

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 5934

To improve the effectiveness and performance of certain Federal financial assistance programs, and for other purposes.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 12, 2023

Ms. PEREZ (for herself and Ms. FOXX) introduced the following bill

OCTOBER 25, 2023

Referred to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability

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## A BILL

To improve the effectiveness and performance of certain Federal financial assistance programs, 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 “Streamlining Federal  
5 Grants Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

7 The purposes of this Act are to—

1           (1) improve the effectiveness and performance  
2 of Federal grant and cooperative agreement pro-  
3 grams;

4           (2) simplify the application and reporting re-  
5 quirements of Federal grant and cooperative agree-  
6 ment programs;

7           (3) improve the delivery of services to the pub-  
8 lic, particularly services to communities and organi-  
9 zations that historically have not received Federal  
10 grants or cooperative agreements; and

11           (4) facilitate greater coordination among agen-  
12 cies that award Federal grants and non-Federal en-  
13 tities responsible for delivering services to the public.

14 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

15 In this Act:

16           (1) AGENCY.—The term “agency” has the  
17 meaning given the term in section 551 of title 5,  
18 United States Code.

19           (2) AGENCY CO-CHAIR.—The term “agency co-  
20 chair” means the agency designated by the Director  
21 or the Council under section 5(e)(1).

22           (3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-  
23 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-  
24 mittees” means—

1 (A) the Committee on Homeland Security  
2 and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

3 (B) the Committee on Oversight and Ac-  
4 countability of the House of Representatives.

5 (4) CONSULTATION WITH NON-FEDERAL ENTI-  
6 TIES.—The term “consultation with non-Federal en-  
7 tities” means regular and ongoing engagement  
8 with—

9 (A) recipients and potential recipients of  
10 grants or cooperative agreements and entities  
11 that represent those recipients and potential re-  
12 cipients; and

13 (B) particular attention to the recipients  
14 and potential recipients described in subpara-  
15 graph (A) that have not historically received  
16 grants or cooperative agreements.

17 (5) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.—The term “co-  
18 operative agreement” has the meaning given the  
19 term in section 6302 of title 31, United States Code.

20 (6) COUNCIL.—The term “Council” means the  
21 Grants Council established under section 5(a).

22 (7) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means  
23 the Director of the Office of Management and Budg-  
24 et.

1           (8) FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—The  
2 term “Federal financial assistance” has the meaning  
3 given the term in section 7501 of title 31, United  
4 States Code.

5           (9) GRANT.—The term “grant” has the mean-  
6 ing given the term “grant agreement” in section  
7 6302 of title 31, United States Code.

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

12           (11) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—  
13 The term “institution of higher education” has the  
14 meaning given the term in section 101 of the Higher  
15 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

16           (12) LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—The term “local  
17 government” means any unit of government within  
18 a State, including—

- 19                   (A) a county;  
20                   (B) a borough;  
21                   (C) a municipality;  
22                   (D) a city;  
23                   (E) a town;  
24                   (F) a township;  
25                   (G) a parish;

1 (H) a local public authority, including any  
2 public housing agency (as defined in section  
3 3(b) of the United States Housing Act of 1937  
4 (42 U.S.C. 1437(b)));

5 (I) a special district;

6 (J) a school district;

7 (K) an intrastate district;

8 (L) a council of governments, whether or  
9 not incorporated as a nonprofit corporation  
10 under State law; and

11 (M) any other agency or instrumentality of  
12 a multi-State, regional, or intra-State or local  
13 government.

14 (13) NON-FEDERAL ENTITY.—The term “non-  
15 Federal entity” means a State, local government, In-  
16 dian Tribe, institution of higher education, or non-  
17 profit organization.

18 (14) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.—The term  
19 “nonprofit organization”—

20 (A) means any corporation, trust, associa-  
21 tion, cooperative, or other organization that—

22 (i) is operated primarily for scientific,  
23 educational, service, charitable, or similar  
24 purposes in the public interest;

1                   (ii) is not organized primarily for  
2 profit;

3                   (iii) uses net proceeds to maintain,  
4 improve, or expand the operations of the  
5 organization; and

6                   (iv) is not an institution of higher  
7 education; and

8                   (B) includes faith-based and community-  
9 based organizations.

