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(Original Signature of Member)

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To provide community-based nonprofit feeding and anti-hunger groups with funding to partner with small and mid-sized restaurants to expand meal access and delivery for low-income and vulnerable populations during a pandemic or public health emergency.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (for herself and _____) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To provide community-based nonprofit feeding and anti-hunger groups with funding to partner with small and mid-sized restaurants to expand meal access and delivery for low-income and vulnerable populations during a pandemic or public health emergency.

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 “Community Meals
5 Fund”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

2 (1) VULNERABLE POPULATION.—The term vul-
3 nerable population means any person who is a mem-
4 ber of the target population, is a low income indi-
5 vidual, or receives a means-tested benefit as defined
6 under this Act.

7 (2) GRAB-AND-GO MEAL.—The term Grab-and-
8 go meals refers to pre-packaged, ready to eat food
9 that has been prepared and cooked no greater than
10 8 hours prior to being sealed or enclosed in a con-
11 tainer.

12 (3) TARGET POPULATION.—The term “target
13 population” includes an individual who (or family
14 that)—

15 (A) earns an income below 200 percent of
16 the Federal poverty line;

17 (B) suffers from food insecurity;

18 (C) is homeless;

19 (D) receives (or recently received) assist-
20 ance under a State program funded under part
21 A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42
22 U.S.C. et seq.), relating to temporary assistance
23 to needy families; or

24 (E) is eligible for benefits under any nutri-
25 tion assistance or anti-poverty program.

1 (4) COMMUNITY-BASED NONPROFIT FEEDING
2 AND ANTI-HUNGER GROUP.—The term “community-
3 based nonprofit feeding and anti-hunger group”
4 means an anti-hunger organization, food bank, food
5 pantry, soup kitchen, food rescue group, or commu-
6 nity food security organization that is described in
7 section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of
8 1986 and exempt from tax under section 501(a) of
9 such Code.

10 (5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
11 the Secretary of Agriculture.

12 (6) LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUAL.—The term “low-
13 income individual” means, with respect to any cal-
14 endar year, any individual who lives in a household
15 that has a gross income that does not exceed 300
16 percent of the poverty line, as defined in section
17 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act
18 (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)).

19 (7) HOMELESS.—The term “homeless” has the
20 meaning given such term in subtitle B of title VII
21 of the McKinney-Vento Act and the Housing and
22 Urban Development (HUD) definition in section 103
23 of subtitle I of the McKinney-Vento Act.

24 (8) CRISIS HOUSING.—The term “crisis hous-
25 ing” means a supervised publicly or privately oper-

1 ated shelter designated to provide temporary living
2 arrangements (including hotels and motels paid for
3 by Federal, State, or local government programs for
4 low-income individuals or by charitable organiza-
5 tions, congregate shelters, and transitional housing).

6 (9) MEANS-TESTED BENEFIT.—The term
7 “means-tested benefit” means a mandatory spending
8 program of the Federal Government for which, as
9 determined by the Secretary, eligibility for the pro-
10 gram’s benefits, or the amount of such benefits, is
11 determined on the basis of income or resources of
12 the individual or family seeking the benefit.

13 (10) DEPENDENT.—The term “dependent” has
14 the meaning given such term in section 152 of the
15 Internal Revenue Code of 1986, except that the term
16 also includes an individual who is not a citizen or
17 national of the United States if such individual
18 would otherwise be considered a dependent pursuant
19 to such section if such individual were a citizen or
20 national of the United States.

21 (11) DISASTER DECLARATION.—The term “dis-
22 aster declaration” means the instance a Governor re-
23 quests a major disaster declaration under the Robert
24 T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assist-
25 ance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.).

1 (12) TEMPORARY COMMUNITY NEED.—The
2 term “temporary community need” means prepared
3 meals during the time period under which a disaster
4 declaration is provided. Such community need shall
5 terminate 30 days after the termination of such dec-
6 laration.

7 (13) PANDEMIC.—The term “pandemic” means
8 a communicable disease for which the Federal Gov-
9 ernment has issued a travel alert or travel warning.

