

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6822

To amend the National and Community Service Act of 1990 to establish a national public health service program to respond to public health emergencies, including the COVID–19 pandemic, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 12, 2020

Ms. HOULAHAN (for herself, Mr. BERA, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. WALTZ, Ms. SCHRIER, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. CISNEROS, Ms. SPANBERGER, Mr. SOTO, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. KILMER, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CROW, Mr. COX of California, Mr. SUOZZI, Ms. WILD, Ms. SLOTKIN, Mr. PANETTA, Ms. ADAMS, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Mr. DEUTCH) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To amend the National and Community Service Act of 1990 to establish a national public health service program to respond to public health emergencies, including the COVID–19 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 “National Public Health
5 Corps Act of 2020”.

1 **SEC. 2. NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE PROGRAM.**

2 (a) NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE PRO-
3 GRAM.—Subtitle E of the National and Community Serv-
4 ice Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12611 et seq.) is amended—

5 (1) in section 151 (42 U.S.C. 12611)—

6 (A) in paragraph (4), by striking “and” at
7 the end;

8 (B) in paragraph (5), by striking the pe-
9 riod and inserting “; and”; and

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

11 “(6) public health.”;

12 (2) in section 152 (42 U.S.C. 12612)—

13 (A) in paragraph (b)—

14 (i) by striking “two”; and

15 (ii) by adding at the end the following
16 paragraph:

17 “(3) A national public health service program.”;

18 and

19 (B) in paragraph (c), by striking “Both”
20 and inserting “The”;

21 (3) by adding after section 154 (42 U.S.C.
22 12614) the following new section:

23 **“SEC. 154A. NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE PRO-**
24 **GRAM.**

25 “(a) IN GENERAL.—

1 “(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 30 days
2 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Di-
3 rector, in consultation with the Secretary, shall es-
4 tablish the national public health service program as
5 a component of the National Civilian Community
6 Corps Program as authorized by section 152(a).

7 “(2) PURPOSE.—Under the national public
8 health service program established under paragraph
9 (1), the Director shall, in accordance with section
10 155(c), ensure the preparation and assignment of
11 participants under such program to units which
12 shall serve service sites in response to public health
13 emergencies, including the COVID–19 pandemic.

14 “(3) NOTIFICATION.—Not later than 30 days
15 after the establishment of the national public health
16 service program, the Director shall notify the fol-
17 lowing about applying to participate in the national
18 public health service program:

19 “(A) Volunteers under the Peace Corps
20 Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.)—

21 “(i) as of the date of the enactment of
22 the National Public Health Service Pro-
23 gram Act of 2020; and

1 “(ii) that successfully completed the
2 requirements of the Peace Corps Act (22
3 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.).

4 “(B) Volunteers under title I serving dur-
5 ing the emergency period (as defined in para-
6 graph (1)(B) of section 1135(g) of the Social
7 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b–5(g))) who were
8 unsuccessful in completing the requirements of
9 such programs due to COVID–19.

10 “(C) Volunteers under title I of the Do-
11 mestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (42
12 U.S.C. 4951 et seq.) serving during the emer-
13 gency period (as defined in paragraph (1)(B) of
14 section 1135(g) of the Social Security Act (42
15 U.S.C. 1320b–5(g))) who were unsuccessful in
16 completing the requirements of such programs
17 due to COVID–19.

18 “(D) Any individuals from organizations
19 the Director determines appropriate.

20 “(b) ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS.—The Director shall
21 establish criteria to determine eligibility for the national
22 public health service program established under subsection
23 (a).

24 “(c) SUBMISSIONS BY SERVICE SITES.—Each service
25 site shall submit to the Director a request that includes—

1 “(1) the preference of such service site with re-
2 spect to—

3 “(A) the number of participants under the
4 national public health service program assigned
5 to serve such service site;

6 “(B) the method of service for such par-
7 ticipants; and

8 “(C) the duration of service for such par-
9 ticipants;

10 “(2) information pertaining to the work such
11 participants would be engaging in at such service
12 site;

13 “(3) an agreement that such service site—

14 “(A) may receive training from the Sec-
15 retary with respect to the appropriate use of
16 contact tracing tools, including the Text Illness
17 Monitoring system; and

18 “(B) shall provide personal protective
19 equipment to such participants if the work such
20 participants are assigned to do at such service
21 site requires the use of such personal protective
22 equipment; and

23 “(4) any other information that the Director, in
24 coordination with the Secretary, determines nec-
25 essary.

1 “(d) ASSIGNMENT OF NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH
2 SERVICE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS.—

3 “(1) PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES.—If a
4 public health emergency is declared by the Secretary
5 of Health and Human Services under section 319 of
6 the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d), the
7 campus director may task participants under the na-
8 tional public health service program to assist in re-
9 sponse.

