

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3700

To provide Peace Corps Volunteers and Trainees whose service was terminated as a result of the COVID–19 pandemic with health insurance, an expedited redeployment process, and domestic service opportunities, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 12, 2020

Mr. MURPHY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To provide Peace Corps Volunteers and Trainees whose service was terminated as a result of the COVID–19 pandemic with health insurance, an expedited redeployment process, and domestic service opportunities, 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 “Utilizing and Sup-
5 porting Evacuated Peace Corps Volunteers Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. CLARIFICATION OF INCLUSION OF PEACE CORPS**
2 **VOLUNTEERS IN FEDERAL PANDEMIC UNEM-**
3 **PLOYMENT COMPENSATION PROGRAM.**

4 (a) **DEFINED TERM.**—In this section, the term “ap-
5 plicable individual” means an individual—

6 (1) who was serving as a Peace Corp Volunteer
7 or Trainee before the date of the enactment of this
8 Act;

9 (2) whose period of service was subject to early
10 termination as a result of the COVID–19 pandemic;
11 and

12 (3) who is unemployed and not eligible for reg-
13 ular unemployment compensation or extended unem-
14 ployment benefits under Federal or State law, in-
15 cluding an individual who has exhausted all rights to
16 regular unemployment or extended benefits under
17 Federal or State law.

18 (b) **INCLUSION OF APPLICABLE INDIVIDUALS.**—Not-
19 withstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of
20 Labor shall deem applicable individuals as covered individ-
21 uals for purposes of section 2102 of the Relief for Workers
22 Affected by Coronavirus Act (subtitle A of title II of divi-
23 sion A of Public Law 116–136).

1 **SEC. 3. HEALTH INSURANCE CONTINUATION FOR PEACE**
2 **CORPS VOLUNTEERS.**

3 Section 5(e) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C.
4 2504(e)) is amended—

5 (1) by striking “Volunteers shall receive such
6 health care” and inserting “(1) Volunteers shall re-
7 ceive such health care”; and

8 (2) by adding at the end the following:

9 “(2) Volunteers whose periods of service were subject
10 to early termination as a result of the COVID–19 public
11 health emergency declared under section 319 of the Public
12 Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d), and applicants for
13 enrollment described in section 8(a) whose training prior
14 to enrollment was subject to early termination as a result
15 of such public health emergency, shall receive—

16 “(A) 2 months of health insurance upon their
17 return to the United States; and

18 “(B) an opportunity to extend such health in-
19 surance, at the expense of such volunteer or appli-
20 cant for enrollment, until the last day of the last
21 week for which such volunteer or applicant for en-
22 rollment is eligible for payments under section 2102
23 of the Relief for Workers Affected by Coronavirus
24 Act (subtitle A of title II of division A of Public Law
25 116–136).

1 “(3) Not later than 30 days prior to the date on
2 which the period of service of a volunteer shall terminate,
3 the Director of the Peace Corps, in consultation with the
4 Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall provide
5 general guidance to such volunteer on options for health
6 care after termination other than health care provided by
7 the Peace Corps, including information regarding—

8 “(A) the application process and eligibility re-
9 quirements for medical assistance through State
10 plans under title XIX of the Social Security Act (or
11 waiver of State plans);

12 “(B) the qualified health plans (as defined in
13 section 1301(a) of the Patient Protection and Af-
14 fordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 18021(a))) offered
15 through an Exchange established under title I of
16 such Act, including the enrollment periods for enroll-
17 ing in such plans; and

18 “(C) if such volunteer is 25 years of age or
19 younger, the eligibility of such volunteer to enroll as
20 a dependent child in a group health plan or health
21 insurance coverage in which the parent of such vol-
22 unteer is enrolled if such plan or coverage offers
23 such dependent coverage.”.

1 **SEC. 4. EXPEDITED HIRING FOR PEACE CORPS VOLUN-**
2 **TEERS.**

3 (a) NONCOMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY HIRING STA-
4 TUS.—

5 (1) DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION.—Not
6 later than 30 days after the date of enactment of
7 this Act, and annually thereafter, the Director of the
8 Office of Personnel Management, in coordination
9 with the Director of the Peace Corps, shall prepare
10 and distribute information to each Federal depart-
11 ment and agency in the executive branch regarding
12 the noncompetitive appointment eligibility available
13 to Peace Corps volunteers for up to 3 years under
14 Executive Order 11103 (22 U.S.C. 2504 note; relat-
15 ing to Providing for the Appointment of Former
16 Peace Corps Volunteers to the Civilian Career Serv-
17 ices), as amended by Executive Order 12107 (44
18 Fed. Reg. 1055; relating to the Civil Service Com-
19 mission and Labor-Management in the Federal Serv-
20 ice), including the qualifications for such eligibility.

21 (2) EXPEDITED PROCESS.—Each Federal de-
22 partment and agency in the executive branch facing
23 critical hiring needs as a result of the COVID–19
24 pandemic or that have unfilled noncompetitive posi-
25 tions shall establish a process by which staff with
26 hiring authority receive the information described in

1 paragraph (1) from the Office of Personnel Manage-
2 ment about the expedited process for hiring such in-
3 dividuals who meet the minimum qualifications of a
4 vacant position.

5 (b) CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY
6 SERVICE.—The Chief Executive Officer of the Corpora-
7 tion for National and Community Service, in coordination
8 with the Director of the Peace Corps, shall establish an
9 expedited process by which Volunteers and Trainees evac-
10 uated due to the COVID–19 public health emergency can
11 participate in domestic service opportunities.

12 **SEC. 5. RESUMPTION OF PEACE CORPS OPERATIONS.**

13 (a) DEFINED TERM.—In this section, the term “re-
14 enroll” means the resumption of Peace Corps service, for
15 a period determined by the Director of the Peace Corps,
16 of Volunteers and Trainees evacuated due to the COVID–
17 19 public health emergency.

18 (b) RESUMPTION REQUIRED.—As soon as practicable
19 after the Director of the Peace Corps determines, as a
20 result of the cessation of the COVID–19 pandemic, that
21 it is safe to resume Peace Corps global operations, the
22 Director shall seek to resume, to the fullest extent pos-
23 sible, all of the Peace Corps programs in every country
24 in which the Peace Corps operated immediately before the

1 March 15, 2020, suspension of all Peace Corps volunteer
2 activities.

3 (c) REPORT ON RESUMPTION OF PEACE CORPS OP-
4 ERATIONS FOLLOWING END OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMER-
5 GENCY.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the en-
6 actment of this Act, the Director of the Peace Corps shall
7 submit a report to the Committee on Foreign Relations
8 of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
9 the House of Representatives that describes the efforts of
10 the Peace Corps—

11 (1) to offer reenrollment to each Peace Corps
12 Volunteer and Trainee whose service ended suddenly
13 on March 15, 2020 (or earlier, in the case of volun-
14 teers who were serving China and Mongolia), due to
15 the COVID–19 public health emergency;

16 (2) to obtain approval from countries, as appro-
17 priate, to return reenrolled Volunteers and Trainees
18 to their previous assignments or countries of service;

19 (3) to provide additional measures necessary for
20 the safety and health of Volunteers and Trainees
21 and to develop contingency plans in the event over-
22 seas operations are disrupted by future COVID–19
23 outbreaks;

24 (4) to develop and maintain a robust volunteer
25 cohort; and

1 (5) to identify the anticipated additional appro-
2 priations or new statutory authorities that would be
3 necessary to achieve the goal of safely redeploying
4 7,300 Peace Corps Volunteers during the 1-year pe-
5 riod beginning on the date on which Peace Corps op-
6 erations resume.

7 (d) EXPEDITED REENROLLMENT PROCESS.—The
8 Director of the Peace Corps shall establish an expedited
9 process for the reenrollment of former Peace Corps Volun-
10 teers and Trainees whose service was interrupted as a re-
11 sult of the COVID–19 outbreak, including—

12 (1) streamlining, to the fullest extent prac-
13 ticable, all application requirements for the reenroll-
14 ment of such Volunteers and Trainees during the 2-
15 year period beginning on March 15, 2020;

16 (2) expediting the medical clearance for such
17 Volunteers and Trainees to facilitate reenrollment;

18 (3) beginning on the date on which such Volun-
19 teer or Trainee reenrolls, providing such Volunteer
20 or Trainee with the compensation, allowances, bene-
21 fits, and other terms and conditions of service to
22 which the volunteer is entitled under the Peace
23 Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.); and

1 (4) subject to the discretion of the Director, af-
2 fording evacuated Volunteers and Trainees, to the
3 fullest extent practicable, the opportunity—

4 (A) to return to their previous country of
5 service; and

6 (B) to resume work in the project area in
7 which they had been serving immediately before
8 their evacuation due to the COVID–19 public
9 health emergency.

10 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

11 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
12 this Act and section 5(e)(2) of the Peace Corps Act, as
13 added by section 3(2), such sums as may be necessary for
14 fiscal years 2020 through 2022.

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