10           (15) SENIOR AGENCY OFFICIAL FOR GRANTS.—

11           The term “senior agency official for grants” means  
12 an agency official designated under section 4(a).

13           (16) STATE.—The term “State” means any  
14 State of the United States, the District of Columbia,  
15 the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin  
16 Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Common-  
17 wealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Trust  
18 Territory of the Pacific Islands, any instrumentality  
19 thereof, and any multi-State, regional, or interstate  
20 entity that has governmental functions.

21 **SEC. 4. SENIOR AGENCY OFFICIALS FOR GRANTS.**

22           (a) SENIOR AGENCY OFFICIAL FOR GRANTS.—Not  
23 later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act,  
24 the head of each agency shall—

1           (1) designate a senior official of the agency to  
2           be responsible for—

3                   (A) agency-wide grant and cooperative  
4                   agreement policy, management, strategic plan-  
5                   ning, and implementation; and

6                   (B) the responsibilities of the agency under  
7                   this Act; and

8           (2) notify the Director of the designation under  
9           paragraph (1).

10          (b) LIST.—The Director shall—

11                   (1) maintain a list of senior agency officials for  
12                   grants; and

13                   (2) not later than 90 days after the date of en-  
14                   actment of this Act, make the list maintained under  
15                   paragraph (1) available to the public on the website  
16                   of the Office of Management and Budget.

17          **SEC. 5. GRANTS COUNCIL.**

18                   (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 80 days after the  
19                   date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall establish  
20                   a council to be known as the Grants Council.

21                   (b) MEMBERSHIP.—The Council shall be composed  
22                   of—

23                           (1) the Controller of the Office of Federal Fi-  
24                           nancial Management of the Office of Management

1 and Budget, who shall act as the Chair of the Coun-  
2 cil;

3 (2) with respect to each agency that distributes  
4 grants or enters into cooperative agreements, the  
5 senior agency official for grants of the agency; and

6 (3) other relevant agency officials, as deter-  
7 mined necessary by the Chair.

8 (c) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.—The Administrator  
9 of General Services shall provide administrative support  
10 for the Council.

11 (d) SOLICITATION OF FEEDBACK.—The Director  
12 shall—

13 (1) consistently and regularly solicit input and  
14 collect feedback and user experience information  
15 with respect to the application, administration, and  
16 reporting of grants and cooperative agreements, in-  
17 cluding from non-Federal entities; and

18 (2) incorporate the information collected under  
19 paragraph (1) into the work of the Council.

20 (e) IMPLEMENTATION ASSISTANCE.—

21 (1) AGENCY CO-CHAIR.—

22 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall des-  
23 ignate an agency with representation on the  
24 Council to serve as the agency co-chair to assist



1 the Director in carrying out the responsibilities  
2 under this section.

3 (B) TERM.—The term of service of the  
4 agency co-chair shall be 2 years.

5 (C) RENEWAL.—At the discretion of the  
6 Council, an agency may serve as the agency co-  
7 chair for not more than 2 consecutive terms.

8 (D) SUCCESSOR.—Upon the expiration of  
9 a term of service of an agency co-chair, the  
10 members of the Council shall designate a suc-  
11 cessor agency co-chair.

12 (2) INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUPS.—The Di-  
13 rector may use interagency working groups to assist  
14 in carrying out the responsibilities under this sec-  
15 tion.

16 (f) INTERAGENCY DUTIES.—The Director, in con-  
17 sultation with the Council, shall direct, coordinate, and as-  
18 sist agencies in—

19 (1) designing and implementing common data  
20 standards under chapter 64 of title 31, United  
21 States Code;

22 (2) creating guidelines for simplified notice of  
23 funding opportunities that improve the user experi-  
24 ence for grants and cooperative agreements;

1           (3) improving interagency and intergovern-  
2           mental coordination of information collection and  
3           data sharing relating to grant and cooperative agree-  
4           ment programs, including for the purpose of per-  
5           formance management and program evaluation;

6           (4) improving the timeliness, completeness, and  
7           quality of information received by agencies from re-  
8           cipients of grants and cooperative agreements;

9           (5) improving the performance of grants and  
10          cooperative agreements;

11          (6) ensuring the consistent application and in-  
12          terpretation of Governmentwide Federal financial as-  
13          sistance policy, oversight, and management;

14          (7) supporting the development of the Federal  
15          financial assistance workforce;

16          (8) establishing policies and guidelines to pro-  
17          hibit conflicts of interest by officials involved in de-  
18          termining grant awards and grant recipients; and

19          (9) identifying and improving other procedures  
20          and policies relating to the application, administra-  
21          tion, and reporting of grants and cooperative agree-  
22          ments, as identified by the Council.

