

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1268

To require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award targeted grants to State, Tribal, Territorial, and local health departments or nonprofit organizations in geographic locations with racial and ethnic minorities and other vulnerable populations disproportionately impacted by COVID–19 to disseminate information regarding the safety and efficacy of COVID–19 vaccines, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 23, 2021

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (for herself, Ms. MENG, Mr. COHEN, Mr. SAN NICOLAS, Mr. SIRES, Mr. EVANS, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. HASTINGS, Mrs. HAYES, Mr. JONES, Mr. NADLER, Mr. TORRES of New York, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. STRICKLAND, Ms. SCANLON, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. BOURDEAUX, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. CARBAJAL) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award targeted grants to State, Tribal, Territorial, and local health departments or nonprofit organizations in geographic locations with racial and ethnic minorities and other vulnerable populations disproportionately impacted by COVID–19 to disseminate information regarding the safety and efficacy of COVID–19 vaccines, 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 “Building COVID–19
5 Vaccine Confidence Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. HEALTH DISPARITY-INFORMED COVID–19 VACCINE**
7 **SAFETY AND EFFICACY PUBLIC AWARENESS**
8 **CAMPAIGN GRANTS.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and
10 Human Services (referred to in this section as the “Sec-
11 retary”), acting through the Director of the Centers for
12 Disease Control and Prevention and in coordination with
13 the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Minority Health and,
14 as appropriate, with the directors of the relevant Offices
15 of Minority health of the Department of Health and
16 Human Services, the Director of the National Institute on
17 Minority Health and Health Disparities, and the Director
18 of the Indian Health Service, shall award grants to eligible
19 entities to carry out evidence-based campaigns to dissemi-
20 nate COVID–19 vaccination information.

21 (b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—To be eligible to receive a
22 grant under this section, an entity shall—

23 (1) be a State, Tribal, Territorial, or local
24 health department, an Urban Indian organization
25 (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care

1 Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)), a nonprofit
2 community-based organization, or a nonprofit faith-
3 based organization; and

4 (2) submit an application to the Secretary at
5 such time, in such manner, and containing such in-
6 formation as the Secretary may require, including
7 demographic data on the entity's COVID-19 vaccine
8 campaign target.

9 (c) USE OF FUNDS.—Entities receiving a grant
10 under this section shall use such grant funds to—

11 (1) create multilingual and culturally appro-
12 priate messaging to disseminate scientific and evi-
13 dence-based information related to COVID-19 vac-
14 cines;

15 (2) provide information on where the COVID-
16 19 vaccine can be obtained;

17 (3) target racial and ethnic minority commu-
18 nities;

19 (4) target communities with a COVID-19 Com-
20 munity Vulnerability Index higher than the national
21 average;

22 (5) increase awareness and knowledge of the
23 safety and effectiveness of vaccines approved or au-
24 thorized by the Food and Drug Administration for

1 the prevention and control of COVID–19 and the
2 benefit of receiving a COVID–19 vaccine;

3 (6) increase awareness and knowledge of
4 COVID–19, including countering stigma associated
5 with COVID–19;

6 (7) address vaccine skepticism in communities
7 of color;

8 (8) address COVID–19 vaccine misinformation;

9 (9) address side effects after COVID–19 vac-
10 cination;

11 (10) share information on the processes and
12 policies that lead to vaccine development, licensure,
13 manufacturing, and recommendations for use; and

14 (11) other matters the Secretary determines
15 necessary.

16 (d) PROHIBITION ON DISCRIMINATION.—Programs
17 funded under this section shall not discriminate on the
18 basis of actual or perceived sex, race, color, ethnicity, na-
19 tional origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity,
20 or religion. Nothing in this section shall be construed to
21 invalidate or limit rights, remedies, procedures, or legal
22 standards available under any other Federal law or any
23 law of a State or a political subdivision of a State, includ-
24 ing the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000a et
25 seq.), title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20

1 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.), section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
2 of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), the Americans with Disabilities
3 Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), and section 1557
4 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42
5 U.S.C. 18116).

6 (e) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 45 days
7 after the date on which appropriated funds are made avail-
8 able to the Secretary under this section, the Secretary
9 shall submit to Congress a report on how such funds have
10 been used during such 45-day period and a plan for using
11 any remaining funds within the next 45 days.

12 (f) EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall—

13 (1) conduct qualitative assessments regarding
14 the campaign under this section; and

15 (2) not later than one year after the date of en-
16 actment of this Act, prepare and submit to the Com-
17 mittee on Appropriations and the Committee on
18 Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Sen-
19 ate and the Committee on Appropriations and the
20 Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House
21 of Representatives an evaluation of the campaign
22 under this section.

23 (g) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act
24 shall be construed to limit an eligible entity from receiving

1 a grant under this section for a population otherwise
2 served by such organization with other Federal funds.

3 (h) PRIORITIZATION.—In awarding grants under
4 subsection (a), the Secretary shall give special consider-
5 ation to eligible entities that have demonstrated a commit-
6 ment to a targeted campaign to reach communities where
7 the greatest health disparities have been identified with
8 respect to testing access and rates of infections, hos-
9 pitalizations, and deaths related to COVID–19.

10 (i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
11 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
12 \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2022.

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