

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**S.** \_\_\_\_\_

To provide for assistance to rural water, wastewater, and waste disposal systems affected by the COVID–19 pandemic, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

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Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. TILLIS) introduced the following bill;  
which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

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**A BILL**

To provide for assistance to rural water, wastewater, and waste disposal systems affected by the COVID–19 pandemic, 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 “Emergency Assistance  
5 for Rural Water Systems Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR RURAL WATER SYS-**  
7 **TEMS.**

8 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1           (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-  
2           ty” means a rural water, wastewater, or waste dis-  
3           posal facility with respect to which assistance may  
4           be provided under a water, wastewater, or waste dis-  
5           posal program under section 306(a), 306A, 306C, or  
6           306D of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Develop-  
7           ment Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a), 1926a, 1926c, 1926d).

8           (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
9           the Secretary of Agriculture.

10          (b) EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary  
11          may—

12               (1) provide a grant, a zero percent interest  
13               loan, or a 1 percent interest loan to, forgive prin-  
14               cipal or interest or modify any term or condition of  
15               an outstanding loan made to, or refinance part or all  
16               of any other loan (if the purpose of the loan is an  
17               eligible purpose under section 306(a)(1) or 306C of  
18               the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act  
19               (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(1), 1926c)) made to, an eligible  
20               entity; or

21               (2) reduce or eliminate any fee that is or would  
22               otherwise be required to be paid under section  
23               306(a)(1) of that Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(1)) with re-  
24               spect to a loan guarantee provided to an eligible en-  
25               tity, on the condition that the eligible entity receives

1 the benefit resulting from the reduction or elimi-  
2 nation of the fee.

3 (c) LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may pro-  
4 vide assistance to an eligible entity under subsection (b)  
5 as the Secretary determines is necessary—

6 (1) to ensure that the eligible entity has the  
7 necessary resources to maintain public health, safe-  
8 ty, or order;

9 (2) to address financial hardships of the eligible  
10 entity due to the COVID–19 public health emer-  
11 gency; or

12 (3) to promote the financial stability of the eli-  
13 gible entity.

14 (d) USE OF ASSISTANCE.—An eligible entity to which  
15 assistance is provided under subsection (b) may use the  
16 assistance—

17 (1) for any purpose for which the eligible entity  
18 is eligible for assistance under the relevant provision  
19 of law referred to in subsection (a)(1); or

20 (2) for any direct operational expenses of in-  
21 curred by the eligible entity, as determined by the  
22 Secretary.

23 (e) APPROPRIATION.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Out of any amounts in the  
25 Treasury not otherwise appropriated, there is appro-

1        priated to the Secretary \$1,000,000,000 to carry out  
2        this section.

3           (2) RESERVATION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EX-  
4        PENSES.—The Secretary shall reserve 3 percent of  
5        the amount appropriated by paragraph (1) for ad-  
6        ministrative expenses incurred by the Secretary in  
7        carrying out this section.

8           (3) AVAILABILITY.—The amount appropriated  
9        by paragraph (1) shall remain available through De-  
10       cember 31, 2022.