

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2782

To direct the Secretary of Education to carry out grant programs to encourage student participation in local government and volunteer service, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 11, 2025

Mr. KIM introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Education to carry out grant programs to encourage student participation in local government and volunteer service, 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 “Service Starts At
5 Home Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. GRANTS TO SUPPORT INTERNSHIPS IN LOCAL GOV-**
7 **ERNMENT.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
9 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall carry

1 out a program under which the Secretary makes grants,
2 on a competitive basis, to eligible entities to support paid
3 internships within units of local government for secondary
4 school students and students who are qualified under-
5 graduates at institutions of higher education in the State
6 in which the entity is located.

7 (b) APPLICATION.—To be considered for a grant
8 under subsection (a), an eligible entity shall submit an ap-
9 plication to the Secretary at such time, in such manner,
10 and containing such information as the Secretary may re-
11 quire.

12 (c) LOCAL GOVERNMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM.—
13 Each eligible entity that receives a grant under subsection
14 (a) shall use such grant to carry out a program under
15 which the entity—

16 (1) identifies appropriate paid internship oppor-
17 tunities within units of local government for sec-
18 ondary school students and students who are under-
19 graduates at institutions of higher education in the
20 State in which the entity is located;

21 (2) establishes a process for the selection of
22 students to fill such internships;

23 (3) determines hourly rates of pay and other
24 terms and conditions applicable to such internships;
25 and

1 (4) pays the costs incurred in providing such in-
 2 ternships.

3 (d) ACCOMMODATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL STAND-
 4 ARDS.—In carrying out the internship program under sub-
 5 section (c), an eligible entity shall—

6 (1) work with institutions of higher education
 7 to ensure that the work performed by interns has
 8 educational value and meets applicable educational
 9 standards; and

10 (2) seek to provide reasonable employment-re-
 11 lated accommodations to interns who have childcare
 12 needs, transportation difficulties, or other such chal-
 13 lenges, which may include accommodations such as
 14 flexible work schedules for interns and allowing in-
 15 terns to telework to the extent determined prac-
 16 ticable by the eligibility entity concerned.

17 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
 18 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
 19 \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2030.

20 **SEC. 3. SCHOLARSHIP FOR VOLUNTEER SERVICE PRO-**
 21 **GRAMS.**

22 (a) FUNDING.—

23 (1) STATE PROGRAMS.—

24 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year
 25 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Sec-

1 retary shall carry out a program under which
2 the Secretary makes allocations to States, in ac-
3 cordance with subparagraph (B), to carry out
4 the scholarship program under subsection (b).

5 (B) ALLOCATIONS TO STATES.—From the
6 amount appropriated to carry out this section
7 for each fiscal year and not reserved under
8 paragraph (2), each State that has an applica-
9 tion approved by the Secretary under subpara-
10 graph (C) shall be allocated an amount in pro-
11 portion to number of students enrolled in the
12 public elementary schools and secondary schools
13 in the State for the previous school year relative
14 to the total number of students enrolled in the
15 public elementary schools and secondary schools
16 for such school year in every State that has an
17 application approved by the Secretary under
18 such subparagraph.

19 (C) STATE APPLICATION.—To be eligible
20 to receive an allocation under subparagraph
21 (B), a State shall submit an application to the
22 Secretary at such time, in such manner, and
23 containing such information as the Secretary
24 may require.

1 (2) FEDERAL PROGRAM.—From the amount
 2 appropriated to carry out this section for each fiscal
 3 year, the Secretary may reserve not more than 20
 4 percent to carry out the Federal supplemental schol-
 5 arship program under subsection (c).

6 (b) STATE ADMINISTERED SCHOLARSHIP PRO-
 7 GRAM.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—Each State that receives an
 9 allocation under subsection (a)(2) shall use such al-
 10 location to carry out a program under which the
 11 State awards scholarships, on a competitive basis, to
 12 eligible students who demonstrate a commitment to
 13 volunteer service work.

14 (2) APPLICATION.—A student who seeks a
 15 scholarship under this subsection shall submit an ap-
 16 plication to the State at such time, in such manner,
 17 and containing such information as the State may
 18 require.

19 (3) STUDENT ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to
 20 receive a scholarship under this subsection a student
 21 shall meet the following criteria:

22 (A) FIRST-TIME APPLICANT.—In the case
 23 of a first-time applicant for a scholarship under
 24 this subsection, the student shall—

25 (i) be enrolled—

1 (I) in a secondary school and be
2 in the final year of a program of
3 study leading to a regular high school
4 diploma; or

5 (II) in an institution of higher
6 education; and

7 (ii) have completed at least 100 hours
8 of volunteer service work in the preceding
9 school year (or another one-year period de-
10 termined by the Secretary).

