To authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to carry out a rent stabilization demonstration to provide short-term financial assistance to extremely low-income families at risk of eviction, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Clay introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on ________

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to carry out a rent stabilization demonstration to provide short-term financial assistance to extremely low-income families at risk of eviction, 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 “Stable Families Act
5 of 2020”.
SEC. 2. EVICTION CRISIS ASSISTANCE DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (in this section referred to as the “Secretary”) shall establish a competitive grant demonstration program under which the Secretary shall award grants to State, local, and tribal governments to establish eviction crisis assistance programs to prevent extremely low-income households from experiencing housing instability by providing short-term financial assistance and housing stabilization services.

(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—Grants under this section may be made only to State, local, and tribal governments. A grantee may designate one or more other entities to carry out a eviction crisis assistance program in accordance with this section.

(e) SELECTION FOR GRANTS.—

(1) COMPETITION.—The Secretary shall award grants under the demonstration program under this section pursuant to a competition among applicants for such grants. In developing the criteria for the program and competition, the Secretary shall consult with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the Executive Director of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness.
(2) EVICTION PREVENTION PLAN.—The Secretary shall establish a process and requirements for eligible entities under subsection (b) to apply for grants under the demonstration program under this section, which shall require each applicant to submit an Eviction Prevention Plan for carrying out an eviction crisis assistance program, which shall—

(A) identify the agencies or other entities that will administer the Plan;

(B) specify the criteria that the administering agency or entity will use to determine household eligibility for assistance under the Plan consistent with the requirements under subsection (e)(1);

(C) specify the types of financial assistance and housing stability-related services that the agency will provide to eligible households, consistent with the requirements under subsections (d)(1)(A) and (d)(1)(B), respectively; and

(D) identify any other agencies, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, businesses, or other entities that may provide supplemental aid or services to eligible households under the Plan, and describe the
commitments for such aid or services that each such partnering entity has made.

(3) SELECTION CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall select applicants to participate in the demonstration program under this section based on the following factors:

(A) The incidence of housing instability within the community that the applicant’s Plan will serve.

(B) The applicant’s capacity and interest in providing innovative delivery of housing stability interventions and to connect households to other public benefits that promote housing stability.

(C) The applicant’s prior performance in providing similar forms of assistance.

(D) A demonstration of the applicant’s ability to collaborate with other entities that provide resources to help households eligible for assistance under the Eviction Prevention Plan.

(E) The quality of the applicant’s Eviction Prevention Plan.

(F) The extent of the applicant’s interest in and willingness to track short- and longer-term outcomes of participating households and
to conduct a rigorous evaluation of the applicant’s Plan’s effectiveness, including the extent of the applicant’s willingness to use a randomized process to select among eligible households to receive assistance under the Plan.

(G) The estimated impact of the applicant’s Plan, if such a Plan is carried out, on housing instability in the community.

(H) The extent to which the applicant will supplement amounts from a grant under the demonstration program with matching funds from non-Federal sources of not less than 25 percent of the grant amount from non-Federal sources.

(I) The extent to which the applicant plans on monitoring and overseeing use of funds to deter waste, fraud, and abuse of funding.

(J) Such other factors as the Secretary may require.

(4) GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY.—In selecting applicants for grants under the demonstration program the Secretary shall ensure geographic diversity among applicants selected.

(5) UPDATING.—The Secretary shall establish a process that incorporates findings from evaluations
under subsection (g) of grantee eviction crisis assistance programs into the design of, and selection criteria for, subsequent competitions for grants under the demonstration program under this section.

(d) USE OF FUNDS.—

(1) ELIGIBLE USES.—Funds from a grant under the demonstration program under this section shall be used only to assist eligible households to overcome a short-term crisis impacting housing stability, as follows:

(A) DIRECT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—Not less than 75 percent of amounts received by a recipient of a grant under this section shall be used to provide financial assistance to eligible households, including payment of rent, utilities, and other expenses that must be paid for a household to remain stably housed.

