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112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5626

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to make grants to facilitate certain acquisitions of property for conservation purposes, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 8, 2012

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

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A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to make grants to facilitate certain acquisitions of property for conservation purposes, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Clean and Beautiful Communities Act of 2012''.

SEC. 2. GRANTS TO FACILITATE CERTAIN ACQUISITIONS OF PROPERTY FOR CONSERVATION PURPOSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program of the National Park Service, may make

grants to facilitate the acquisition by a qualified organization of a qualified real property interest exclusively for conservation purposes, that assist in the funding of transactional and operational costs associated with the purchase and management of preserved land or a qualified real property interest (including easements) including—

(1) stewardship costs, including costs of standards and practices development and implementation;

(2) land purchase transaction costs;

(3) costs of preparing for accreditation associated with land management; and

(4) costs of due diligence, including appraisal, title, survey, environmental hazard assessment, and recording costs.

(b) ELIGIBILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A person shall be eligible for a grant under this section only if the person—

(A) is an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from tax under section 501(a) of such Code; and

(B) is not a State or local government entity.

(2) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a grant under subsection (a), a qualified organization

shall submit to the Secretary of the Interior an application at such time, in such form, and containing such information as the Secretary shall require.

(c) PRIORITY.—In making grants under this section, the Secretary of the Interior shall give priority to eligible persons that—

(1) demonstrate a record of successfully acquiring and competently managing a substantial portfolio of conserved properties and easement holdings;

(2) have established and diverse capital and development programs;

(3) demonstrate a record of working successfully with local and State governmental stakeholders in building support for conservation acquisitions and leveraging funding opportunities; and

(4) currently employ full-time or part-time staff to manage their operations on a nonvoluntary basis or can demonstrate capacity to employ such staff in the near-term.

(d) LIMITATION.—A grant under this section may not be used to pay consideration for the purchase of any interest in real property.

(e) GRANT AMOUNT AND DURATION.—A grant under this section shall be in an amount of not more than $500,000 per year for 5 years.

(f) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary of the Interior may not make a grant under subsection (a) in an amount that exceeds 50 percent of the costs such grant is made to assist.

(g) NO LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF GRANTS.—Receipt by a qualified organization of a grant under subsection (a) shall not preclude the Secretary of the Interior from making subsequent grants under subsection (a) to such organization.

(h) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to provide technical assistance to qualified organizations with respect to acquisitions of qualified real property interests exclusively for conservation purposes.

(i) REPORT.—Not later than 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall submit to Congress a report that summarizes the activities carried out under this section.

(j) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The terms ''conservation purpose'', ''exclusively for conservation purposes'', and ''qualified organization'' have the meanings such terms have in section 170(h) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(2) The term ''qualified real property interest'' has the meaning given such term in section 170(h)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(k) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To carry out this section, there is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of the Interior $10,000,000 from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for each of fiscal years 2013 through 2022.

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