23          (g) REPORT ON IMPROVEMENTS.—Not later than 1  
24          year after the date of enactment of this Act, and every  
25          2 years thereafter until the date that is 15 years after

1 the date of enactment of this Act, the Director, in con-  
2 sultation with the Council, shall submit to the appropriate  
3 congressional committees a report relating to the imple-  
4 mentation of this Act.

5 (h) REPORT ON RECOMMENDED CHANGES IN LAW  
6 AND REGULATIONS.—Not later than 4 years after the  
7 date of enactment of this Act, the Director, in consultation  
8 with the Council, shall submit to the appropriate congres-  
9 sional committees a report containing recommendations  
10 for changes in law and regulations to improve the effec-  
11 tiveness, performance, and coordination of grant and coop-  
12 erative agreement programs.

13 **SEC. 6. AGENCY GRANT IMPROVEMENT PLANS.**

14 (a) AGENCY GUIDANCE.—Not later than 270 days  
15 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director, in  
16 consultation with the Council, shall issue guidance for the  
17 development of agency plans to—

18 (1) streamline and simplify the application, ad-  
19 ministrative, and reporting procedures for each  
20 grant and cooperative agreement program adminis-  
21 tered by the agency;

22 (2) simplify and improve user experience with  
23 respect to notices of funding opportunity, including  
24 by implementing—

25 (A) the use of plain language;

1 (B) the listing of the availability of, and  
2 contact information for, training and assistance  
3 relating to applying for, administering, and re-  
4 porting on grants and cooperative agreements;  
5 and

6 (C) the inclusion of a summary of the  
7 funding opportunity of not more than 500  
8 words;

9 (3) demonstrate active participation by the  
10 agency in the Council;

11 (4) demonstrate appropriate coordination with  
12 the Grants Quality Service Management Office, or  
13 any successor organization, with respect to the adop-  
14 tion by the agency, or plans for adoption by the  
15 agency, of grant management solutions or services  
16 that meet usability and modernization standards es-  
17 tablished by the Director;

18 (5) ensure potential applicants for grant and  
19 cooperative agreement programs have opportunities  
20 to receive training and assistance;

21 (6) improve the abilities of recipients of grants  
22 and cooperative agreements to provide timely, com-  
23 plete, and high-quality information in response to  
24 Federal reporting requirements;

1           (7) ensure that individuals with limited English  
2 proficiency can meaningfully access information re-  
3 lating to grants and cooperative agreements con-  
4 sistent with, and without unduly burdening, the mis-  
5 sion of the agency;

6           (8) improve the abilities of recipients of grants  
7 and cooperative agreements to provide meaningful  
8 access to applicants and beneficiaries of the grants  
9 and cooperative agreements who are individuals with  
10 limited English proficiency; and

11           (9) establish specific annual goals and objec-  
12 tives to further the purposes of this Act and meas-  
13 ure annual performance in achieving those goals and  
14 objectives.

15       (b) REVIEW OF PLANS AND REPORTS.—Upon re-  
16 quest by the Director, the head of each agency shall sub-  
17 mit to the Director information and reporting relating to  
18 the implementation of this Act by the agency.

19       (c) EXEMPTIONS.—

20           (1) IN GENERAL.—The Director may exempt an  
21 agency, a component of an agency, or a particular  
22 grant or cooperative agreement program of an agen-  
23 cy from the requirements of this Act if the Director  
24 determines that the agency does not administer a

1 significant number of grant and cooperative agree-  
2 ment programs.

3 (2) LIST OF EXEMPTED AGENCIES.—The Direc-  
4 tor shall—

5 (A) maintain a list of agencies, components  
6 of agencies, and grant and cooperative agree-  
7 ment programs exempted under paragraph (1);  
8 and

9 (B) make the list maintained under sub-  
10 paragraph (A) available to the public on the  
11 website of the Office of Management and Budg-  
12 et.

13 (d) AGENCY PLANS.—Subject to subsection (e), not  
14 later than the earlier of 1 year after the date on which  
15 the Director issues guidance under subsection (a) and 635  
16 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the head of  
17 each agency shall develop, implement, and submit to the  
18 Director and the appropriate congressional committees a  
19 plan in response to the guidance.

20 (e) EXTENSION.—If the head of an agency is unable  
21 to comply with the deadline established under subsection  
22 (d) to develop and implement a plan, the Director may  
23 extend the period during which the agency may develop  
24 and implement the plan by not more than 1 year.

