

115TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 6701

To require the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to improve services for survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 4, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas (for himself and Mr. O'HALLERAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services

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## A BILL

To require the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to improve services for survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

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 “Help End Abusive Liv-  
5 ing Situations Act” or the “HEALS Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act—

8 (1) the term “domestic violence” has the mean-  
9 ing given the term in section 40002(a) of the Vio-

1        lence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C.  
2        13925(a));

3            (2) the term “domestic violence project” means  
4        a project administered by a victim service provider  
5        designed to meet the needs of survivors of domestic  
6        violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking;

7            (3) the term “homeless individual” has the  
8        meaning given the term in section 103 of the  
9        McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42  
10       U.S.C. 11302);

11           (4) the terms “homeless individual with a dis-  
12       ability”, “permanent housing”, “tenant-based”,  
13       “transitional housing”, and “victim service provider”  
14       have the meanings given those terms in section 401  
15       of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42  
16       U.S.C. 11360);

17           (5) the term “rapid re-housing project” means  
18       supportive services and short- or medium-term ten-  
19       ant-based rental assistance, as necessary, to help a  
20       homeless individual, with or without a disability,  
21       move into permanent housing; and

22           (6) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary  
23       of Housing and Urban Development.

1 **SEC. 3. STRENGTHENING HOUSING RESOURCES PROTEC-**  
2 **TIONS FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIO-**  
3 **LENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT,**  
4 **AND STALKING.**

5 Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment  
6 of this Act, the Secretary shall take the following measures  
7 to improve services provided to survivors of domestic vio-  
8 lence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking:

9 (1) STRATEGIC PLAN.—The Secretary shall cre-  
10 ate a section in the next strategic plan of the De-  
11 partment of Housing and Urban Development re-  
12 quired under section 306 of title 5, United States  
13 Code, that—

14 (A) outlines a thorough response to the  
15 housing needs of survivors of domestic violence,  
16 dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking and  
17 their families;

18 (B) provides that, for purposes of scoring  
19 applicants in the notice of funding availability  
20 for the Continuum of Care program authorized  
21 under subtitle C of title IV of the McKinney-  
22 Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.  
23 11381 et seq.) in any fiscal year, the Secretary  
24 shall give equal consideration to—

25 (i) rapid re-housing projects;

1 (ii) projects that provide permanent  
2 supportive housing; and

3 (iii) domestic violence projects that  
4 maximize client choice, including transi-  
5 tional housing;

6 (C) authorizes any defunded transitional  
7 housing project to reapply for funding; and

8 (D) authorizes rapid re-housing projects  
9 to provide not less than 6 months and not more  
10 than 24 months of assistance.

11 (2) EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall de-  
12 velop—

13 (A) measurable criteria upon which appli-  
14 cants are evaluated to demonstrate their col-  
15 laboration with victim service providers to de-  
16 velop local policy priorities focused on survivors  
17 of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual as-  
18 sault, or stalking, including survivor-centered  
19 coordinated entry processes that appropriately  
20 assess and prioritize those survivors and take  
21 into account the safety and confidentiality  
22 needs of those survivors; and

23 (B) mechanisms that promote the provi-  
24 sion of technical assistance and support for pro-

1           grams to improve outcomes instead of reallo-  
2           cating or not awarding funds.

3           (3) RESEARCH AGENDA.—The Secretary shall  
4           develop a research agenda that focuses on survivors  
5           of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault,  
6           and stalking and the housing modalities that best  
7           support them, especially the critical safety concerns  
8           and the link between trauma and residential sta-  
9           bility.

10 **SEC. 4. INCREASING ACCESS TO SAFE HOUSING FOR SUR-**  
11 **VIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VI-**  
12 **OLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, AND STALKING.**

13           Section 427(b) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless As-  
14           sistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11386a(b)) is amended—

15           (1) in paragraph (1)(F)—

16                   (A) in clause (i), by striking “or” at the  
17                   end;

18                   (B) in clause (ii), by striking “and” and  
19                   the end and inserting “or”; and

20                   (C) by adding at the end the following:

21                           “(iii) success in meeting the safety  
22                           and trauma needs of survivors of domestic  
23                           violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or  
24                           stalking, including access to safe housing;  
25                           and”;

1 (2) by adding at the end the following:

2 “(4) CRITERIA FOR VICTIM SERVICES PRO-  
3 VIDERS.—With respect to recipients that are victim  
4 service providers, the Secretary shall evaluate the  
5 provider based on the ability to meet the safety and  
6 trauma needs of victims served by the provider, in-  
7 cluding access to safe housing.”.

8 **SEC. 5. REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

9 Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment  
10 of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a re-  
11 port on—

12 (1) the trends in allocating resources beginning  
13 after the date of enactment of the Homeless Emer-  
14 gency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing  
15 Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–22; 123 Stat. 1663)  
16 to address the housing needs of survivors of domes-  
17 tic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and  
18 stalking; and

19 (2) the increase in the allocation of resources  
20 for domestic violence projects beginning after the  
21 date of enactment of this Act.

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