

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To simplify the grant process for nonurbanized areas, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. RISCH, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. WICKER, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, and Mr. TUBERVILLE) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To simplify the grant process for nonurbanized areas, 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 “Simplifying Grants Act
5 of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

8 (1) AGENCY.—The term “agency” means an
9 Executive department or independent establishment,

1 as such terms are defined in sections 101 and 104
2 of title 5, United States Code, respectively.

3 (2) COVERED LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—The term
4 “covered local government” means a local govern-
5 ment with jurisdiction over an area of which the
6 population is less than the population required to be
7 an urbanized area.

8 (3) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means
9 the Director of the Office of Management and Budg-
10 et.

11 (4) LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—The term “local
12 government” means a county, municipality, city,
13 town, township, or other general purpose political
14 subdivision of a State.

15 (5) STATE.—The term “State” means any
16 State of the United States, the District of Columbia,
17 and any commonwealth, territory, or possession of
18 the United States.

19 (6) URBANIZED AREA.—The term “urbanized
20 area” means an urbanized area, as determined by
21 the Bureau of the Census for purposes of the most
22 recent decennial census of population.

23 **SEC. 3. GRANT PROCESS SIMPLIFICATION.**

24 (a) EXISTING GRANT PROGRAMS.—For each grant
25 program of an agency in existence on the date of enact-

1 ment of this Act under which covered local governments
2 are eligible to receive grants, not later than 180 days after
3 the date of enactment of this Act—

4 (1) the Director shall—

5 (A) conduct a review of the complexity of
6 the requirements for a covered local government
7 to receive funds under a grant under the pro-
8 gram; and

9 (B) provide to the head of the agency in-
10 structions on how to simplify such require-
11 ments; and

12 (2) the head of the agency, in consultation with
13 the Director, shall simplify such requirements.

14 (b) NEW GRANT PROGRAMS.—For each grant pro-
15 gram of an agency established after the date of enactment
16 of this Act under which covered local governments are eli-
17 gible to receive grants, before the application for grants
18 under the program becomes available—

19 (1) the Director shall—

20 (A) conduct a review of the complexity of
21 the proposed requirements for a covered local
22 government to receive funds under a grant
23 under the program; and

1 (B) provide to the head of the agency in-
2 structions on how to simplify such require-
3 ments; and

4 (2) the head of each agency, in consultation
5 with the Director, shall simplify such requirements.

6 (c) CHECKLISTS.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with para-
8 graph (2), the head of each agency shall make pub-
9 licly available a checklist for covered local govern-
10 ments with respect to each grant program of the
11 agency for which covered local governments are oth-
12 erwise eligible that includes each requirement for
13 each step of the grant process for a grant under the
14 grant program.

15 (2) DEADLINE.—The head of an agency shall
16 make publicly available a checklist under paragraph
17 (1)—

18 (A) with respect to a grant program in ex-
19 istence on the date of enactment of this Act,
20 not later than 180 days after the date of enact-
21 ment of this Act; and

22 (B) with respect to a grant program estab-
23 lished after the date of enactment of this Act,
24 on the date on which the application for the
25 grant program becomes available.

1 **SEC. 4. REPORTING.**

2 (a) ONE-TIME REPORT.—Not later than 270 days
3 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall
4 submit to Congress a report evaluating, as of the date of
5 submission of the report—

6 (1) the extent to which agencies have simplified
7 the requirements for covered local governments
8 under section 3(a); and

9 (2) the extent to which agencies made available
10 checklists under section 3(c)(1) for each grant pro-
11 gram in existence on the date of enactment of this
12 Act.

13 (b) ONGOING REPORT.—Not later than April 1 of the
14 first year after the year during which this Act is enacted,
15 and every April 1 thereafter, the Director shall submit to
16 Congress a report evaluating—

17 (1) the amount of technical assistance provided
18 to covered local governments during the previous fis-
19 cal year by agencies relating to the preaward, award,
20 implementation, and closeout stages of grants
21 awarded by the agencies; and

22 (2) the amount of funds that were awarded by
23 agencies during the previous fiscal year to—

24 (A) covered local governments; and

25 (B) local governments that are not covered
26 local governments.