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(Original Signature of Member)

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R.

To authorize the Secretary of Transportation to carry out a school bus emergency fuel grant program.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. MCNERNEY introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Transportation to carry out a school bus emergency fuel grant program.

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 “Gas Price Relief for
5 Schools Act of 2008”.

6 **SEC. 2. SCHOOL BUS EMERGENCY FUEL GRANT PROGRAM.**

7 (a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of Trans-
8 portation may make grants to eligible recipients to assist

1 the recipients in offsetting increases in school bus trans-
2 portation operating costs attributable to higher fuel prices.

3 (b) APPLICATIONS.—An eligible recipient seeking a
4 grant under this section shall submit to the Secretary an
5 application that is in such form and contains such infor-
6 mation as the Secretary may require.

7 (c) CRITERIA FOR AWARDING GRANTS.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—In awarding grants under
9 this section, the Secretary shall consider the extent
10 to which an eligible recipient has been adversely af-
11 fected by increases in fuel costs in providing school
12 bus transportation.

13 (2) FACTORS.—For purposes of paragraph (1),
14 the Secretary, at minimum, shall consider—

15 (A) whether a public school system served
16 by the eligible recipient has implemented cuts to
17 school bus transportation services as a result of
18 increased school bus transportation fuel costs;

19 (B) whether a public school system served
20 by the eligible recipient has implemented
21 changes or cuts in school operations, such as a
22 shorter school week, as a result of increased
23 school bus transportation fuel costs; and

24 (C) the distances traveled by school buses
25 operated by the eligible recipient, particularly

1 for public school systems located in rural areas
2 where school buses travel greater distances to
3 transport students.

4 (d) GRANT ALLOCATIONS.—

5 (1) SOLICITATION OF APPLICANTS.—The Sec-
6 retary shall conduct a national solicitation for appli-
7 cations for grants under this section.

8 (2) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—To the max-
9 imum extent practicable, the Secretary shall ensure
10 a broad geographic distribution of grant awards
11 under this section.

12 (3) DISTRIBUTION AMONG STATES.—Not to ex-
13 ceed 5 percent of the grants funds awarded under
14 this section in a fiscal year may be awarded to eligi-
15 ble recipients in any State.

16 (e) SUBALLOCATIONS TO PRIVATE ENTITIES.—An
17 eligible recipient that receives a grant under this section
18 may allocate all or any portion of the amounts provided
19 under the grant to a private entity providing school bus
20 transportation to a public school system for the eligible
21 recipient on a contract basis.

22 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the following defi-
23 nitions apply:

24 (1) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENT.—The term “eligible
25 recipient” means a unit of State or local government

1 responsible for providing school bus transportation
2 to a public school system.

3 (2) SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION.—The term
4 “school bus transportation” means the transpor-
5 tation of preprimary, primary, or secondary students
6 of a public school system to or from school or an
7 event related to school by a school bus or multi-
8 function school activity bus.

9 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
10 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry
11 out this section such sums as may be necessary for each
12 of fiscal years 2008 and 2009. Such sums shall remain
13 available until expended .