

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5870

To authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to make grants to assist local governments with vacant housing problems, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 22, 2008

Mr. RYAN of Ohio (for himself and Mr. WILSON of Ohio) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to make grants to assist local governments with vacant housing problems, 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 “Emergency Neighbor-
5 hood Reclamation Act of 2008”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The subprime mortgage foreclosure crisis
2 has led to the widespread and unprecedented abandon-
3 donment of housing in many urban neighborhoods.

4 (2) Communities that have experienced a sig-
5 nificant decrease in population since 1980 due to the
6 loss of well-paying manufacturing jobs and subse-
7 quent economic decline were already subject to a se-
8 vere problem of vacant and abandoned housing when
9 the subprime mortgage foreclosure crisis struck, fur-
10 ther exacerbating the problem.

11 (3) Although the prompt demolition and re-
12 moval of vacant and abandoned housing is necessary
13 in order to protect public health and safety, commu-
14 nities experiencing both economic decline and large
15 numbers of subprime mortgage foreclosures have in-
16 sufficient resources to demolish and remove such
17 housing in a timely manner.

18 (4) Emergency grant assistance to such com-
19 munities would enable them to quickly demolish and
20 remove vacant and abandoned housing in order to
21 promote public health and safety, and to create open
22 space that could be used for park land, recreation,
23 future economic and residential development, or
24 other purposes that would benefit such communities.

1 **SEC. 3. GRANT PROGRAM TO ASSIST MUNICIPALITIES WITH**
2 **A VACANT HOUSING PROBLEM.**

3 (a) **AUTHORITY TO MAKE GRANTS.**—From the
4 amounts appropriated under section 4, the Secretary of
5 Housing and Urban Development shall make grants to eli-
6 gible units of general local government for the purpose of
7 neighborhood reclamation in accordance with subsection
8 (c).

9 (b) **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.**—To be eligible to
10 receive a grant under subsection (a), a unit of general local
11 government shall submit to the Secretary, at such time
12 and in such manner as the Secretary may require pursu-
13 ant to regulations, an application that demonstrates that
14 such local government has—

15 (1) experienced significant population loss with-
16 in its jurisdiction since 1980, as measured by decen-
17 nial census data;

18 (2) neighborhoods or other areas within its ju-
19 risdiction with—

20 (A) a high incidence of vacant and aban-
21 doned housing, or other vacant and abandoned
22 structures, located in areas that are primarily
23 residential in character; and

24 (B) substantial urban decay and neighbor-
25 hood degradation resulting from such housing
26 or such other structures; and

1 (3) a comprehensive plan for the demolition of
2 all such housing, and such other structures, within
3 the jurisdiction of such local government, that will
4 increase the stability of neighborhoods, or promote
5 the rational utilization of land, within the jurisdic-
6 tion of such local government.

7 (c) PURPOSES.—A unit of local government awarded
8 a grant under subsection (a), shall use such grant to
9 fund—

10 (1) the demolition of vacant and abandoned
11 housing, and other vacant and abandoned struc-
12 tures, located in areas that are primarily residential
13 in character, and which are within the jurisdiction of
14 such local government, pursuant to such local gov-
15 ernment’s comprehensive plan for demolition under
16 subsection (b)(3);

17 (2) prior to demolition, the abatement of any
18 health and safety hazards in accordance with appli-
19 cable State and Federal laws, within such housing or
20 such other structures, or on the site upon which
21 such housing or other structures are located; and

22 (3) after demolition—

23 (A) the capping or removal of utility con-
24 nections and public infrastructure, including
25 street pavements and sewer lines; and

1 (B) the rehabilitation of a site for use as
2 public open space, inclusion in a land bank, or
3 for sale.

4 (d) REPORTS.—One year after the Secretary awards
5 a grant under this Act to a unit of general local govern-
6 ment, such local government shall submit to the Secretary
7 a report on—

8 (1) the number of houses and other structures
9 demolished, and the number of houses and other
10 structures remaining to be demolished, pursuant to
11 such local government’s comprehensive plan under
12 subsection (b)(3); and

13 (2) the amount of site rehabilitation completed
14 pursuant to subsection (c)(3)(B).

15 (e) RELATION TO OTHER PROGRAMS OF THE DE-
16 PARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT.—
17 The Secretary’s award of a grant under this Act to a unit
18 of general local government shall not affect a decision by
19 the Secretary to award funding to such local government
20 for the demolition of vacant and abandoned housing under
21 any other program of the Department of Housing and
22 Urban Development.

23 (f) RELATION TO OTHER LAW.—Nothing in this Act
24 shall be construed to waive any obligations under local,
25 State, and Federal law.

1 (g) PUBLIC HOUSING.—Funds made available under
2 this Act shall not be used to demolish public housing, as
3 such term is defined in section 3 of the United States
4 Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a).

5 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

6 There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out
7 this Act, \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2009, and such
8 sums as are necessary for each fiscal year thereafter.

9 **SEC. 5. IMPLEMENTATION.**

10 (a) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This Act shall take effect not
11 later than 60 days after the date that funds are appro-
12 priated or otherwise made available to carry out this Act.

13 (b) INTERIM REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall
14 issue such interim regulations as may be necessary to im-
15 plement this Act not later than 60 days after the effective
16 date in subsection (a).

17 (c) FINAL REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall issue
18 final regulations necessary to implement this Act not later
19 than 180 days after such effective date.

20 **SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.**

21 In this Act—

22 (1) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary
23 of Housing and Urban Development;

24 (2) the term “unit of general local government”
25 means a unit of general local government as defined

1 in section 102 of the Housing and Community De-
2 velopment Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5302); and

3 (3) the term “other vacant and abandoned
4 structures” means vacant and abandoned structures
5 not used for residential purposes, or used for a com-
6 bination of residential and other purposes.

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