

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 15

To reform the requirements regarding the safety and security of families living in public and federally assisted housing in high-crime areas.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 3, 2019

Mr. RUBIO introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To reform the requirements regarding the safety and security of families living in public and federally assisted housing in high-crime areas.

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 “Liberty City Rising
5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. SAFETY STANDARDS FOR FEDERALLY ASSISTED**
7 **HOUSING IN HIGH-CRIME AREAS.**

8 (a) PUBLIC HOUSING.—Section 6(f)(2) of the United
9 States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437d(f)(2)) is
10 amended—

(1) by striking “The Secretary shall” and inserting the following:

“(A) SAFE AND HABITABLE.—The Secretary shall”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) HIGH-CRIME AREAS.—

“(i) DEFINITION.—In this subparagraph, the term ‘high-crime area’ means a neighborhood or other small geographic area that the Secretary determines has a high incidence of violent crime, based on the most recent violent crime data available from a State, unit of local government, or other source determined appropriate by the Secretary, that lists the types of crimes and number of offenses committed in the area.

“(ii) ADDITIONAL SAFETY AND SECURITY STANDARDS.—In addition to the standards under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall establish standards to ensure the safety and security of dwellings located in a high-crime area.

“(iii) CONTENTS.—The standards established under clause (ii)—

1 “(I) shall require a public hous-
 2 ing agency to consider security meas-
 3 ures that meet the specific needs of a
 4 property or building; and

5 “(II) may include requirements
 6 related to security cameras, locks,
 7 lighting, or other security measures.

8 “(iv) ANONYMOUS HOTLINE.—A pub-
 9 lic housing agency that operates a public
 10 housing project in a high-crime area shall
 11 establish an anonymous hotline for tenants
 12 to report suspicious activity and crimes
 13 that occur in the community in which the
 14 public housing project is located.”.

15 (b) PROJECT-BASED ASSISTED HOUSING.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 8(o)(13) of the
 17 United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C.
 18 1437f(o)(13)) is amended by adding at the end the
 19 following:

20 “(P) SAFETY AND SECURITY STANDARDS
 21 FOR HIGH-CRIME AREAS.—

22 “(i) DEFINITION.—In this subpara-
 23 graph, the term ‘high-crime area’ means a
 24 neighborhood or other small geographic
 25 area that the Secretary determines has a

1 high incidence of violent crime, based on
2 the most recent violent crime data avail-
3 able from a State, unit of local govern-
4 ment, or other source determined appro-
5 priate by the Secretary, that lists the types
6 of crimes and number of offenses com-
7 mitted in the area.

8 “(ii) CONTRACT REQUIREMENT.—An
9 assistance contract for project-based assist-
10 ance entered into under this paragraph
11 with respect to a structure shall require
12 that the owner maintain the structure, if
13 determined to be in a high-crime area, in
14 a condition that complies with standards
15 that meet or exceed the safety and security
16 standards established under clause (iii).

17 “(iii) SAFETY AND SECURITY STAND-
18 ARDS.—The Secretary shall establish
19 standards to ensure the safety and security
20 of structures located in a high-crime area.

21 “(iv) CONTENTS.—The standards es-
22 tablished under clause (iii)—

23 “(I) shall require the owner of a
24 structure that receives project-based
25 assistance under this paragraph to

1 consider security measures that meet
2 the specific needs of the structure;
3 and

4 “(II) may include requirements
5 related to security cameras, locks,
6 lighting, or other security measures.

7 “(v) INSPECTIONS.—When deter-
8 mining whether a dwelling unit that is in
9 a high-crime area meets the housing qual-
10 ity standards under paragraph (8)(B), a
11 public housing agency shall also determine
12 whether the dwelling unit meets the stand-
13 ards established under this subparagraph.

14 “(vi) ANONYMOUS HOTLINE.—A pub-
15 lic housing agency that provides project-
16 based assistance under this paragraph with
17 respect to a structure in a high-crime area
18 shall establish an anonymous hotline for
19 tenants to report suspicious activity and
20 crimes that occur in the community in
21 which the structure is located.”.

22 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section
23 8(d)(2) of the United States Housing Act of 1937
24 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(d)(2)) is amended by adding at
25 the end the following:

1 “(E)(i) Subsection (o)(13)(P) (relating to safety and
 2 security standards for high-crime areas) shall apply to a
 3 contract for project-based assistance under this paragraph
 4 and to a public housing agency that enters into such a
 5 contract.

6 “(ii) When determining whether a structure assisted
 7 under this paragraph that is in a high-crime area, as de-
 8 fined in subsection (o)(13)(P), meets any applicable hous-
 9 ing quality standards, a public housing agency shall also
 10 determine whether the structure meets the safety and se-
 11 curity standards established under that subsection.”.

12 (c) DEADLINES.—

13 (1) DETERMINATION OF HIGH-CRIME AREAS.—

14 Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment
 15 of this Act, the Secretary of Housing and Urban De-
 16 velopment shall make an initial determination as to
 17 which areas of the United States are high-crime
 18 areas for purposes of sections 6(f)(2)(B),
 19 8(d)(2)(E), and 8(o)(13)(P) of the United States
 20 Housing Act of 1937, as added by this section.

21 (2) SAFETY AND SECURITY STANDARDS.—Not

22 later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this
 23 Act, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Develop-
 24 ment shall establish the safety and security stand-
 25 ards for public housing projects and other assisted

1 structures located in high-crime areas required
 2 under sections 6(f)(2)(B), 8(d)(2)(E), and
 3 8(o)(13)(P) of the United States Housing Act of
 4 1937, as added by this section.

5 **SEC. 3. GRANT PRIORITY FOR PUBLIC HOUSING PROJECTS**
 6 **IN HIGH-CRIME AREAS.**

7 Section 9(d) of the United States Housing Act of
 8 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437g(d)) is amended by adding at the
 9 end the following:

10 “(4) EMERGENCY SAFETY AND SECURITY
 11 FUNDING PRIORITY FOR HIGH-CRIME AREAS.—In
 12 awarding grants for safety and security measures
 13 using amounts from the Capital Fund, the Secretary
 14 shall give priority to an application from a public
 15 housing agency that proposes to use the grant for a
 16 public housing project located in a high-crime area
 17 (as defined in section 6(f)(2)(B)).”.

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