

[DISCUSSION DRAFT]116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION**H. R.** _____

To reform the programs of the Secretary of Agriculture for housing for rural farmworkers, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

A BILL

To reform the programs of the Secretary of Agriculture for housing for rural farmworkers, 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 “Farmworker Housing
5 Improvement Act of 2019”.

6 **SEC. 2. REFORMS TO FARMWORKER HOUSING PROGRAMS.**

7 Section 514 of the Housing Act of 1949 (42 U.S.C.
8 1484) is amended by adding at the end the following new
9 subsections:

1 “(j) COORDINATION WITH LOW-INCOME HOUSING
2 TAX CREDIT.—

3 “(1) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall con-
4 sult with the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue
5 Service and take such actions as are appropriate in
6 conjunction with such consultation to simplify the
7 coordination of rules, regulations, forms, and ap-
8 proval requirements for multifamily housing projects
9 for which assistance is provided by the Secretary in
10 conjunction with any low-income housing tax credits
11 under section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code of
12 1986 or tax-exempt housing bonds.

13 “(2) RECOMMENDATIONS.—In implementing
14 the changes required under this subsection, the Sec-
15 retary shall solicit recommendations regarding such
16 changes from project owners and sponsors, investors
17 and stakeholders in housing tax credits, State and
18 local housing finance agencies, public housing agen-
19 cies, tenant advocates, and other stakeholders in
20 such projects.

21 “(3) REPORT.—Not later than the expiration of
22 the 9-month period beginning on the date of the en-
23 actment of this subsection, the Secretary shall sub-
24 mit a report to the Committee on Financial Services
25 of the House of Representatives and the Committee

1 on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Sen-
2 ate that—

3 “(A) identifies the actions taken by the
4 Secretary to comply with this subsection;

5 “(B) includes information regarding any
6 resulting improvements in the expedited ap-
7 proval for multifamily housing projects;

8 “(C) identifies recommendations made pur-
9 suant to paragraph (2); and

10 “(D) makes recommendations for any leg-
11 islative changes that are needed to facilitate
12 prompt approval of assistance for such projects.

13 “(k) FUNDING CAPS.—Upon the enactment of this
14 subsection, the Secretary shall increase the maximum
15 amount of a loan or grant that may be made under this
16 section or section 516 to \$3,000,000 and may not estab-
17 lish a maximum funding amount that is lower than such
18 amount.

19 “(l) NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY.—Any no-
20 tice of funding availability relating to assistance under this
21 section or section 516 shall provide for a period for appli-
22 cation for such funding having a duration not shorter than
23 60 days.

24 “(m) ANNUAL SCHEDULE OF AWARDS OF ASSIST-
25 ANCE.—The Secretary shall establish and implement an

1 annual schedule for notice of funding, submission of appli-
2 cations, and awards of funding for assistance under this
3 section and section 516.

4 “(n) PUBLICATION OF SELF-SCORING ASSESS-
5 MENTS.—The Secretary shall make publicly available on
6 a website of the Department, with respect to assistance
7 under this section and section 516—

8 “(1) the self-scoring form and assessment for
9 such assistance of the applicant;

10 “(2) a summary of the applications for such as-
11 sistance and such loans made and grants awarded;
12 and

13 “(3) a description of the compliance procedures,
14 mechanisms, and activities used by the Department
15 to monitor compliance and performance of such bor-
16 rowers and grantees.

17 “(o) ELIGIBILITY FOR ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary
18 shall provide that any person not ineligible for financial
19 assistance by reason of section 214 of the Housing and
20 Community Development Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 1436a)
21 may not be denied occupancy in housing assisted under
22 this title or for housing assistance under this title by rea-
23 son of such person’s citizenship or alien status.”.

1 **SEC. 3. CONSISTENCY BETWEEN PROGRAMS.**

2 Section 516 of the Housing Act of 1949 (42 U.S.C.
3 1486) is amended—

4 (1) in subsection (a), in the matter preceding
5 paragraph (1), by inserting “or any limited partner-
6 ship in which the general partner is a nonprofit enti-
7 ty,” after “or any Indian tribe,”; and

8 (2) in subsection (k)(7)(A), by striking “any”
9 and inserting “limited partnership in which the gen-
10 eral partner is a nonprofit entity, or”.