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(Original Signature of Member)

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to provide assistance to individuals affected by a pandemic, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to provide assistance to individuals affected by a pandemic, 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 “Pandemic Disaster As-
5 sistance Act of 2020”.

1 **SEC. 2. ASSISTANCE FOR PANDEMICS.**

2 The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-
3 gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) is amend-
4 ed—

5 (1) in section 102(1) (42 U.S.C. 5122(1)), by
6 inserting “or pandemic” after “catastrophe”;

7 (2) in section 301 (42 U.S.C. 5141), by insert-
8 ing “or an emergency due to a pandemic” after
9 “major disaster” each place the term appears;

10 (3) in section 408(e) (42 U.S.C. 5174(e)), by
11 inserting “or an emergency due to a pandemic”
12 after “major disaster” each place the term appears;

13 (4) in section 410 (42 U.S.C. 5177)—

14 (A) in subsection (a), by inserting “or an
15 emergency due to a pandemic” after “major
16 disaster” each place the term appears; and

17 (B) by adding at the end the following:

18 “(c) ASSISTANCE DURING A PANDEMIC.—In the case
19 of an emergency due to a pandemic—

20 “(1) assistance authorized under this section
21 shall be made available to an individual regardless of
22 whether the individual is entitled to any other unem-
23 ployment compensation (as that term is defined in
24 section 85(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of
25 1986); and

1 “(2) the minimum weekly benefit shall be 1.5
2 times the national average State unemployment com-
3 pensation weekly benefit for the previous year.”;

4 (5) in section 412 (42 U.S.C. 5179)—

5 (A) by inserting “or an emergency due to
6 a pandemic” after “major disaster” each place
7 the term appears;

8 (B) in subsection (a) by inserting “without
9 regard to regular allotments” after the ref-
10 erence to the Food and Nutrition Act; and

11 (C) by adding at the end the following:

12 “(d) ASSISTANCE DURING A PANDEMIC.—In the case
13 of an emergency due to a pandemic, for purposes of pro-
14 viding benefits under this section, the Secretary of Agri-
15 culture shall remove or delay the requirement of an in-
16 person interview and if an interview occurs, provide an al-
17 ternative to the in-person interview requirement for all ap-
18 plicants. Assistance shall be provided based on need and
19 not lost provisions.”; and

20 (6) in section 502(a) (42 U.S.C. 5192(a))—

21 (A) in paragraph (7), by striking “and” at
22 the end;

23 (B) in paragraph (8)(B), by striking the
24 period at the end and inserting a semicolon;
25 and

1 (C) by adding at the end the following:

2 “(9) provide unemployment assistance in ac-
3 cordance with section 410; and

4 “(10) provide assistance in accordance with sec-
5 tion 412.”.

6 **SEC. 3. FUNDING.**

7 Provided that there are hereby appropriated to the
8 Secretary of Agriculture and Secretary of Labor such
9 amounts as are necessary to carry out section 2(5) and
10 section 2(4), respectively. Provided, that such amount is
11 designated by the Congress as being for an emergency re-
12 quirement pursuant to Section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Bal-
13 anced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.