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(Original Signature of Member)

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to improve public transportation services for veterans.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to improve public transportation services for veterans.

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. PILOT PROGRAM ON GRANTS TO IMPROVE**
4 **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FOR**
5 **VETERANS.**

6 (a) GRANT PROGRAM REQUIRED.—Not later than
7 one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
8 Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall commence carrying out

1 a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability
2 of awarding grants to eligible entities to improve public
3 transportation services for veterans.

4 (b) DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the
5 pilot program during the five-year period beginning on the
6 date on which the pilot program commences.

7 (c) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall carry out the
8 pilot program at not fewer than five locations selected by
9 the Secretary for purposes of the pilot program.

10 (d) AWARD OF GRANTS.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the pilot
12 program, the Secretary shall award grants to eligible
13 entities to expand, retain, or establish public trans-
14 portation services that provide veterans access to lo-
15 cations of facilities or organizations that serve vet-
16 erans, including—

17 (A) facilities of the Department of Vet-
18 erans Affairs; and

19 (B) organizations that provide services to
20 veterans using funds provided by the Depart-
21 ment.

22 (2) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—For purposes of this
23 section, an eligible entity is any State, Tribal, coun-
24 ty, or city government that—

1 (A) is providing public transportation serv-
2 ices as of the date on which the pilot program
3 commences; or

4 (B) has a proven ability and intention to
5 establish public transportation infrastructure.

6 (3) INTERVALS OF PAYMENT AND MAXIMUM
7 GRANT AMOUNT.—The Secretary may establish in-
8 tervals of payment for the administration of grants
9 under this section and a maximum grant amount to
10 be awarded, in accordance with the services being
11 provided and the duration of such services.

12 (4) COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION.—In
13 awarding grants under this section, the Secretary
14 may coordinate and consult with the Secretary of
15 Transportation.

16 (5) EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.—The Secretary
17 of Veterans Affairs shall ensure that, to the extent
18 practicable, grants awarded under this section are
19 equitably distributed among eligible entities across
20 geographic regions, including rural and Tribal com-
21 munities.

22 (e) GRANT APPLICATION.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity seeking
24 the award of a grant under this section shall submit
25 to the Secretary an application therefor in such

1 form, in such manner, and containing such commit-
2 ments and information as the Secretary considers
3 necessary to carry out this section.

4 (2) CONTENTS OF APPLICATION.—Each appli-
5 cation submitted by an eligible entity under para-
6 graph (1) shall contain the following:

7 (A) A description of the public transpor-
8 tation services that the entity intends to provide
9 under the grant.

10 (B) A list of all sites accessed by the pub-
11 lic transportation services to be provided.

12 (C) The schedule of such services.

13 (D) A list of the locations of facilities and
14 organizations that serve veterans that will be
15 accessed by such services.

16 (E) An estimate of the number of veterans
17 that would use such services.

18 (F) Evidence of the ability of the entity to
19 provide such services.

20 (f) NOTIFICATION TO VETERANS.—Each eligible en-
21 tity awarded a grant under this section shall notify vet-
22 erans of the expansion or establishment of public transpor-
23 tation services to locations of facilities or organizations
24 that serve veterans and that those services are available

1 in whole or in part due to funds provided by the Depart-
2 ment.

3 (g) REPORT ON SERVICES PROVIDED.—The Sec-
4 retary shall require each eligible entity awarded a grant
5 under this section to submit to the Secretary a report that
6 describes the expansion, retention, or establishment of
7 public transportation services provided with amounts
8 under such grant.

9 (h) REPORT.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year
11 after the date on which the first grant is awarded
12 under this section, the Secretary shall submit to the
13 Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and
14 the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of
15 Representatives a report on the services provided
16 under the pilot program.

17 (2) ELEMENTS.—The report required by para-
18 graph (1) shall include the following:

19 (A) The geographic location of each recipi-
20 ent of a grant under this section.

21 (B) The estimated number of veterans
22 served by each such grant recipient.

23 (C) An assessment of whether use of facili-
24 ties of the Department has increased due to ac-
25 cess to public transportation provided under

- 1 grants awarded under this section, if informa-
- 2 tion for such an assessment is available.