

HR 9325

EQUAL Defense Act of 2022

Congress: 117 (2021–2023, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Crime and Law Enforcement

Introduced: Nov 17, 2022

Current Status: Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary.

Latest Action: Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary. (Nov 17, 2022)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/9325>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Bonamici, Suzanne [D-OR-1]

Party: Democratic • **State:** OR • **Chamber:** House

Cosponsors (7 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Del. Norton, Eleanor Holmes [D-DC-At Large]	D · DC		Nov 17, 2022
Rep. Jackson Lee, Sheila [D-TX-18]	D · TX		Nov 17, 2022
Rep. Jones, Mondaire [D-NY-17]	D · NY		Nov 17, 2022
Rep. Payne, Donald M., Jr. [D-NJ-10]	D · NJ		Nov 17, 2022
Rep. Scanlon, Mary Gay [D-PA-5]	D · PA		Nov 17, 2022
Rep. Schakowsky, Janice D. [D-IL-9]	D · IL		Nov 17, 2022
Rep. Cherfilus-McCormick, Sheila [D-FL-20]	D · FL		Dec 1, 2022

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Judiciary Committee	House	Referred To	Nov 17, 2022

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Crime and Law Enforcement

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
117 HR 1408	Related bill	Apr 28, 2021: Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security.

Ensuring Quality Access to Legal Defense Act of 2022 or the EQUAL Defense Act of 2022

This bill establishes and modifies certain programs that support the delivery of public defense services (i.e., legal services for criminal defendants who cannot afford counsel).

Specifically, the bill directs the Department of Justice (DOJ) to award grants to state and local governments, tribal organizations, and public defender offices for public defense. A grant recipient must use the grant to establish a data collection process, develop workload limits, and satisfy specified compensation requirements (e.g., pay parity between public defenders and prosecutors).

The bill also directs DOJ to award grants to nonprofits and government organizations to train public defenders, court-appointed attorneys, and contract attorneys.

Additionally, a state that receives Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant program funds must annually submit to DOJ information related to the legal representation of defendants in criminal cases.

Finally, it reauthorizes through FY2026 the student loan repayment program for prosecutors and public defenders and otherwise revises the program, including by increasing the maximum benefit amount.

Actions Timeline

- **Nov 17, 2022:** Introduced in House
- **Nov 17, 2022:** Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary.