

114TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1258

To protect the pets of victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking,  
and dating violence.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 4, 2015

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts (for herself, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. HONDA, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. TITUS, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. PETERS, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. MEEHAN, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. DEUTCH, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. POLIS, Mr. JONES, Mr. BARLETTA, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. FARR, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. MARINO, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. KEATING, Mr. WELCH, Ms. MOORE, Ms. STEFANIK, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. GIBSON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## A BILL

To protect the pets of victims of domestic violence, sexual  
assault, stalking, and dating violence.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Pet and Women Safety  
3 Act of 2015”.

4 **SEC. 2. PET INVOLVEMENT IN CRIMES RELATED TO DO-**  
5 **MESTIC VIOLENCE AND STALKING.**

6 (a) INTERSTATE STALKING.—Section 2261A of title  
7 18, United States Code, is amended—

8 (1) in paragraph (1)(A)—

9 (A) in clause (ii), by striking “or” at the  
10 end; and

11 (B) by inserting after clause (iii) the fol-  
12 lowing:

13 “(iv) the pet of that person; or”; and

14 (2) in paragraph (2)(A)—

15 (A) by inserting after “to a person” the  
16 following: “or a pet”; and

17 (B) by striking “or (iii)” and inserting  
18 “(iii), or (iv)”.

19 (b) INTERSTATE VIOLATION OF PROTECTION  
20 ORDER.—Section 2262 of title 18, United States Code,  
21 is amended—

22 (1) in subsection (a)—

23 (A) in paragraph (1), by inserting after  
24 “another person” the following: “or the pet of  
25 that person”; and

1 (B) in paragraph (2), by inserting after  
2 “proximity to, another person” the following  
3 “or the pet of that person”; and

4 (2) in subsection (b)(5), by inserting after “in  
5 any other case,” the following: “including any case  
6 where the offense is committed against a pet.”.

7 (c) RESTITUTION TO INCLUDE VETERINARY SERV-  
8 ICES.—Section 2264 of title 18, United States Code, is  
9 amended in subsection (b)(3)—

10 (1) by redesignating subparagraph (F) as sub-  
11 paragraph (G);

12 (2) in subparagraph (E), by striking “and” at  
13 the end; and

14 (3) by inserting after subparagraph (E) the fol-  
15 lowing:

16 “(F) veterinary services relating to phys-  
17 ical care for the victim’s pet; and”.

18 (d) PET DEFINED.—Section 2266 of title 18, United  
19 States Code, is amended by inserting after paragraph (10)  
20 the following:

21 “(11) PET.—The term ‘pet’ means a domes-  
22 ticated animal, such as a dog, cat, bird, rodent, fish,  
23 turtle, horse, or other animal that is kept for pleas-  
24 ure rather than for commercial purposes.”.

1 **SEC. 3. EMERGENCY AND TRANSITIONAL PET SHELTER**  
2 **AND HOUSING ASSISTANCE GRANT PRO-**  
3 **GRAM.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture, act-  
5 ing in consultation with the Director of the Violence  
6 Against Women Office of the Department of Justice, the  
7 Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, and the  
8 Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall award  
9 grants under this section to eligible entities to carry out  
10 programs to provide the assistance described in subsection  
11 (c) with respect to victims of domestic violence, dating vio-  
12 lence, sexual assault, or stalking and the pets of such vic-  
13 tims.

14 (b) APPLICATION.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity seeking a  
16 grant under this section shall submit an application  
17 to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and  
18 containing such information as the Secretary may  
19 reasonably require, including—

20 (A) a description of the activities for which  
21 a grant under this section is sought;

22 (B) such assurances as the Secretary de-  
23 termines to be necessary to ensure compliance  
24 by the entity with the requirements of this sec-  
25 tion; and

1 (C) a certification that the entity, before  
2 engaging with any individual domestic violence  
3 victim, will disclose to such victim any manda-  
4 tory duty of the entity to report instances of  
5 abuse and neglect (including instances of abuse  
6 and neglect of pets).

7 (2) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—In addition  
8 to the requirements of paragraph (1), each applica-  
9 tion submitted by an eligible entity under such para-  
10 graph shall—

11 (A) not include proposals for any activities  
12 that may compromise the safety of a domestic  
13 violence victim, including—

14 (i) background checks of domestic vio-  
15 lence victims; or

16 (ii) clinical evaluations to determine  
17 the eligibility of such a victim for support  
18 services;

19 (B) not include proposals that would re-  
20 quire mandatory services for victims or that a  
21 victim obtain a protective order in order to re-  
22 ceive proposed services; and

23 (C) reflect the eligible entity's under-  
24 standing of the dynamics of domestic violence,  
25 dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

1           (3) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in  
2 this subsection shall be construed to require—

3           (A) domestic violence victims to participate  
4 in the criminal justice system in order to re-  
5 ceive services; or

6           (B) eligible entities receiving a grant under  
7 this section to breach client confidentiality.

