

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 643

To reduce child poverty in the United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 9, 2021

Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. BROWN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

A BILL

To reduce child poverty in the United States, 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 “Child Poverty Reduc-
5 tion Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. CHILD POVERTY GOAL AND ACCOUNTABILITY.**

7 Title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601
8 et seq.) is amended by inserting after part B the following:

1 **“PART C—CHILD POVERTY ACCOUNTABILITY**

2 **MEASURE**

3 **“SEC. 441. NATIONAL GOAL TO CUT CHILD POVERTY BY**

4 **HALF.**

5 “(a) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the
6 United States to reduce the number of children living in
7 poverty in the United States by half in 10 years.

8 “(b) SENSE OF THE CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
9 the Congress that an effort to reach the goal described
10 in subsection (a) shall include reducing the number of chil-
11 dren in deep poverty as well as reducing child poverty
12 among racial or ethnic groups with disparate poverty
13 rates.

14 **“SEC. 442. ESTABLISHMENT OF ANNUAL REPORTING.**

15 “(a) ANCHORED SUPPLEMENTAL POVERTY MEAS-
16 URE.—The Secretary shall enter into an agreement with
17 the Bureau of the Census to report an anchored Supple-
18 mental Poverty Measure for individuals who have not at-
19 tained 18 years of age, annually beginning with calendar
20 year 2021. Beginning with the report for calendar year
21 2022, the report shall be based on poverty thresholds
22 which are adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price
23 Index for all-urban consumers (as published by the De-
24 partment of Labor). This subsection shall not be inter-
25 preted to require or authorize the replacement of any

1 other calculation or measure reported by the Bureau of
2 the Census.

3 “(b) TIMING OF RELEASE OF CURRENT POPULATION
4 SURVEY ANNUAL SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SUPPLEMENT
5 MICRODATA.—The Bureau of the Census shall release the
6 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic
7 Supplement microdata for each year as a single file con-
8 taining the anchored Supplemental Poverty Measure and
9 any other poverty rates the Bureau of the Census reports.
10 The file shall be released at the same time as the Bureau
11 of the Census report on Income, Poverty, and Health In-
12 surance Coverage in the United States. That report, or
13 companion reports, should include poverty statistics and
14 thresholds for the anchored Supplemental Poverty Meas-
15 ure and any other measures the Bureau of the Census re-
16 ports.

17 “(c) REPORTING IN RELATION TO THE TERRI-
18 TORIES.—

19 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter
20 into an agreement with the Bureau of the Census to
21 develop data to report an anchored Supplemental
22 Poverty Measure for Puerto Rico, Guam, the United
23 States Virgin Islands, the Northern Mariana Is-
24 lands, and American Samoa, as part of the annual

1 report required by subsection (a), not later than the
 2 close of fiscal year 2023.

3 “(2) REPORT REQUIRED IF COMPLIANCE IS NOT
 4 FEASIBLE.—If the Secretary determines that it will
 5 not be feasible to comply with all or part of para-
 6 graph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the Con-
 7 gress, not later than 6 months after the date of the
 8 enactment of this section, a report that explains
 9 what is not feasible, why it is not feasible, and in-
 10 cludes details on what, if anything, would be needed
 11 to enable such compliance and by what date compli-
 12 ance could be achieved.

13 “(3) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF AP-
 14 PROPRIATIONS.—To carry out this subsection, there
 15 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary
 16 a total of not more than \$2,000,000 for fiscal years
 17 2021 through 2023.

18 “(d) IMPROVING INCOME DATA FOR USE IN ANNUAL
 19 REPORTING.—

20 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter
 21 into an agreement with the Bureau of the Census to
 22 develop income data with corrections for under-re-
 23 porting of income data for calculating an anchored
 24 Supplemental Poverty Measure as part of the annual

1 report required by subsection (a), not later than the
2 close of fiscal year 2023.

3 “(2) REPORT REQUIRED IF COMPLIANCE IS NOT
4 FEASIBLE.—If the Secretary determines that it will
5 not be feasible to comply with all or part of para-
6 graph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the Con-
7 gress, not later than 6 months after the date of the
8 enactment of this section, a report that explains
9 what is not feasible, why it is not feasible, and in-
10 cludes details on what, if anything, would be needed
11 to enable such compliance and by what date compli-
12 ance could be achieved.

13 **“SEC. 443. CHILD POVERTY REPORTS.**

14 “(a) ANNUAL REPORTS ON THE EFFECT OF FED-
15 ERAL POLICIES ON CHILD POVERTY IN THE UNITED
16 STATES.—Within 6 months after the date of the enact-
17 ment of this section, the Secretary shall enter into an
18 agreement with the National Academy of Sciences to sub-
19 mit to the Congress annual reports providing an evidence-
20 based, non-partisan analysis of how Federal policies or
21 programs have contributed to meeting the goal set forth
22 in section 441(a), based on their effect on the anchored
23 Supplemental Poverty Measure for children as reported by
24 the Bureau of the Census pursuant to section 442.

