

117TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 3583

To amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to provide grants for outdoor recreation projects to spur economic development, with a focus on rural communities, and to provide training for rural communities on funding opportunities for outdoor recreation, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 3, 2022

Mr. BENNET (for himself and Mr. SCHUMER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

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## A BILL

To amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to provide grants for outdoor recreation projects to spur economic development, with a focus on rural communities, and to provide training for rural communities on funding opportunities for outdoor recreation, 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 “Rural Outdoor Invest-  
5 ment Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. OUTDOOR RECREATION GRANTS.**

2 Title II of the Public Works and Economic Develop-  
3 ment Act of 1965 is amended by inserting after section  
4 207 (42 U.S.C. 3147) the following:

5 **“SEC. 208. OUTDOOR RECREATION GRANTS.**

6 “(a) DEFINITION OF OUTDOOR RECREATION.—In  
7 this section, the term ‘outdoor recreation’ means all rec-  
8 reational activities undertaken for pleasure that—

9 “(1) generally involve some level of intentional  
10 physical exertion; and

11 “(2) occur in nature-based environments out-  
12 doors.

13 “(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall make  
14 grants to eligible recipients for outdoor recreation projects  
15 to spur economic development, with a focus on rural com-  
16 munities.

17 “(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
18 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary for  
19 each of fiscal years 2022 through 2026—

20 “(1) \$30,000,000 for grants under section 201  
21 for outdoor recreation projects to spur economic de-  
22 velopment, with a focus on rural communities;

23 “(2) \$5,000,000 for grants under section 203  
24 for outdoor recreation projects to spur economic de-  
25 velopment, with a focus on rural communities; and

1           “(3) \$2,500,000 for grants under section 207  
2           for outdoor recreation projects to spur economic de-  
3           velopment, with a focus on rural communities.”.

4 **SEC. 3. TRAINING FOR RURAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**  
5 **FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION.**

6           Beginning not later than 180 days after the date of  
7 enactment of this Act, the Assistant Secretary of Com-  
8 merce for Economic Development, in consultation with the  
9 Administrator of the Small Business Administration and  
10 the Secretary of Agriculture, shall develop a partnership  
11 agreement—

12           (1) to provide for the development of—

13           (A) basic training, including in-person or  
14 modular training sessions, for small business  
15 concerns (as defined in section 3 of the Small  
16 Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632)) and rural com-  
17 munities relating to existing funding opportuni-  
18 ties for outdoor recreation, including funding  
19 opportunities for—

20                   (i) business development;

21                   (ii) community planning;

22                   (iii) infrastructure investment;

23                   (iv) community capacity building; and

24                   (v) marketing and communications;

1 (B) informational materials relating to ex-  
2 isting funding opportunities described in sub-  
3 paragraph (A); and

4 (C) opportunities to coordinate among  
5 Federal departments and agencies to share the  
6 basic training and informational materials de-  
7 veloped under subparagraphs (A) and (B) with  
8 those departments and agencies and relevant  
9 nongovernmental organizations;

10 (2) to provide the basic training and informa-  
11 tional materials developed under paragraph (1)—

12 (A) through electronic formats, including  
13 internet-based webinars; and

14 (B) at physical locations, including offices  
15 of the rural development mission area; and

16 (3) to make the basic training and informa-  
17 tional materials developed under paragraph (1)  
18 available to rural business development entities that  
19 partner with programs of the rural development mis-  
20 sion area, including institutions of higher education,  
21 nonprofit organizations, business incubators, and  
22 business accelerators.

23 **SEC. 4. RECREATION ECONOMY FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES.**

24 (a) DEFINITION OF PROGRAM.—In this section, the  
25 term “program” means the Recreation Economy for Rural

1 Communities planning assistance program sponsored by  
2 the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Under  
3 Secretary for Rural Development, the Administrator of  
4 the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Secretary  
5 of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest  
6 Service.

7 (b) PARTNERSHIPS.—To build on the program, the  
8 Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Under Sec-  
9 retary for Rural Development, in partnership with the Ad-  
10 ministrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and  
11 the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of  
12 the Forest Service, shall develop partnerships to connect  
13 the program to—

14 (1) the Economic Development Administration  
15 and the Small Business Administration; and

16 (2) the basic training and informational mate-  
17 rials described in section 3.

18 (c) GRANTS.—The Secretary of Agriculture, acting  
19 through the Under Secretary for Rural Development, in  
20 partnership with the Administrator of the Environmental  
21 Protection Agency and the Secretary of Agriculture, act-  
22 ing through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall carry  
23 out a competitive grant program to assist entities other-  
24 wise eligible to receive assistance under the program in  
25 carrying out an action plan developed under the program.

1 (d) CONSULTATION.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—On request of a regional  
3 commission described in paragraph (2), the entities  
4 carrying out the program shall consult with the re-  
5 questing regional commission in carrying out the  
6 program.

7 (2) REGIONAL COMMISSIONS DESCRIBED.—A  
8 regional commission referred to in paragraph (1) is  
9 any of the following:

10 (A) The Appalachian Regional Commission  
11 established by section 14301(a) of title 40,  
12 United States Code.

13 (B) The Delta Regional Authority estab-  
14 lished under subtitle F of the Consolidated  
15 Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C.  
16 2009aa et seq.).

17 (C) The Denali Commission established  
18 under the Denali Commission Act of 1998 (42  
19 U.S.C. 3121 note; title III of division C of Pub-  
20 lic Law 105–277).

21 (D) The Northern Border Regional Com-  
22 mission established by section 15301(a)(3) of  
23 title 40, United States Code.

24 (E) The Northern Great Plains Regional  
25 Authority established under subtitle G of the

1 Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act  
2 (7 U.S.C. 2009bb et seq.).

3 (F) The Southeast Crescent Regional  
4 Commission established by section 15301(a)(1)  
5 of title 40, United States Code.

6 (G) The Southwest Border Regional Com-  
7 mission established by section 15301(a)(2) of  
8 title 40, United States Code.

9 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be  
11 appropriated to carry out the program \$12,500,000  
12 for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2026.

13 (2) GRANTS.—Beginning with fiscal year 2023,  
14 of the funds made available under paragraph (1) for  
15 each fiscal year, not less than 50 percent shall be  
16 used to carry out the grant program under sub-  
17 section (c).

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