

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7459

To authorize the President to establish the Coronavirus Service Corps as a means of providing gainful employment to unemployed and underemployed citizens of the United States through the performance of useful public work, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 1, 2020

Mr. HARDER of California (for himself, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. SOTO, Ms. NORTON, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. SAN NICOLAS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To authorize the President to establish the Coronavirus Service Corps as a means of providing gainful employment to unemployed and underemployed citizens of the United States through the performance of useful public work, 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 “Coronavirus Service
5 Corps Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF CORONAVI-**
2 **RUS SERVICE CORPS.**

3 (a) ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE.—In order to re-
4 lieve the acute condition of widespread distress and unem-
5 ployment existing in the United States and to provide for
6 the mitigation of the health and economic impacts of the
7 coronavirus crisis, the President shall establish and oper-
8 ate a Coronavirus Service Corps to employ citizens of the
9 United States, who are otherwise unemployed or under-
10 employed, in the carrying on of works of a public nature
11 in connection with—

12 (1) health care, including contact tracing, ad-
13 ministering COVID–19 tests, and peer mental
14 health counseling;

15 (2) assisting essential services and the reopen-
16 ing process, including taking temperatures for busi-
17 nesses, childcare, and training teachers and parents
18 to use distance learning technology; and

19 (3) social services, assisting food banks, food
20 assistance, and hunger relief programs, including de-
21 livery, building homeless shelters, senior care.

22 (b) LEADERSHIP.—The Coronavirus Service Corps
23 shall be administered by a board for which the Director
24 of the Corporation for National and Community Service
25 shall serve as the chairperson and appoint to such board
26 5 members, including—

1 (1) at least one member who is an expert in
2 nonprofit work; and

3 (2) at least two members who are leaders of a
4 major national or international union.

5 (c) ROLE OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.—To operate the
6 Coronavirus Service Corps, the President may utilize ex-
7 isting Federal departments and agencies, including the
8 Department of Labor, the Department of Defense, the
9 National Guard Bureau, the Department of the Interior,
10 the Department of Agriculture, the Army Corps of Engi-
11 neers, the Department of Transportation, the Department
12 of Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and
13 Federal governmental corporations.

14 (d) CONTRACT AUTHORITY.—For the purpose of car-
15 rying out this Act, the President may enter into such con-
16 tracts or agreements with States as may be necessary, in-
17 cluding provisions for utilization of existing State adminis-
18 trative agencies.

19 (e) PARTICIPATION.—

20 (1) PLACEMENT.—The chairperson of the
21 Coronavirus Service Corps shall, in coordination
22 with the Secretary of Health and Human Services
23 and State and local governments, determine employ-
24 ment placement under subsection (a) based on the
25 areas of most need.

1 (2) EMPLOYMENT PERIOD.—A term of employ-
2 ment under subsection (a) shall be for a period of
3 less than or equal to 1 year. Nothing in this para-
4 graph shall be construed to limit the number of
5 terms of employment a citizen may be employed
6 under such subsection.

7 (3) CURRICULUM.—

8 (A) IN GENERAL.—Citizens employed
9 under subsection (a) shall receive training
10 under the Coronavirus Service Corps in areas
11 relevant to the employment of such citizens.

12 (B) DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULUM.—

13 The training described in subparagraph (A)
14 shall be developed through partnerships with—

15 (i) apprenticeship programs registered
16 under the National Apprenticeship Act (29
17 U.S.C. 50 et seq.); and

18 (ii) institutions of higher education.

19 (C) TREATMENT OF TRAINING.—The
20 training described in subparagraph (A) may be
21 credited towards a registered apprenticeship
22 program or program of study, as determined by
23 such apprenticeship program or institution of
24 higher education, as applicable.

1 (f) PAYMENT.—Any person who is employed under
2 subsection (a) shall receive compensation in an amount
3 equal to the greater of the following:

4 (1) An hourly wage equal to 150 percent of the
5 minimum hourly wage in the locality in which such
6 person is employed.

7 (2) An hourly wage equal to \$15 an hour.

8 (g) ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY.—The Presi-
9 dent, or the head of any department or agency authorized
10 by the President to construct any project or to carry on
11 any public works under this Act, may acquire real prop-
12 erty for such project or public work by purchase, donation,
13 condemnation, or otherwise.

14 **SEC. 3. ADMINISTRATION OF CORONAVIRUS SERVICE**
15 **CORPS.**

16 (a) EMPLOYMENT PREFERENCE.—If the President
17 determines that amounts appropriated to carry out a
18 Coronavirus Service Corps under this Act for a fiscal year
19 will be insufficient to employ all of the citizens of the
20 United States described in section 2(a) who are seeking
21 or likely to seek employment in the Coronavirus Service
22 Corps and continue the employment of current employees
23 who desire to remain in the Coronavirus Service Corps,
24 the President shall employ additional persons in the

1 Coronavirus Service Corps in the following order of pref-
2 erence:

3 (1) Unemployed veterans of the Armed Forces
4 and unemployed members of the reserve components
5 of the Armed Forces.

6 (2) Unemployed citizens who have exhausted
7 their entitlement to unemployment compensation.

8 (3) Unemployed citizens, who immediately be-
9 fore employment in the Coronavirus Service Corps,
10 are eligible for unemployment compensation payable
11 under any State law or Federal unemployment com-
12 pensation law, including any additional compensa-
13 tion or extended compensation under such laws.

14 (4) Other citizens described in section 2(a).

15 (b) HOUSING AND CARE OF EMPLOYEES.—The
16 President may provide housing for persons employed in
17 the Coronavirus Service Corps and furnish them with such
18 subsistence, clothing, medical attendance and hospitaliza-
19 tion, and cash allowance, as may be necessary, during the
20 period they are so employed.

21 (c) TRANSPORTATION.—The President may provide
22 for the transportation of persons employed in the
23 Coronavirus Service Corps to and from the places of em-
24 ployment.

1 (d) NON-DISCRIMINATION.—In employing citizens
2 for the Coronavirus Service Corps, no discrimination shall
3 occur in accordance with Federal employment law; except
4 that no individual under conviction for crime and serving
5 sentence therefore shall be employed under the provisions
6 of this Act.

7 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

8 (a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
9 are authorized to be appropriated to the President to es-
10 tablish and operate a Coronavirus Service Corps under
11 this Act \$60,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2021, to be avail-
12 able through September 30, 2022.

13 (b) DURATION OF AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appro-
14 priated pursuant to the authorization of appropriations in
15 subsection (a) shall remain available until expended.

16 **SEC. 5. TERMINATION.**

17 The authority of the President to establish and oper-
18 ate a Coronavirus Service Corps under this Act shall ex-
19 pire on September 30, 2022.

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