8       (c) USE OF FUNDS.—Grants awarded under this sec-  
9 tion may only be used for programs that provide—

10           (1) emergency and transitional pet shelter and  
11 housing assistance, including assistance with respect  
12 to any construction or operating expenses of newly  
13 developed or existing emergency and transitional pet  
14 shelter and housing (regardless of whether such  
15 shelter and housing is co-located at a victim service  
16 provider or within the community);

17           (2) short-term pet shelter and housing assist-  
18 ance, including assistance with respect to expenses  
19 incurred for the temporary shelter, housing, board-  
20 ing, or fostering of the pets of domestic violence vic-  
21 tims and other expenses that are incidental to secur-  
22 ing the safety of such a pet during the sheltering,  
23 housing, or relocation of such victims;

24           (3) support services designed to enable a do-  
25 mestic violence victim who is fleeing a situation of

1 domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or  
2 stalking to—

3 (A) locate and secure safe housing with  
4 their pet or safe accommodations for their pet;  
5 or

6 (B) provide the victim with pet-related  
7 services, such as pet transportation, pet care  
8 services, and other assistance; or

9 (4) for the training of relevant stakeholders  
10 on—

11 (A) the link between domestic violence,  
12 dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking and  
13 the abuse and neglect of pets;

14 (B) the needs of domestic violence victims;

15 (C) best practices for providing support  
16 services to such victims;

17 (D) best practices for providing such vic-  
18 tims with referrals to victims' services; and

19 (E) the importance of confidentiality.

20 (d) GRANT CONDITIONS.—An eligible entity that re-  
21 ceives a grant under this section shall, as a condition on  
22 such receipt, agree—

23 (1) to be bound by the nondisclosure of con-  
24 fidential information requirements of section

1 40002(b)(2) of the Violence Against Women Act of  
2 1994 (42 U.S.C. 13925(b)(2)); and

3 (2) that the entity shall not condition the re-  
4 ceipt of support, housing, or other benefits provided  
5 pursuant to this section on the participation of do-  
6 mestic violence victims in any or all of the support  
7 services offered to such victims through a program  
8 carried out by the entity using grant funds.

9 (e) DURATION OF ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO VIC-  
10 TIMS.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2),  
12 assistance provided with respect to a pet of a domes-  
13 tic violence victim using grant funds awarded under  
14 this section shall be provided for a period of not  
15 more than 24 months.

16 (2) EXTENSION.—An eligible entity that re-  
17 ceives a grant under this section may extend the 24-  
18 month period referred to in paragraph (1) for a pe-  
19 riod of not more than 6 months in the case of a do-  
20 mestic violence victim who—

21 (A) has made a good faith effort to acquire  
22 permanent housing for their pet during such  
23 24-month period; and

24 (B) has been unable to acquire such per-  
25 manent housing within such period.



1 (f) REPORT TO THE SECRETARY.—Not later than  
2 one year after the date on which an eligible entity receives  
3 a grant under this section and each year thereafter, such  
4 entity shall submit to the Secretary of Agriculture a re-  
5 port. Such report shall contain, with respect to assistance  
6 provided by such entity with respect to pets of domestic  
7 violence victims using grant funds received under this sec-  
8 tion, information on—

9 (1) the number of pets provided such assist-  
10 ance; and

11 (2) the purpose, amount, type of, and duration  
12 of such assistance.

13 (g) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

14 (1) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Not later than  
15 November 1 of each even-numbered fiscal year, the  
16 Secretary of Agriculture shall submit to the Com-  
17 mittee on Agriculture of the House of Representa-  
18 tives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,  
19 and Forestry of the Senate a report that contains a  
20 compilation of the information contained in the re-  
21 port submitted under subsection (f).

22 (2) AVAILABILITY OF REPORT.—The Secretary  
23 of Agriculture shall transmit a copy of the report  
24 submitted under paragraph (1) to—

1 (A) the Office on Violence Against Women  
2 of the Department of Justice;

3 (B) the Office of Community Planning and  
4 Development at the Department of Housing  
5 and Urban Development; and

6 (C) the Administration for Children and  
7 Families at the Department of Health and  
8 Human Services.

9 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be  
11 appropriated to carry out this section \$3,000,000 for  
12 each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.

13 (2) LIMITATION.—Of the amount made avail-  
14 able under paragraph (1) in any fiscal year, not  
15 more than 5 percent may be used for evaluation,  
16 monitoring, technical assistance, salaries, and ad-  
17 ministrative expenses.

18 (i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

19 (1) DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIM DEFINED.—  
20 The term “domestic violence victim” means a victim  
21 of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault,  
22 or stalking.

23 (2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-  
24 ty” means—

25 (A) a State;

1 (B) a general unit of local government;

2 (C) an Indian tribe; or

3 (D) any other organization that has a doc-  
4 umented history of effective work concerning  
5 domestic violence, dating violence, sexual as-  
6 sault, or stalking (as determined by the Sec-  
7 retary), including—

8 (i) a domestic violence and sexual as-  
9 sault victim service provider;

10 (ii) a domestic violence and sexual as-  
11 sault coalition;

12 (iii) a community-based and culturally  
13 specific organization;

14 (iv) any other nonprofit, nongovern-  
15 mental organization; and

16 (v) any organization that works di-  
17 rectly with pets and collaborates with any  
18 organization referred to in clauses (i)  
19 through (iv), including—

20 (I) an animal shelter; and

21 (II) an animal welfare organiza-  
22 tion.

23 **SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

24 It is the sense of Congress that States should encour-  
25 age the inclusion of protections against violent or threat-

- 1 ening acts against the pet of the person in domestic vio-
- 2 lence protection orders.

