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(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To establish a competitive grant program for reducing the student absence rate of certain local educational agencies, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. GALLEGO introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To establish a competitive grant program for reducing the student absence rate of certain local educational agencies, 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 “Keeping our Students
5 in School Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. GRANT PROGRAM TO REDUCE CHRONIC STUDENT**
2 **ABSENCE.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than October 1 of the
4 first fiscal year after the date of enactment of this Act,
5 the Secretary of Education shall establish a program to
6 award grants, on a competitive basis, to eligible local edu-
7 cational agencies for reducing the chronic absence rate of
8 such eligible local educational agencies by carrying out any
9 of the activities described in subsection (d).

10 (b) APPLICATIONS.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible for a grant
12 under this section, an eligible local educational agen-
13 cy shall submit to the Secretary an application in
14 such form, at such time, and containing such infor-
15 mation as the Secretary determines appropriate, in-
16 cluding the contents described in paragraph (2).

17 (2) CONTENTS.—An application for a grant
18 under this section shall contain the following:

19 (A) The chronic absence rate of the eligible
20 local educational agency.

21 (B) A description of any programs and re-
22 sources to reduce the chronic absence rate of
23 the eligible local educational agency that are in
24 place at the time such application is submitted.

25 (C) A plan for how grant funds awarded
26 under this section to the eligible local edu-

1 cational agency would be used to reduce the
2 chronic absence rate of the eligible local edu-
3 cational agency.

4 (D) The estimated cost of implementing
5 the plan described in subparagraph (C).

6 (E) At least one letter of support explain-
7 ing why grant funds should be awarded under
8 this section to the eligible local educational
9 agency written by—

10 (i) a local government official that
11 serves a geographic area that is served by
12 the eligible local educational agency, in-
13 cluding a mayor or chief executive officer
14 of a unit of local government; or

15 (ii) the head of the eligible local edu-
16 cational agency.

17 (c) DURATION; RENEWAL.—A grant awarded under
18 this section shall be for a period of 1 year. The Secretary
19 may renew a grant awarded under this section to an eligi-
20 ble local educational agency for 1 or more additional 1-
21 year grant periods.

22 (d) USE OF GRANT FUNDS.—An eligible local edu-
23 cational agency that receives a grant under this section
24 shall use the grant funds for 1 or more of the following
25 activities:

1 (1) Providing transportation services for stu-
2 dents traveling to and from schools served by the eli-
3 gible local educational agency.

4 (2) Performing visits at places of residence of
5 a student who was absent for at least 10 percent of
6 the school days in the most recent school year for
7 the purpose of evaluating—

8 (A) the wellbeing of the student; and

9 (B) whether the number of school days
10 missed by the student has resulted in any learn-
11 ing loss by the student, including identifying
12 any risk factors present in the lifestyle of the
13 student that may contribute to learning loss.

14 (3) Establishing student mentorship programs.

15 (4) Establishing partnerships with State agen-
16 cies to reduce the chronic absence rate of the eligible
17 local educational agency that received the grant.

18 (5) Acquiring software or other data tools de-
19 signed to monitor student absence.

20 (6) Recruiting and retaining specialized instruc-
21 tional support personnel.

22 (7) Any other activities related to student ab-
23 sence that the Secretary determines appropriate.

24 (e) REPORTING.—Not later than 1 year after the
25 date that an eligible local educational agency receives a

1 grant under this section, the eligible local educational
2 agency shall provide a report to the Secretary that con-
3 tains any information reasonably required by the Sec-
4 retary, which includes a description of how grant funds
5 awarded under this section to the eligible local educational
6 agency were used to reduce the chronic absence rate of
7 the eligible local educational agency.

8 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

9 (1) CHRONIC ABSENCE RATE.—The term
10 “chronic absence rate”, used with respect to a local
11 educational agency, means the quotient resulting
12 from dividing—

13 (A) the total number of students served by
14 such local educational agency who were absent
15 for at least 10 percent of the school days in the
16 school year for which the most recent data is
17 available from the Consolidated State Perform-
18 ance Report administered by the Office of Ele-
19 mentary and Secondary Education of the De-
20 partment of Education, by

21 (B) the total number of students served by
22 such local educational agency in such school
23 year.

24 (2) ELIGIBLE LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—

25 The term “eligible local educational agency” means

1 a local educational agency that has a chronic ab-
2 sence rate of 0.2 or more.

3 (3) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY; SPECIAL-
4 IZED INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL.—The
5 terms “local educational agency” and “specialized
6 instructional support personnel” have the meanings
7 given the terms in section 8101 of the Elementary
8 and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
9 7801).