

110TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 3385

To establish a task force to examine homelessness in the United States and make recommendations to alleviate the causes and effects of such homelessness.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 3, 2007

Mr. COHEN (for himself, Ms. CARSON, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. KUCINICH, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, and Mr. PAYNE) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services

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## A BILL

To establish a task force to examine homelessness in the United States and make recommendations to alleviate the causes and effects of such homelessness.

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 Homelessness  
5 Task Force Act of 2007”.

1 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT.**

2       There is established a task force in the legislative  
3 branch to be known as the “National Homelessness Task  
4 Force” (in this Act referred to as the “Task Force”).

5 **SEC. 3. DUTIES.**

6       The Task Force, in consultation with relevant heads  
7 of Federal agencies administering Federal programs for  
8 homeless individuals that were in existence on the date  
9 of enactment of this Act, including the Interagency Coun-  
10 cil on Homelessness, shall conduct the following activities:

11           (1) Review and analyze reports published by  
12       Federal, State, and local agencies and academic in-  
13       stitutions that relate to homelessness.

14           (2) Evaluate—

15                   (A) the effectiveness of Federal programs  
16       in existence on the date of enactment of this  
17       Act that address homelessness;

18                   (B) the cost-effectiveness of such pro-  
19       grams; and

20                   (C) the Federal role in interacting and co-  
21       ordinating with State and local entities that ad-  
22       dress homelessness.

23           (3) Analyze options and make recommenda-  
24       tions—

1 (A) to improve Federal programs in exist-  
2 ence on the date of enactment of this Act that  
3 address homelessness;

4 (B) for State and local shelter and transi-  
5 tional housing programs to reduce the period  
6 that people remain homeless;

7 (C) for the establishment of an outreach  
8 program that raises awareness among homeless  
9 individuals about resources available to such in-  
10 dividuals and assists such individuals in access-  
11 ing such resources, which may include local  
12 service and treatment centers, case manage-  
13 ment agencies, and safe haven services that as-  
14 sist homeless individuals with serious mental ill-  
15 nesses; and

16 (D) to expand the supply of permanent af-  
17 fordable housing for chronically homeless indi-  
18 viduals, as well as individuals and families with  
19 incomes below the Federal poverty line.

20 (4) Conduct research and develop methods—

21 (A) through consultation with State and  
22 local agencies, to improve coordination between  
23 the Interagency Council on Homelessness and  
24 Federal agencies in existence at the date of en-  
25 actment of this Act which specifically deal with

1           homelessness, including the Department of  
2           Housing and Urban Development, the Depart-  
3           ment of Health and Human Services, and the  
4           Department of Veterans Affairs;

5           (B) to minimize the period in which indi-  
6           viduals remain homeless; and

7           (C) to establish a system that ensures  
8           homeless individuals have access to employment  
9           and job-training programs, as well as employ-  
10          ment.

11 **SEC. 4. MEMBERSHIP.**

12          (a) **NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.**—The Task Force  
13 shall be composed of up to 10 members (in this Act re-  
14 ferred to as the “TF members”). The Committee on Fi-  
15 nancial Services of the House of Representatives and the  
16 Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of  
17 the Senate may each appoint, in consultation with the Sec-  
18 retary of Housing and Urban Development, up to 5 TF  
19 members. Appointments shall be made within 90 days of  
20 the enactment of this Act.

21          (b) **QUALIFICATIONS.**—In making appointments  
22 under subsection (a), the appointing authorities described  
23 in such subsection may select TF members from rep-  
24 resentatives of Federal and State agencies, commissions,  
25 boards, regional agencies, tribes, colleges and universities,

1 and nongovernmental organizations. Such appointing au-  
2 thorities shall, to the greatest extent possible, appoint in-  
3 dividuals who are particularly qualified to perform the  
4 functions of the Task Force, by reason of either practical  
5 experience or academic expertise in housing or economic  
6 development.

7 (c) COMPENSATION.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—TF members shall serve  
9 without compensation.

10 (2) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Each TF member  
11 shall receive travel expenses, including per diem in  
12 lieu of subsistence, in accordance with applicable  
13 provisions under subchapter 1 of chapter 57 of title  
14 5, United States Code.

