

SECTION-BY-SECTION SUMMARY

The Historic Tax Credit Improvement Act makes changes to the Historic Tax Credit to further encourage building reuse and redevelopment in small, midsize, and rural communities. It also makes the rehabilitation of community projects like theaters, libraries, and schools easier. Finally, the bill would make more historic properties eligible to use the credit by updating program requirements to reflect current industry practices. These reforms would be the first major changes to the Historic Tax Credit (HTC) since the Tax Reform Act of 1986.

SEC. 1 SHORT TITLE “HISTORIC TAX CREDIT IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2017”

SEC. 2 INCREASING THE REHABILITATION CREDIT FOR CERTAIN SMALL PROJECTS

Creates a 30% credit for smaller deals to make sure the rural west and non-urban areas have the same ability to take advantage of the credit. This small deal credit would be capped at qualified rehabilitation expenses of \$2.5 million, changing the maximum small project credit allowed from \$500,000 to \$750,000 on the largest projects.

SEC. 3 ALLOWANCE FOR THE TRANSFER OF CREDITS FOR CERTAIN SMALL PROJECTS

Allows the HTC, for small transactions, to be transferred as a tax certificate, making these deals easier for small project owners.

SEC. 4 INCREASING THE TYPE OF BUILDINGS ELIGIBLE FOR REHABILITATION

Changes the definition of substantial rehabilitation. This provision would change the threshold to qualify for the credit of 50% of adjusted basis instead of 100% of adjusted basis as the program currently requires.

SEC. 5 REDUCING BASIS ADJUSTMENT

Changes the amount of the depreciable basis adjustment from 100 percent to 50 percent of the amount of the HTC. This would place the HTC in line with renewable energy and new market tax credits. The Low-income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) has no depreciable basis adjustment.

SEC. 6. MODIFICATIONS REGARDING CERTAIN TAX-EXEMPT USE PROPERTY.

Modifies the disqualified lease rules to limit the definition of a “disqualified lease” to those leases that are part of a sale leaseback arrangement involving a nonprofit that has used the property before certification as a historic rehabilitation. The other types of disqualified leases that inhibit the rehabilitation of these buildings: those with purchase options, leases in excess of 20 years, and leases in buildings that use tax-exempt financing, would be eliminated.