10 **SEC. 3. COMMUNITY MEALS FUND.**

11 (a) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a grant
12 to address temporary community needs under this section,
13 a community-based nonprofit feeding and anti-hunger
14 group shall submit to the Secretary an application that
15 contains a description of how the applicant proposes to
16 use the grant funds to implement the components of the
17 temporary grant program listed in subsection (b). The ap-
18 plication shall be submitted in such form, at such time,
19 and containing such other information as the Secretary
20 may require.

21 (b) COMMUNITY MEALS GRANT PROGRAM COMPO-
22 NENTS.—An application for a grant under this section
23 shall contain an assurance that the applicant will expand
24 the capacity of community-based nonprofit feeding and
25 anti-hunger groups and schools to meet the needs of chil-

1 dren, families, and vulnerable populations in a pandemic
2 by—

3 (1) contracting with small and mid-sized busi-
4 ness restaurants or small and mid-sized food con-
5 tractors that are small business concerns as defined
6 in section 3 of the Small business Act (15 U.S.C.
7 632) for—

8 (A) preparing, cooking, and storing grab-
9 and-go meals;

10 (B) serving meals to vulnerable popu-
11 lations or make them available for pick up, or
12 distributed in high poverty areas designated by
13 state and local agencies;

14 (C) bolstering food security for children,
15 dependents, families, and the elderly in rural
16 and hard to reach communities;

17 (D) bolstering food security for depend-
18 ents, target populations, and families in crisis
19 housing; and

20 (E) improving the nutrition of vulnerable
21 populations.

22 (c) CRITERIA.—In evaluating an application of a
23 community-based nonprofit feeding and anti-hunger group
24 to receive a grant, the Secretary shall consider criteria as
25 the Secretary determines appropriate.

1 (d) GRANT ADMINISTRATION.—

2 (1) AMOUNT.—A grant awarded under this sec-
3 tion may not exceed \$500,000

4 (2) RENEWALS.—

5 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may
6 renew a grant awarded under this section with
7 respect to an eligible entity if the entity—

8 (i) submits to the Secretary an appli-
9 cation for renewal at such time, in such
10 manner, and containing such information
11 as the Secretary may require; and

12 (ii) demonstrates in such application
13 that—

14 (I) grant, contract, or cooperative
15 agreement funds made available to the
16 entity were used in a manner required
17 under the most recently approved ap-
18 plication of the entity under this sec-
19 tion; and

20 (II) the entity has made progress
21 in achieving the objectives of the ini-
22 tial application approved for the entity
23 under this section.

1 (B) DURATION.—A grant shall be eligible
2 for renewal so long as a disaster declaration is
3 active on the date of the renewal application.

4 (e) SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT, REQUIRE-
5 MENT.—A grant, contract, or cooperative agreement made
6 under this Act shall be expended to supplement, and not
7 supplant, the expenditures of the eligible entity involved
8 and the value of in-kind contributions.

9 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be ap-
11 propriated to carry out this section \$20,000,000 during
12 the 1-year period beginning on May 1, 2020.

13 (b) AVAILABILITY.—Funds authorized to be appro-
14 priated under subsection (a) shall remain available until
15 expended.

16 **SEC. 5. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**

17 Nothing in this Act shall be construed to limit a com-
18 munity-based nonprofit feeding and anti-hunger group
19 from receiving a grant under this Act for any vulnerable
20 population otherwise served by such group with other Fed-
21 eral funds.

22 **SEC. 6. REPORTS TO CONGRESS.**

23 (a) GRANTEE REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later
24 than 90 days after the end of the fiscal year for which
25 a grantee receives a grant under this Act, such grantee

1 shall submit to the Secretary a report that contains an
2 evaluation of the results of the activities, including finan-
3 cial expenditures, made during such fiscal year to carry
4 out the program for which such grant is received.

5 (b) ANNUAL REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later
6 than January 1 following the end of fiscal year for which
7 funds are appropriated are appropriated to carry out this
8 Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report de-
9 scribing the progress of the programs carried out with
10 grants made for such fiscal year.