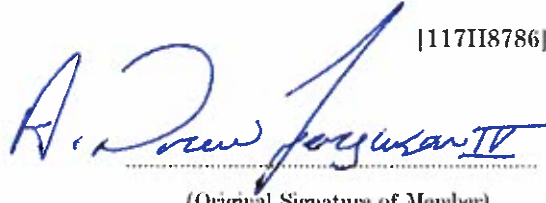


[117II8786]



(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To require the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation to establish a national land bank network, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

A BILL

To require the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation to establish a national land bank network, 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 “National Land Bank
5 Network Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Vacant and abandoned properties desta-
2 bilize rural, suburban, and urban neighborhoods
3 across the United States by creating fire and other
4 public safety hazards, driving down property values,
5 and draining local tax dollars.

6 (2) The cost of repairs to maintain vacant and
7 abandoned properties, as well as the potential un-
8 paid taxes and public liens on vacant and abandoned
9 properties, often exceed the property values of va-
10 cant and abandoned properties, driving away pur-
11 chasers.

12 (3) The lack of an insurable and marketable
13 title frequently prevents vacant and abandoned prop-
14 erties from returning to productive use.

15 (4) Low-income neighborhoods and commu-
16 nities of color disproportionately bear the burden of
17 living near vacant and abandoned properties and the
18 hazards associated with those properties.

19 (5) Existing property disposition practices fre-
20 quently prioritize the ease of disposition and maxi-
21 mizing sale prices instead of the needs of commu-
22 nities and homeowners.

23 (6) Land banks—

1 (A) have been developed to respond to the
2 challenges posed by vacant and abandoned
3 properties; and

4 (B) are primarily focused on the return of
5 vacant, abandoned, and tax delinquent prop-
6 erties to productive use in accordance with lo-
7 cally determined goals and priorities.

8 (7) Land banks, regardless of the location, size
9 of inventory, or duration of existence of a particular
10 land bank, share challenges in accessing best prac-
11 tices, research, technical assistance, and other re-
12 sources.

13 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

14 It is the sense of Congress that a national land bank
15 network would provide the tools necessary to ensure that
16 land banks—

17 (1) use best practices;

18 (2) operate transparently;

19 (3) prioritize positive community outcomes;

20 (4) develop partnerships and programming to
21 drive community redevelopment forward; and

22 (5) access education, expertise, and research to
23 strengthen the critical work of land banks in sup-
24 porting equitable communities.

1 **SEC. 4. NATIONAL LAND BANK NETWORK.**

2 (a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

3 (1) **CORPORATION.**—The term “Corporation”
4 means the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation
5 established under the Neighborhood Reinvestment
6 Corporation Act (42 U.S.C. 8101 et seq.).

7 (2) **ELIGIBLE ENTITY.**—The term “eligible enti-
8 ty” means a national nonprofit organization that has
9 demonstrated and established expertise—

10 (A) in supporting the creation, implemen-
11 tation, and operation of land banks; and

12 (B) relating to the systems, laws, and poli-
13 cies that impact vacant, abandoned, and other
14 problem properties.

15 (3) **LAND BANK.**—The term “land bank”
16 means a government entity, agency, or program, or
17 a special purpose nonprofit entity formed by 1 or
18 more units of government in accordance with a State
19 or local land bank enabling law, that has been des-
20 ignated by 1 or more State or local governments to
21 acquire, steward, and dispose of vacant, abandoned,
22 or other problem properties in accordance with lo-
23 cally determined priorities and goals.

24 (4) **MEMBER LAND BANK.**—The term “member
25 land bank” means a rural, suburban, or urban land

1 bank that is a member of the national land bank
2 network.

3 (5) NATIONAL LAND BANK NETWORK.—The
4 term “national land bank network” means the mem-
5 bership-based national land bank network estab-
6 lished under subsection (b)(1).

