

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8852

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program on food insecurity, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 15, 2022

Ms. JACOBS of California (for herself, Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. LEVIN of California, and Ms. SPEIER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program on food insecurity, 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 “End Veteran Hunger
5 Act of 2022”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PILOT PRO-**
7 **GRAM ON FOOD INSECURITY.**

8 (a) **AUTHORITY.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs,
9 acting through the Director of the National Nutrition and

1 Food Services Office, shall carry out a pilot program
2 under which the Secretary shall—

3 (1) make grants to eligible entities for the pur-
4 pose of supporting partnerships that address food
5 insecurity among veterans and family members of
6 veterans, including veterans who receive services
7 through Vet Centers or other facilities of the De-
8 partment of Veterans Affairs as determined by the
9 Secretary; and

10 (2) make grants to eligible entities for the pur-
11 pose of supporting partnerships that address food
12 insecurity among veterans who have recently
13 transitioned from serving as members of the Armed
14 Forces to civilian life, and the family members of
15 such members.

16 (b) DISTRIBUTION AND DURATION OF GRANTS.—

17 (1) GENERAL GRANTS.—The Secretary shall
18 award at least five grants under subsection (a)(1) to
19 eligible entities that principally serve Native Ameri-
20 cans.

21 (2) TRANSITION GRANTS.—The Secretary shall
22 award at least one grant under subsection (a)(2) in
23 five different geographic areas that the Secretary de-
24 termines have a high rate of individuals described in
25 such paragraph.

1 (3) GRANT PERIOD.—A grant awarded to an el-
2 igible entity under this section shall be for a period
3 of two years, but the Secretary may renew the grant
4 for additional periods, subject to subsection (h).

5 (c) USE OF FUNDS.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—Each grant awarded under
7 this section shall be used to carry out either or both
8 of the following activities:

9 (A) Increasing access to, and enrollment
10 in, Federal assistance programs, including the
11 supplemental nutrition assistance program
12 under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7
13 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), the special supplemental
14 nutrition program for women, infants, and chil-
15 dren established by section 17 of the Child Nu-
16 trition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786), the low-
17 income home energy assistance program estab-
18 lished under the Low-Income Home Energy As-
19 sistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8621 et seq.),
20 and any other assistance program that the Sec-
21 retary determines advisable.

22 (B) Increasing participation in nutrition
23 counseling programs and providing educational
24 materials and counseling to veterans, and fam-

1 ily members of veterans, to address food insecur-
2 rity and healthy diets among those individuals.

3 (2) ADDITIONAL USE.—In addition to being
4 used to carry out either or both of the activities
5 specified in paragraph (1), any grant awarded under
6 this section may be used to provide direct food as-
7 sistance to covered individuals, or otherwise to pro-
8 vide assistance to covered individuals in accessing
9 food.

10 (d) APPLICATIONS.—An eligible entity seeking a
11 grant under this section shall submit to the Secretary an
12 application therefor at such time, in such manner, and
13 containing such information as the Secretary may require.

14 (e) SELECTION OF RECIPIENTS.—The Secretary
15 shall select eligible entities that submit applications under
16 subsection (d) for the award of grants using a competitive
17 process that takes into account the following:

18 (1) The capacity of the applicant entity to serve
19 covered individuals.

20 (2) The demonstrated need of the population
21 the applicant entity would serve.

22 (3) The demonstrated need of the applicant en-
23 tity for assistance from the grants.

1 (4) The capacity of the applicant entity to serve
2 covered individuals from underserved or disadvan-
3 tagged populations.

4 (5) Such other criteria as the Secretary con-
5 siders appropriate.

6 (f) MULTIPLE GRANTS.—The Secretary may award
7 grants to an eligible entity under both paragraphs (1) and
8 (2) of subsection (a).

9 (g) INFORMATION.—

10 (1) COLLECTION.—The Secretary shall collect
11 such information from eligible entities that receive a
12 grant under this section as the Secretary determines
13 appropriate to monitor and evaluate the use of
14 grants, including—

15 (A) data regarding the results or outcomes
16 of the services provided to covered individuals
17 under the grant; and

18 (B) data regarding how activities or pro-
19 grams carried out under the grant contribute to
20 specific goals, including eligibility screening, ap-
21 plication assistance, and food insecurity.

22 (2) FORM AND MANNER.—Information under
23 paragraph (1) shall be furnished in such form and
24 manner as the Secretary may specify.

1 (h) DURATION OF PROGRAM.—The Secretary shall
2 carry out the pilot program under this section for a five-
3 year period.

4 (i) REPORTS REQUIRED.—

5 (1) REPORTS.—

6 (A) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than
7 three years after the date on which the pilot
8 program under this section commences, the
9 Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation
10 with the Secretary of Agriculture, shall submit
11 to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the
12 House of Representatives and the Senate an
13 initial report on veteran food insecurity.

14 (B) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than the
15 two years after the date on which the pilot pro-
16 gram under this section concludes, the Sec-
17 retary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with
18 the Secretary of Agriculture, shall submit to the
19 Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House
20 of Representatives and the Senate a final report
21 on veteran food insecurity.

22 (2) MATTERS.—Each report under paragraph
23 (1) shall include the findings of a study on the effec-
24 tiveness of the grants made under such pilot pro-
25 gram (including an analysis of the data specified in

1 subsection (g)(1)), disaggregated by grants awarded
2 under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a), re-
3 spectively. With respect to grants awarded under
4 such paragraph (2), such study shall—

5 (A) measure the need for food assistance
6 by individuals described in such paragraph (2);
7 and

8 (B) include a description of how improving
9 access to food during the period in which an in-
10 dividual transitions from service in the armed
11 forces to civilian life affects the outcomes of the
12 individual and the family of the individual.

13 (j) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
14 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
15 \$50,000,000 for fiscal years 2023 through 2027.

16 (k) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

17 (1) The term “covered individual” means any
18 veteran or family member described in paragraph
19 (1) or (2) of subsection (a).

20 (2) The term “eligible entity” means—

21 (A) a nonprofit organization;

22 (B) a veterans service organization;

23 (C) a Federal, State, or local government
24 agency;

25 (D) an Indian Tribe or tribal organization;

1 (E) a community-based organization; or

2 (F) an institution of higher education.

3 (3) The terms “Indian Tribe” and “tribal orga-
4 nization” have the meanings given those terms in
5 section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-
6 cation Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

7 (4) The term “institution of higher education”
8 has the meaning given that term in section 101 of
9 the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
10 1001).

11 (5) The term “Native American” has the mean-
12 ing given that term in section 3765 of title 38,
13 United States Code.

14 (6) The term “State” means each of the several
15 States, territories, and possessions of the United
16 States, the District of Columbia, and the Common-
17 wealth of Puerto Rico.

18 (7) The term “veterans service organization”
19 means any organization recognized by the Secretary
20 of Veterans Affairs for the representation of vet-
21 erans under section 5902 of title 38, United States
22 Code.

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