25 “(b) CONTENTS OF REPORTS.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each such report—

2 “(A) shall analyze how, and the extent to
3 which, Federal policies and programs contribute
4 to meeting the goal referred to in subsection (a)
5 of this section;

6 “(B) shall take into account the number of
7 children in deep poverty and child poverty
8 among racial or ethnic groups with disparate
9 poverty rates;

10 “(C) shall attempt to ascertain whether
11 each studied policy or program reduces or in-
12 creases the number of children living in poverty,
13 why the policy or program does so, and the ex-
14 tent to which the policy or program does so;
15 and

16 “(D) shall include, to the extent feasible,
17 projections on how such policies or programs
18 would affect the number of children living in
19 poverty in future years, which shall be made on
20 the basis of previously released Current Popu-
21 lation Survey Annual Social and Economic Sup-
22 plement data, and adjusted periodically as new
23 estimates from the Bureau of the Census be-
24 come available.

1 “(2) DATA CORRECTIONS.—Where feasible,
2 each such report shall correct the underlying Cur-
3 rent Population Survey Annual Social and Economic
4 Supplement data, for under-reporting of income and
5 in-kind benefits and shall include estimates using
6 both uncorrected and corrected income data. Be-
7 cause available information with which to produce
8 corrected income data is currently limited and not
9 timely, each such report shall indicate the year to
10 which the corrected income data pertain and other
11 limitations of the data. As soon as corrected income
12 data from the Census Bureau become available
13 under section 442(d), each such report shall use
14 those data.

15 “(c) FEASIBILITY REVIEW OF STATE AND LOCAL
16 EVIDENCE-BASED POLICIES.—The 1st report under sub-
17 section (a) shall include a review of the feasibility of in-
18 cluding consideration of State and local evidence-based
19 policies or programs in subsequent such reports, and if
20 the review determines that including the consideration is
21 feasible, then each such report shall include an analysis
22 of the additional policies.

23 “(d) TIMING.—Each report for a year under sub-
24 section (a) shall be made after the report of the United
25 States Census Bureau on Income, Poverty, and Health In-

1 surance Coverage in the United States for the year is re-
 2 leased, and—

3 “(1) in the case of the 1st such report, before
 4 the beginning of the 1st calendar year that begins
 5 more than 6 months after the date of the enactment
 6 of this section; or

7 “(2) in the case of each subsequent such report,
 8 before the end of the year.

9 “(e) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPRO-
 10 PRIATIONS.—To carry out this section, there are author-
 11 ized to be appropriated not more than—

12 “(1) \$1,200,000 for fiscal year 2021; and

13 “(2) \$1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2022
 14 through 2030.

15 **“SEC. 444. CHILD POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY CLEAR-**
 16 **INGHOUSE.**

17 “The Secretary shall establish, and annually update,
 18 on a website of the Department of Health and Human
 19 Services, an online collection of resources related to the
 20 national child poverty reduction goal established in section
 21 441 of this Act, including—

22 “(1) the anchored Supplemental Poverty Meas-
 23 ure published under section 442 of this Act;

24 “(2) the reports required by section 443 of this
 25 Act;

1 “(3) the report required by section 3 of the
2 Child Poverty Reduction Act of 2021;

3 “(4) the report required by section 4 of the
4 Child Poverty Reduction Act of 2021; and

5 “(5) links to other relevant Federal reports,
6 analyses, evaluations, and resources related to child
7 poverty as determined by the Secretary.

8 **“SEC. 445. DEFINITIONS.**

9 “In this part:

10 “(1) ANCHORED.—The term ‘anchored’ means
11 fixed at a given point in time, and annually adjusted
12 by a measure reflecting only changes in prices.

13 “(2) POVERTY.—The term ‘poverty’ means,
14 with respect to an individual or family, that the indi-
15 vidual or family has a total annual income that is
16 less than the anchored Supplemental Poverty thresh-
17 old for the individual or family, as provided in the
18 Bureau of the Census report under section 442.

19 “(3) DEEP POVERTY.—The term ‘deep poverty’
20 means, with respect to an individual or family, that
21 the individual or family has a total annual income
22 that is less than 50 percent of the anchored Supple-
23 mental Poverty threshold for the individual or fam-
24 ily, as provided in the Bureau of the Census report
25 under section 442.”.

1 **SEC. 3. UPDATE OF “A ROADMAP TO REDUCE CHILD POV-**
2 **ERTY”.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Within 36 months after the date
4 of the enactment of this section, the Secretary of Health
5 and Human Services shall enter into an agreement with
6 the National Academy of Sciences to revise and update
7 the National Academies report entitled “A Roadmap to
8 Reduce Child Poverty” within 72 months after the date
9 of entry into the agreement.

10 (b) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPRO-
11 PRIATIONS.—To carry out subsection (a), there are au-
12 thorized to be appropriated not more than \$2,200,000.

13 **SEC. 4. REPORT ON REDUCING LONG-TERM, INTERGENERA-**
14 **TIONAL CHILD POVERTY.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—Within 6 months after the date
16 of the enactment of this section, the Secretary of Health
17 and Human Services shall enter into an agreement with
18 the National Academy of Sciences to publish, within 36
19 months after the date of entry into the agreement, a re-
20 port on evidence-based policies to reduce long-term, inter-
21 generational child poverty, which report shall build on the
22 National Academies report entitled “A Roadmap to Re-
23 duce Child Poverty”.

1 (b) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPRO-
2 PRIATIONS.—To carry out subsection (a), there are au-
3 thorized to be appropriated not more than \$2,200,000.

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