 make allocation determinations; and

19 (3) which functions and calculations are made  
20 by the Department of Veterans Affairs and which  
21 are made by Department of Housing and Urban De-  
22 velopment, in making such allocations.