(B) HOUSING STABILITY-RELATED SERVICES.—Not more than 25 percent of amounts received by a recipient of a grant under this section shall be used to provide housing stability-related services for eligible households, including—

(i) case management services and providing community resources to negotiate
and resolve non-financial, non-legal issues
to keep individuals and families housed,
and rehousing services;

(ii) services to connect households to
other public support, including long-term
housing assistance;

(iii) legal assistance or legal services;
and

(iv) referrals to other services for be-
havioral, emotional, and mental health
issues, domestic violence, child welfare
issues, employment, substance abuse treat-
ment, or other services.

(2) LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—
Grant amounts may not be used by a grant recipient
to cover administrative costs that are not incurred in
carrying out subparagraph (A) or (B) of paragraph
(1).

(e) HOUSEHOLD ELIGIBILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive as-

service under an eviction crisis assistance program
established by a recipient of a grant under this sec-
tion, a household shall meet the following criteria:

(A) INCOME ELIGIBILITY.—The household
shall be extremely low-income, having an in-
come at or below the Federal poverty limit or
30 percent of the median income for the area,
whichever is higher.

(B) SHORT-TERM CRISIS.—The household
shall demonstrate that it is experiencing a
short-term crisis impacting housing stability,
which may include—

(i) being subject to a past due utility
or rent notice, eviction notice, or other evi-
dence that the household is at risk of hous-
ing instability or homelessness;

(ii) a temporary decline in household
income;

(iii) a family or health crisis;

(iv) unexpected expenses;

(v) unsafe or unhealthy living condi-
tions; or

(vi) such other events as the Secretary
may determine.

(2) FEDERALLY-ASSISTED HOUSEHOLDS.—A
household residing in housing assisted under a pro-
gram of the Department of Housing and Urban De-
velopment or pursuant to assistance under such a
program, and who meets the criteria under para-
graph (1), shall be eligible for assistance and serv-
ices provided by an eviction crisis assistance program funded with a grant under this section, except that financial assistance the household receives pursuant to subsection (d)(1)(A) may not be used to pay for rent or utilities.

(f) LIMITATION.—An eligible household may not receive assistance pursuant to subsection (d)(1)(A) more than once during any calendar year.

(g) OVERSIGHT AND EVALUATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—All grantees under the demonstration program under this section shall be evaluated through rigorous research as determined by the Secretary and shall provide such information regarding activities under the demonstration as may requested by the Secretary to support such oversight and evaluation. Research and evaluation shall be coordinated under the direction of the Secretary.

(2) TOPICS.—Evaluation topics shall include the accessibility to at-risk households of assistance, the short- and longer-term effectiveness of grantees’ eviction crisis assistance programs’ intervention models in preventing housing instability, including for households of different types, for households experiencing different short-term crises, and for households in different housing markets, cost effectiveness...
of such assistance programs, the program’s short-
and longer-term impact on households involved with
the criminal justice system, and other topics as de-
termined by the Secretary.

(3) **Public Availability of Findings.**—The
Secretary shall make all findings pursuant to evalua-
tion under this subsection publicly available through
the website of the Department and by other means,
and shall so disseminate interim findings relating to
the demonstration program under this section as
they become available.

(4) **Final Report.**—Not later than the expira-
tion of the 5-year beginning upon the implementa-
tion of the demonstration program under this sec-
tion, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on
Financial Services of the House of Representatives
and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and
Urban Affairs of the Senate, and publish in the Fed-
eral Register, a report evaluating the effectiveness of
the eviction crisis assistance programs assisted
under the demonstration program. Such report shall
include identification of any necessary statutory
changes and other actions to expand the demonstra-
tion program’s evidence-based practices to the scale
necessary to address housing instability.
(h) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary may implement the demonstration program under this section, including its terms, procedures, requirements, and conditions, by notice.

(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated $100,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2020 through 2024 to carry out the demonstration program under this section, which amounts shall remain available until expended.

(2) EVALUATION.—Not more than 5 percent of amounts received by a recipient of a grant under this section may be used for carrying out evaluations and other activities under subsection (g).