11 (B) RENEWAL APPLICANT.—In the case of
12 a student who received a scholarship under this
13 subsection for an academic year and is seeking
14 a scholarship for a subsequent academic year,
15 the student shall—

16 (i) be enrolled in an institution of
17 higher education;

18 (ii) be in good academic standing (as
19 determined by the institution); and

20 (iii) have completed at least 100 hours
21 of volunteer service work in the preceding
22 school year (or another one-year period de-
23 termined by the Secretary).

(4) RENEWAL PROCESS.—Subject to the availability of funds for such purpose, a State that receives an allocation under subsection (a) shall—

(A) award a scholarship to each renewal applicant who meets the requirements described in paragraph (3)(B); and

(B) establish a streamlined process under which renewal applicants can apply for such scholarships with minimal documentation required.

(5) PRIORITY.—In awarding scholarships under this subsection, a State shall—

(A) in accordance with paragraph (4), first award scholarships to renewal applicants described in paragraph (3)(B); and

(B) from any funds remaining after awarding such scholarships, award scholarships to first-time applicants described in paragraph (3)(A).

(6) USE OF FUNDS.—A scholarship received by a student under this subsection may be used by such student only to pay the student's costs of attendance at an institution of higher education.

(7) DURATION.—Each scholarship under this subsection shall be awarded for a period of one aca-

1 demic year. A student may receive a scholarship
2 under this subsection for a total period of not more
3 than 4 academic years.

4 (8) AMOUNT.—The amount of each scholarship
5 under this subsection shall be—

6 (A) \$1,000, for a student who completed
7 at least 100 hours, but less than 138 hours, of
8 volunteer service work in the preceding school
9 year (or another one-year period determined by
10 the Secretary);

11 (B) \$1,500, for a student who completed
12 at least 138 hours, but less than 175 hours, of
13 volunteer service work in the preceding school
14 year (or another one-year period determined by
15 the Secretary);

16 (C) \$2,000, for a student who completed
17 at least 175 hours, but less than 213 hours, of
18 volunteer service work in such period;

19 (D) \$2,500, for a student who completed
20 at least 213 hours, but less than 250 hours, of
21 volunteer service work in such period; and

22 (E) \$3,000, for a student who completed
23 at least 250 hours of volunteer service work in
24 such period.

1 (c) FEDERAL SUPPLEMENTAL SCHOLARSHIP PRO-
2 GRAM.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—From amounts reserved
4 under subsection (a)(2), the Secretary may carry out
5 a program under which the Secretary awards supple-
6 mentary funds, on a competitive basis, directly to el-
7 igible students for volunteer service work.

8 (2) AMOUNT.—The amount of supplementary
9 funds awarded to each student under paragraph (1)
10 shall be determined by the Secretary.

11 (3) PRIORITY.—In awarding scholarships under
12 this subsection, the Secretary shall prioritize the
13 award of funds to students who have not received a
14 scholarship under subsection (b).

15 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
16 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
17 \$100,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2030.

18 **SEC. 4. RECOGNITION OF ACHIEVEMENT IN COMMUNITY**
19 **SERVICE.**

20 The Secretary shall carry out a program to recognize
21 elementary schools, secondary schools, local educational
22 agencies, and institutions of higher education based on
23 their overall volunteer achievement and contributions to
24 community service.

1 **SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) ESEA DEFINITIONS.—The terms “elemen-
4 tary school”, “local educational agency”, “regular
5 high school diploma”, “secondary school”, “Sec-
6 retary”, and “State” have the meanings given those
7 terms in section 8101 of the Elementary and Sec-
8 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

9 (2) COST OF ATTENDANCE.—The term “cost of
10 attendance” has the meaning given that term in sec-
11 tion 472 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
12 U.S.C. 1087ll).

13 (3) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
14 ty” means a State or a unit of local government.

15 (4) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
16 term “institution of higher education” has the
17 meaning given that term in section 101 of the High-
18 er Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

19 (5) UNIT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—The term
20 “unit of local government” means—

21 (A) a county, municipality, town, township,
22 village, parish, borough, or other unit of general
23 government below the State level; or

24 (B) a governing body of an Indian Tribe or
25 Tribal organization.

1 (6) VOLUNTEER SERVICE WORK.—The term
2 “volunteer service work”—

3 (A) means unpaid acts of volunteer service
4 conducted for or on behalf of a government or
5 other nonprofit organization, which may include
6 a community-based organization, faith-based or-
7 ganization, school, national service program,
8 civic or fraternal service organization, local gov-
9 ernment agency, or other such organization;
10 and

11 (B) does not include acts of proselytizing,
12 conducting worship services, religious instruc-
13 tion, political lobbying, court ordered service, or
14 service conducted primarily for the benefit of
15 the family of a student eligible for a scholarship
16 under section 3.

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