

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 209

To provide for assistance to rural water, wastewater, and waste disposal systems affected by the COVID–19 pandemic, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 3, 2021

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. TILLIS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

A BILL

To provide for assistance to rural water, wastewater, and waste disposal systems affected by the COVID–19 pandemic, 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 “Emergency Assistance
5 for Rural Water Systems Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR RURAL WATER SYS-**
7 **TEMS.**

8 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
2 ty” means a rural water, wastewater, or waste dis-
3 posal facility with respect to which assistance may
4 be provided under a water, wastewater, or waste dis-
5 posal program under section 306(a), 306A, 306C, or
6 306D of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Develop-
7 ment Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a), 1926a, 1926c, 1926d).

8 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
9 the Secretary of Agriculture.

10 (b) EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary
11 may—

12 (1) provide a grant, a zero percent interest
13 loan, or a 1 percent interest loan to, forgive prin-
14 cipal or interest or modify any term or condition of
15 an outstanding loan made to, or refinance part or all
16 of any other loan (if the purpose of the loan is an
17 eligible purpose under section 306(a)(1) or 306C of
18 the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act
19 (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(1), 1926c)) made to, an eligible
20 entity; or

21 (2) reduce or eliminate any fee that is or would
22 otherwise be required to be paid under section
23 306(a)(1) of that Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(1)) with re-
24 spect to a loan guarantee provided to an eligible en-
25 tity, on the condition that the eligible entity receives

1 the benefit resulting from the reduction or elimi-
2 nation of the fee.

3 (c) LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may pro-
4 vide assistance to an eligible entity under subsection (b)
5 as the Secretary determines is necessary—

6 (1) to ensure that the eligible entity has the
7 necessary resources to maintain public health, safe-
8 ty, or order;

9 (2) to address financial hardships of the eligible
10 entity due to the COVID–19 public health emer-
11 gency; or

12 (3) to promote the financial stability of the eli-
13 gible entity.

14 (d) USE OF ASSISTANCE.—An eligible entity to which
15 assistance is provided under subsection (b) may use the
16 assistance—

17 (1) for any purpose for which the eligible entity
18 is eligible for assistance under the relevant provision
19 of law referred to in subsection (a)(1); or

20 (2) for any direct operational expenses incurred
21 by the eligible entity, as determined by the Sec-
22 retary.

23 (e) APPROPRIATION.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Out of any amounts in the
25 Treasury not otherwise appropriated, there is appro-

1 priated to the Secretary \$1,000,000,000 to carry out
2 this section.

3 (2) RESERVATION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EX-
4 PENSES.—The Secretary shall reserve 3 percent of
5 the amount appropriated by paragraph (1) for ad-
6 ministrative expenses incurred by the Secretary in
7 carrying out this section.

8 (3) AVAILABILITY.—The amount appropriated
9 by paragraph (1) shall remain available through De-
10 cember 31, 2022.

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