116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1598

To require the Secretary of Homeland Security to issue a strategy to improve hiring and retention of U.S. Customs and Border Protection personnel in rural or remote areas, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 7, 2019

Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico (for herself and Mr. HURD of Texas) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security

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A BILL

To require the Secretary of Homeland Security to issue a strategy to improve hiring and retention of U.S. Customs and Border Protection personnel in rural or remote areas, 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 "U.S. Customs and Bor-

5 der Protection Rural and Remote Hiring and Retention

6 Strategy Act of 2019".

1 **SEC. 2. STRATEGY.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the

3 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Home-

4 land Security, acting through the Chief Human Capital

5 Officer of the Department of Homeland Security and the

6 Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection,

7 shall issue a strategy and implementation plan, including

8 benchmarks, to improve the hiring and retention of indi-

9 viduals by the Commissioner in rural or remote areas.

10 (b) CONSIDERATIONS.—The strategy required under

11 subsection (a) shall take into consideration the following:

12 (1) Feedback from individuals who are U.S.

13 Customs and Border Protection candidates or new

14 hires at locations in rural or remote areas, including

15 feedback on the quality of life in such areas for new

16 hires and their families.

17 (2) Feedback from U.S. Customs and Border

18 Protection personnel, other than new hires, who are

19 stationed at locations in rural or remote areas, in-

20 cluding feedback on the quality of life in such areas

21 for such personnel and their families.

22 (3) An assessment of existing Federal pro-

23 grams, including financial incentives and other com-

24 pensation-based flexibilities, regarding how to most

25 effectively aid spouses and families of individuals

1 who are candidates or new hires in a rural or remote

2 area.

3   (4) An assessment of Department of Homeland

4 Security internship programs and the usefulness of

5 such programs in improving hiring by the Secretary

6 of Homeland Security in rural or remote areas.

7 (c) PLAN.—The implementation plan required under

8 subsection (a) shall—

9   (1) include a pilot or other program, as appro-

10 priate, to address hiring challenges faced by U.S.

11 Customs and Border Protection in rural or remote

12 areas; and

13   (2) enhance strategic recruiting efforts of U.S.

14 Customs and Border Protection through relation-

15 ships with institutions of higher education (as such

16 term is defined in section 102 of the Higher Edu-

17 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)), veterans

18 transition and employment centers, and job place-

19 ment programs in regions that could assist in filling

20 positions in rural or remote areas.

21 (d) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Beginning on the date

22 that is one year after the date of issuance of the strategy

23 and implementation plan required under subsection (a)

24 and for four years thereafter, the Secretary of Homeland

25 Security shall report to the Committee on Homeland Secu-

1 rity of the House of Representatives and the Committee
2 on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the
3 Senate on the extent to which such strategy and imple-
4 mentation plan has improved the hiring and retention by
5 U.S. Customs and Border Protection of employees in rural
6 or remote areas.

7   (e) RURAL OR REMOTE AREAS DEFINED.—For pur-
8 poses of this section, the term ''rural or remote areas''
9 means areas within the United States that are not within
10 an area defined and designated as urbanized areas by the
11 Bureau of the Census in the most recently completed de-
12 cennial census.

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