7 (b) NATIONAL LAND BANK NETWORK.—Not later
8 than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act,
9 the Corporation shall enter into a contract with an eligible
10 entity to establish and operate—

11 (1) a membership-based national land bank net-
12 work; and

13 (2) the grant programs described in subsection
14 (d).

15 (c) DUTIES.—The duties of the national land bank
16 network shall be to—

17 (1) provide technical assistance to member land
18 banks to support skills training, staffing support,
19 and other operational capacity needs of member land
20 banks;

21 (2) work with rural, suburban, and urban com-
22 munities that are considering whether a land bank
23 would be an appropriate tool to address vacant,
24 abandoned, and other problem properties in those
25 communities;

1 (3) provide the communities described in para-
2 graph (2) with technical assistance in the formation
3 of a land bank;

4 (4) develop partnerships and programming to
5 advance the work of land banks;

6 (5) support engagement between land banks
7 and local communities;

8 (6) provide land banks with access to education,
9 expertise, and research that support the work of
10 land banks, including environmental hazard remedi-
11 ation, land reuse, and rehabilitation of commercial
12 and residential properties;

13 (7) support the participation of land banks in
14 local community planning processes;

15 (8) support the engagement of land banks with
16 residents of neighborhoods in which land banks op-
17 erate;

18 (9) work with rural communities and land
19 banks to ensure that the grant programs established
20 under subsection (d) and education initiatives, exper-
21 tise, and research of the national land bank network
22 address the specific challenges of rural areas;

23 (10) support data collection by land banks to
24 track and evaluate the activities and outcomes of
25 land banks; and

1 (11) support the use of specialized technology
2 by land banks—

3 (A) to enable strategic and targeted prop-
4 erty acquisition and disposition; and

5 (B) to facilitate the data collection de-
6 scribed in paragraph (10) in a standardized
7 manner that enables data to be aggregated and
8 compared.

9 (d) GRANT PROGRAMS.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—The eligible entity with
11 which the Corporation enters into a contract under
12 subsection (b) shall develop and administer grant
13 programs to support—

14 (A) land banks; and

15 (B) communities in the creation of new
16 land banks.

17 (2) AUTHORITY.—The eligible entity described
18 in paragraph (1) may, with respect to the grant pro-
19 grams developed under this subsection—

20 (A) design the grant programs;

21 (B) develop eligibility criteria for the grant
22 programs;

23 (C) disburse grant funds directly to—

24 (i) a land bank; or

1 (ii) a nonprofit organization, a com-
2 munity organization, or 1 or more units of
3 government for the purpose of establishing
4 a land bank; and

5 (D) establish reporting requirements for
6 recipients of the grants.

7 (3) APPLICATIONS.—A land bank or an entity
8 described in subparagraph (C)(ii) desiring a grant
9 from a grant program developed under this sub-
10 section shall submit to the eligible entity described
11 in paragraph (1) an application that includes a plan
12 for resident engagement in the use of any grant
13 funds that has a direct impact on the community.

14 (4) REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the
15 date on which a land bank or an entity described in
16 paragraph (2)(C)(ii) receives a grant from a grant
17 program developed under this section, and annually
18 thereafter until 1 year after the date on which the
19 land bank or entity fully expends the funds from the
20 grant, the land bank or entity shall submit to the
21 national land bank network a report that includes a
22 summary of the steps undertaken to engage neigh-
23 borhood residents relating to activities funded by the
24 grant that have a direct impact on the community.

1 (e) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after
2 the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter,
3 the Corporation shall submit to Congress a report describ-
4 ing, with respect to the preceding fiscal year—

5 (1) the services provided to land banks by the
6 national land bank network; and

7 (2) the outcomes, qualitative impacts, and
8 quantifiable impacts that member land banks have
9 had in the respective communities of those member
10 land banks.

11 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
12 authorized to be appropriated to the Corporation to carry
13 out this section—

14 (1) \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 2024, of which
15 not less than \$7,000,000 shall be used for the grant
16 programs developed under subsection (d); and

17 (2) \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025
18 through 2034.