

1 iTitle: To direct the Secretary of Energy to establish a grant program for tree planting to reduce
2 residential energy consumption.
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5 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in
6 Congress assembled,

7 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

8 This Act may be cited as the “Tackling Residential Energy burdens Efficiently Act of 2020”
9 or the “TREE Act of 2020”.

10 SEC. 2. TREE PLANTING GRANT PROGRAM.

11 (a) Definitions.—In this section:

12 (1) ELIGIBLE COST.—The term “eligible cost” means, with respect to a project—

13 (A) the cost of implementing the project, including—

14 (i) planning and designing the planting activity;

15 (ii) purchasing trees; and

16 (iii) preparing the site and conducting planting, including the labor and cost
17 associated with the use of machinery;

18 (B) the cost of maintaining and monitoring planted trees for a period of up to 3 years
19 to ensure successful establishment of the trees;

20 (C) the cost of training activities associated with the project; and

21 (D) any other relevant cost, as determined by the Secretary.

22 (2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible entity” means—

23 (A) a State agency;

24 (B) a local governmental entity;

25 (C) an Indian Tribe;

26 (D) a nonprofit organization; and

27 (E) a retail power provider.

28 (3) ENERGY BURDEN.—The term “energy burden” means the percentage of household
29 income spent on home energy bills.

30 (4) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe” has the meaning given the term “Indian
31 tribe” in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25
32 U.S.C. 5304).

33 (5) LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY.—The term “local governmental entity” means any
34 municipal government or county government with jurisdiction over local land use decisions.

35 (6) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.—The term “nonprofit organization” means an

1 organization that—

2 (A) is described in section 170(h)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and

3 (B) operates in accordance with 1 or more of the purposes described in section
4 170(h)(4)(A) of that Code.

5 (7) PROGRAM.—The term “Program” means the grant program established under
6 subsection (b)(1).

7 (8) PROJECT.—The term “project” means a tree planting project carried out by an eligible
8 entity using grant funds awarded under the Program.

9 (9) RETAIL POWER PROVIDER.—The term “retail power provider” means any entity
10 authorized under applicable State or Federal law to generate, distribute, or provide retail
11 electricity, natural gas, or fuel oil service.

12 (10) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Energy.

13 (b) Establishment.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in coordination with the Secretary of Agriculture,
15 acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall establish a program under which the
16 Secretary shall award grants to eligible entities to conduct tree planting projects in
17 accordance with this section.

18 (2) TREE PLANTING.—Subject to the availability of appropriations, in carrying out the
19 Program, the Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable, award sufficient grants
20 each year to plant not less than 300,000 trees each year.

21 (c) Applications.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity that seeks to receive a grant under the Program shall
23 submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such form, and containing such
24 information as the Secretary may require, including the information described in paragraph
25 (2).

26 (2) CONTENTS.—An application submitted under paragraph (1) shall include—

27 (A) a description of how the project will reduce residential energy consumption;

28 (B) an estimate of the expected reduction in residential energy consumption;

29 (C) a description of the total eligible costs of the project and sources of funding for
30 the project;

31 (D) a description of the anticipated community and stakeholder engagement in the
32 project;

33 (E) a description of the tree species to be planted and how that species is suitable for
34 the local environmental conditions and climate; and

35 (F) any other relevant information required by the Secretary.

36 (d) Priority.—In awarding grants under the Program, the Secretary shall give priority to
37 projects that—

38 (1) provide the largest potential reduction in residential energy consumption for

- 1 households with a high energy burden;
- 2 (2) are located in a neighborhood with lower tree canopy cover and higher maximum
- 3 daytime summer temperatures;
- 4 (3) are located in a neighborhood with high amounts of senior citizens or children;
- 5 (4) will collaboratively engage neighbors and community members that will be closely
- 6 affected by the tree planting; and
- 7 (5) will employ a substantial percentage of the workforce locally, with a focus on
- 8 engaging unemployed and underemployed persons.

9 (e) Costs.—

10 (1) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Secretary shall award a grant to an eligible entity under the
11 Program in an amount equal to not more than 75 percent of the eligible costs of the project,
12 as determined by the Secretary.

13 (2) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—As a condition of receiving a grant under the Program,
14 an eligible entity shall provide, in cash or through in-kind contributions from non-Federal
15 sources, matching funds in an amount equal to not less than 25 percent of the eligible costs
16 of the project, as determined by the Secretary.

17 (f) Authorization of Appropriations.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out the
18 Program \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2025.