

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3498

To authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to make grants to assist cities with a vacant housing problem, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 7, 2007

Mr. HIGGINS 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 cities with a vacant housing problem, 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 “Neighborhood Rec-
5 lamation and Revitalization Program Act of 2007”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that vacant residential properties are
8 a scourge on communities, leading to lower property tax
9 revenues for municipalities, higher municipal maintenance

1 costs, and severe public health and environmental prob-
2 lems.

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

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Housing and
6 Urban Development (hereinafter in this Act referred to
7 as the “Secretary”) may make grants to a local govern-
8 ment to fund—

- 9 (1) the demolition of vacant housing; or
10 (2) the demolition of vacant housing in com-
11 bination with a study of neighborhood revitalization.

12 (b) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—To be eligible for
13 a grant under this Act, a local government shall submit
14 to the Secretary, at such time and in such manner as the
15 Secretary may require, an application that demonstrates
16 that the local government has—

- 17 (1) a history of continued population loss to be
18 measured beginning with the 1980 decennial census;
19 (2) vacant housing within its borders;
20 (3) substantial urban decay and neighborhood
21 degradation resulting from vacant housing; and
22 (4) a comprehensive, coordinated plan for the
23 demolition of vacant housing.

24 (c) AWARD.—

1 (1) To the extent provided in advance in appro-
2 piation Acts, the Secretary shall award grants
3 under this Act to local governments that have best
4 demonstrated the requirements of subsection (b) in
5 such number and amounts that the Secretary deter-
6 mines is warranted by the applications submitted.

7 (2) The Secretary shall evaluate grant applica-
8 tions using the following factors:

9 (A) The severity of the vacant housing
10 problem in the context of the applicant's overall
11 housing stock.

12 (B) The level of positive impact the demo-
13 lition of vacant housing would provide in stabi-
14 lizing the neighborhoods facing vacant housing
15 problems.

16 (C) Other relevant factors that the Sec-
17 retary deems pertinent and appropriate.

18 (d) REPORTS.—

19 (1) One year after the Secretary awards to a
20 local government a grant under this Act, that local
21 government shall submit to the Secretary a report
22 on the progress made on the plan for which the
23 grant was awarded.

24 (2) This report shall include—

1 (A) the number of housing units demol-
2 ished and the number remaining to be demol-
3 ished pursuant to the local governments com-
4 prehensive, coordinated plan;

5 (B) progress in completing the study or
6 studies for neighborhood revitalization; and

7 (C) the extent to which a demonstrated
8 public health or safety hazard exists in relation
9 to the applicant's vacant housing problem.

10 (e) **RELATION TO OTHER PROGRAMS OF THE DE-**
11 **PARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT.—**

12 It is the intent of Congress that the Secretary's award
13 to a local government of a grant under this Act shall not
14 affect a decision by the Secretary to award funding to that
15 local government for demolition of vacant housing or a
16 study of neighborhood revitalization under any other pro-
17 gram of the Department of Housing and Urban Develop-
18 ment.

19 (f) **RELATION TO OTHER LAW.—**Any demolition re-
20 sulting from this Act must comply with appropriate local,
21 State, and Federal law.

22 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

23 In this Act—

1 (1) the term “vacant housing” means a group
2 of buildings intended for use as residences that are
3 vacant and are located in a well-defined area;

4 (2) the term “local government” means any
5 county, city, town, township, village, or other general
6 purpose political subdivision of a State; and

7 (3) the term “a study of neighborhood revital-
8 ization” means a study conducted by the local gov-
9 ernment, or by an organization on behalf of the local
10 government, of how best to use the real property un-
11 derlying vacant housing after that vacant housing
12 has been demolished.

13 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

14 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
15 this Act—

16 (1) \$20,000,000 for fiscal year 2009;

17 (2) \$30,000,000 for fiscal year 2010; and

18 (3) \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2011.

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