1 (f) COMMENT AND CONSULTATION ON AGENCY  
2 PLANS.—

3 (1) COMMENT.—

4 (A) IN GENERAL.—The head of each agen-  
5 cy shall publish the plan developed in accord-  
6 ance with the guidance issued under subsection  
7 (a) in the Federal Register.

8 (B) PUBLIC COMMENT.—With respect to a  
9 plan published in the Federal Register by the  
10 head of an agency in accordance with subpara-  
11 graph (A)—

12 (i) the head of the agency shall review  
13 public comments on the plan submitted  
14 through the Federal Register and by other  
15 means; and

16 (ii) to the maximum extent prac-  
17 ticable, the head of the agency shall hold  
18 a public forum on the plan.

19 (2) CONSULTATION.—The senior agency official  
20 for grants of each agency shall participate in con-  
21 sultation with non-Federal entities during the devel-  
22 opment and implementation of the plan developed in  
23 accordance with the guidance issued under sub-  
24 section (a).

25 (g) ANNUAL REPORT.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after  
2           the date of the submission of the plan of an agency  
3           under subsection (d), and annually thereafter, the  
4           senior agency official for grants of the agency or the  
5           head of the agency, as applicable, shall submit to the  
6           Director and the appropriate congressional commit-  
7           tees a report on—

8                       (A) the implementation of the plan; and

9                       (B) the performance of the agency in  
10           meeting the goals and objectives described in  
11           subsection (a)(9).

12           (2) INCLUSION IN OTHER REPORTS.—Effective  
13           on the date on which the head of an agency submits  
14           a plan under subsection (d), the head of the agency  
15           shall update and include the goals and objectives de-  
16           scribed in subsection (a)(9) in each performance  
17           plan of the agency required under section 1115 of  
18           title 31, United States Code.

19 **SEC. 7. GRANTS.GOV.**

20           (a) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date  
21           of enactment of this Act, the Director, in coordination  
22           with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall  
23           submit to the appropriate congressional committees a re-  
24           port that—



1           (1) contains findings from a study on the acces-  
2           sibility and user experience of Grants.gov, or any  
3           successor website; and

4           (2) provides recommendations based on the  
5           findings described in paragraph (1) to improve the  
6           access to the function of Grants.gov, or any suc-  
7           cessor website.

8           (b) IMPROVEMENTS.—Not later than 3 years after  
9           the date of enactment of this Act, the Director, in coordi-  
10          nation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services,  
11          shall implement the recommendations described in sub-  
12          section (a)(2).

13       **SEC. 8. ANALYSIS OF ACCESS TO FEDERAL GRANTS.**

14          Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment  
15          of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States  
16          shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees  
17          a report that—

18               (1) identifies challenges experienced by non-  
19               Federal entities, including by faith-based and com-  
20               munity-based organizations, rural communities, and  
21               small communities, in applying for, accessing, ad-  
22               ministering, and reporting on grants and cooperative  
23               agreements;

1           (2) identifies the reasons that the entities de-  
2           scribed in paragraph (1) elect not to participate in  
3           grants and cooperative agreements;

4           (3) includes options to improve access to grants  
5           and cooperative agreements for the entities described  
6           in paragraph (1);

7           (4) analyzes the extent to which agencies that  
8           award grants collect information on the number and  
9           characteristics, including the geographic distribution,  
10          of applicants for competitive grants and cooperative  
11          agreements; and

12          (5) if the information described in paragraph  
13          (4) is available, analyzes the information.

14 **SEC. 9. EVALUATION.**

15          (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 years after the  
16          date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General  
17          of the United States, in consultation with non-Federal en-  
18          tities, shall submit to the appropriate congressional com-  
19          mittees an evaluation of the effectiveness of this Act.

20          (b) CONTENTS.—The evaluation under subsection (a)  
21          shall—

22                  (1) assess the implementation of this Act and  
23                  the extent to which the implementation meets the  
24                  purposes of this Act;

1           (2) make specific recommendations to further  
2 the implementation of this Act;

3           (3) evaluate the actual performance of each  
4 agency in achieving the goals and objectives stated  
5 in the plan of the agency developed in accordance  
6 with the guidance issued under section 6(a); and

7           (4) assess the level of coordination among the  
8 Director and non-Federal entities in implementing  
9 this Act.

○