15 (d) CHAIRPERSONS.—The Task Force shall have 2  
16 Chairpersons. From among the TF members, the majority  
17 leader of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Rep-  
18 resentatives shall choose 1 Chairperson, and the minority  
19 leaders from the Senate and the House of Representatives  
20 shall choose the other Chairperson.

21 **SEC. 5. STAFF OF THE TASK FORCE AND EXPERTS AND**  
22 **CONSULTANTS.**

23 (a) STAFF.—Subject to the rules prescribed by the  
24 Task Force, the Chairpersons of the Task Force may ap-  
25 point from 3 to 6 individuals as personnel and fix the pay

1 of such personnel as the Chairpersons consider appro-  
2 priate.

3 (b) EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—With the ap-  
4 proval of the Task Force, the Chairpersons may procure  
5 temporary and intermittent services in the manner pre-  
6 scribed in section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code,  
7 but at rates for individuals not to exceed the daily equiva-  
8 lent of the maximum annual rate of basic pay payable for  
9 grade GS–15 of the General Schedule under section 5332  
10 of such title.

11 (c) STAFF OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Upon the re-  
12 quest of the Task Force, the head of any Federal depart-  
13 ment or agency may detail, on a reimbursable basis, any  
14 of the personnel of that department or agency to the Task  
15 Force to assist it in performing its duties under this Act.

16 **SEC. 6. POWERS.**

17 (a) MEMBERS AND AGENTS.—Any member or agent  
18 of the Task Force may, if authorized by the Task Force,  
19 take any action that the Task Force is authorized to take  
20 under this Act.

21 (b) OBTAINING OFFICIAL DATA.—The Task Force  
22 may secure directly from any Federal department or agen-  
23 cy information necessary to enable it to carry out this Act.  
24 Upon the request of the Task Force, the head of that de-

1 partment or agency shall furnish the information to the  
2 Task Force.

3 (c) **MAILS.**—The Task Force may use the United  
4 States mails in the same manner and under the same con-  
5 ditions as Federal departments and agencies.

6 **SEC. 7. REPORTS.**

7 (a) **INITIAL REPORT.**—Not later than 3 months after  
8 the date of completion of the appointment of the TF mem-  
9 bers under section 4(a), the Task Force shall submit to  
10 Congress a report describing how the Task Force will un-  
11 dertake the duties described in section 3.

12 (b) **FINAL REPORT.**—Not later than 12 months after  
13 the date of completion of the appointment of the TF mem-  
14 bers under section 4(a), the Task Force shall submit to  
15 Congress a report that—

16 (1) describes the activities of the Task Force  
17 conducted under section 3; and

18 (2) makes recommendations on—

19 (A) long-term goals for Congress to reduce  
20 homelessness; and

21 (B) strategies for Congress to achieve such  
22 goals.

1 **SEC. 8. TERMINATION.**

2 The Task Force shall terminate 10 days after the  
3 date on which the Task Force submits the final report  
4 under section 7(b).

5 **SEC. 9. DEFINITIONS.**

6 For purposes of this Act:

7 (a) **AFFORDABLE HOUSING.**—The term “affordable  
8 housing” includes properties for which assistance is pro-  
9 vided under section 8 of the United States Housing Act  
10 of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f), and single-room occupancy  
11 units.

12 (b) **CHRONICALLY HOMELESS INDIVIDUAL.**—The  
13 term “chronically homeless individual” means an unac-  
14 companied, disabled individual with a disabling condition  
15 who has been continually homeless for at least the dura-  
16 tion of 1 year or who has been homeless for 4 or more  
17 episodes in the previous 3 years.

18 (c) **DISABLING CONDITION.**—A “disabling condition”  
19 means a diagnosable substance use disorder, serious men-  
20 tal illness, developmental disability, or chronic physical ill-  
21 ness or disability, including the co-occurrence of 2 or more  
22 of such conditions.

23 (d) **HOMELESS; HOMELESS INDIVIDUAL.**—The terms  
24 “homeless” and “homeless individual” have the meaning  
25 given such terms in section 103 of the McKinney-Vento  
26 Act (42 U.S.C. 11302).

1 **SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2       There are authorized to be appropriated \$2,000,000

3 to carry out this Act.

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