

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the treatment of applications for projects to construct new State homes, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. DAINES introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the treatment of applications for projects to construct new State homes, 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 “Veteran State Home
5 Grant Backlog Reduction Act of 2017”.

6 **SEC. 2. MODIFICATION OF TREATMENT OF APPLICATIONS**

7 **FOR PROJECTS TO CONSTRUCT NEW STATE**
8 **HOMES.**

9 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-
10 ings:

1 (1) The State home construction grants priority
2 list group 1 of the Department of Veterans Affairs
3 for fiscal year 2017 contains 57 projects with a cu-
4 mulative cost of \$639,805,081.

5 (2) Of those projects, 17 are new construction
6 projects, with a cumulative cost of \$445,430,897.

7 (3) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs has re-
8 quested between \$80,000,000 and \$90,000,000 for
9 construction grants for State homes in each annual
10 budget submission to Congress for fiscal years 2013
11 through 2018.

12 (4) Recurring funding shortfalls have created a
13 backlog of outstanding State home projects, aver-
14 aging six years from receipt of State funds to obliga-
15 tion of Federal funds for new construction projects.

16 (b) MODIFICATION OF PRIORITY OF PROJECTS.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (3) of section
18 8135(c) of title 38, United States Code, is amend-
19 ed—

20 (A) by redesignating subparagraphs (A)
21 and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively;

22 (B) by striking “In according” and insert-
23 ing “(A) In according”; and

24 (C) by adding at the end the following new
25 subparagraph:

1 “(B) In according priorities to projects under para-
2 graph (2) of this subsection, the Secretary shall—

3 “(i) prioritize grants for safety, renovation, and
4 bed replacement using the criteria described in sub-
5 paragraphs (A), (B), (C), (E), and (G) of such para-
6 graph; and

7 “(ii) separately prioritize grants for projects to
8 construct new State homes using the criteria de-
9 scribed in subparagraphs (A), (C), (D), (F), (G),
10 and (H) of such paragraph.”.

11 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

12 (A) LIST OF APPROVED PROJECTS.—Para-
13 graph (4) of such section is amended—

14 (i) by striking “, in the order of their
15 priority,” and inserting “for safety, ren-
16 ovation, and bed replacement, in the order
17 of their priority, and a separate list of ap-
18 proved projects (including projects that
19 have been so conditionally approved) to
20 construct new State homes, in the order of
21 their priority,”; and

22 (ii) by striking “the list” the first
23 place in appears and inserting “each such
24 list”.

1 (B) DEFERRED APPLICATIONS.—Para-
2 graph (5)(B) of such section is amended by
3 adding before the period at the end the fol-
4 lowing: “on the priority list corresponding with
5 the project type to which the deferred applica-
6 tion relates”.

7 (C) INCREASE OF GRANT AMOUNT.—Para-
8 graph (7)(A) of such section is amended by
9 striking “list” and inserting “lists”.

10 (c) MODIFICATION OF BUDGET SUBMISSION.—Be-
11 ginning in fiscal year 2019, the President shall include
12 in the budget submitted to Congress pursuant to section
13 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, requests for fund-
14 ing for projects to construct new State homes that is sepa-
15 rate and distinct from requests for funding for projects
16 relating to safety, renovation, and bed replacement at
17 State homes.

18 (d) PLAN TO CLEAR BACKLOG OF NEW CONSTRUC-
19 TION PROJECTS.—Not later than 180 days after the date
20 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans
21 Affairs shall submit to Congress a plan to clear the back-
22 log of projects to construct new State homes by September
23 30, 2023.

1 (e) STATE HOME DEFINED.—In this section, the
2 term “State home” has the meaning given that term in
3 section 101 of title 38, United States Code.