10 “(2) ASSIGNMENT.—Under paragraph (1), the
11 Director, in coordination with the campus director,
12 may—

13 “(A) assign interested participants under
14 the national public health service program to
15 service sites to assist with contact tracing, test-
16 ing, and providing support for the administra-
17 tion of vaccinations for COVID–19;

18 “(B) make travel arrangements for the as-
19 signed national public health service program
20 participants to service sites; and

21 “(C) provide funds to the service sites to
22 which national public health service program
23 participants are assigned, to enable such sites
24 to coordinate and provide housing, living sti-

1 pends, and insurance for those assigned mem-
2 bers.

3 “(e) COVID–19 PROJECTS.—With respect to partici-
4 pants under the national public health service program
5 who serve during the emergency period (as defined in
6 paragraph (1)(B) of section 1135(g) of the Social Security
7 Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b–5(g))), the campus director shall
8 encourage such participants to perform tasks, in-person
9 or virtually, to address issues arising during such emer-
10 gency period which include—

11 “(1) contact tracing;

12 “(2) supporting the administration of testing
13 for COVID–19;

14 “(3) supporting the administration of vaccina-
15 tions; and

16 “(4) any other activities recommended by the
17 Secretary to address issues arising relating to
18 COVID–19.

19 “(f) SECRETARY DEFINED.—In this section, the term
20 ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of Health and Human
21 Services acting through—

22 “(1) the Director of the Centers for Disease
23 Control and Prevention; and

24 “(2) the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness
25 and Response.”;

1 (4) in section 155 (42 U.S.C. 12615)—

2 (A) in subsection (b)—

3 (i) in paragraph (1), by striking “in
4 the national service” and all that follows
5 through “Program” and inserting “in a
6 program under section 152(b)”;

7 (ii) in paragraph (2)—

8 (I) by striking “The Director”
9 and inserting “(A) IN GENERAL.—
10 The Director”; and

11 (II) by adding at the end the fol-
12 lowing new subparagraph:

13 “(B) PREFERRED PARTICIPANTS FOR NA-
14 TIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE PROGRAM.—
15 In selecting individuals for the national public
16 health service program, the Director shall
17 prioritize applicants that, due to the emergency
18 period (as defined in paragraph (1)(B) of sec-
19 tion 1135(g) of the Social Security Act (42
20 U.S.C. 1320b–5(g))—

21 “(i) were selected to participate in a
22 program under title I and title I of the Do-
23 mestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (42
24 U.S.C. 4951 et seq.) but were unsuccessful

1 in completing the requirements of such
2 programs; and

3 “(ii) experienced unemployment.”;

4 and

5 (iii) in paragraph (3)—

6 (I) by striking “To be selected”

7 and inserting “(A) IN GENERAL.—To
8 be selected”; and

9 (II) by adding at the end the fol-
10 lowing new subparagraph:

11 “(B) NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
12 PROGRAM SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS.—With re-
13 spect to an individual applying for participation
14 in the national public health service program—

15 “(i) each individual shall include in
16 the application under subparagraph (A)—

17 “(I) information about the work
18 experience of the applicant and suffi-
19 cient information to enable the Direc-
20 tor to determine whether selection of
21 the applicant for such program is ap-
22 propriate; and

23 “(II) the preference of the appli-
24 cant with respect to—

25 “(aa) length of service; and

1 “(bb) method of service (in-
2 person, virtually, or a combina-
3 tion of virtual and in-person);
4 and

5 “(ii) the Director may waive the appli-
6 cation under subparagraph (A) and select,
7 in accordance with paragraph (2), an indi-
8 vidual under section 154A(a)(3).”; and
9 (B) in subsection (e)—

10 (i) by striking “The Director shall en-
11 sure” and inserting “(1) IN GENERAL.—
12 The Director shall ensure”; and

13 (ii) by adding at the end the fol-
14 lowing:

15 “(2) UNITS FOR NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH
16 SERVICE PROGRAM.—With respect to a unit of par-
17 ticipants under the national public health service
18 program, the Director, in consultation with the cam-
19 pus director, may assign such unit to assist more
20 than one service site depending on the number of
21 participants requested by such service site under sec-
22 tion 154A(c).”;

23 (5) in section 156 (42 U.S.C. 12616)—

24 (A) in subsection (a)—

1 (i) by striking “Each member” and
2 inserting “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each mem-
3 ber”; and

4 (ii) by adding at the end the fol-
5 lowing:

6 “(2) WAIVER FOR NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH
7 SERVICE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS.—With respect to
8 a participant under the national public health service
9 program, the Director may waive or modify the re-
10 quirements of paragraph (1) for such participant
11 during an emergency period declared by the Sec-
12 retary of Health and Human Services under section
13 319 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C.
14 247d).”; and

15 (B) in subsection (b), by adding at the end
16 the following new paragraph:

17 “(3) NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE PRO-
18 GRAM.—Members of the Corps participating in the
19 national public health service program—

20 “(A) shall receive the training required by
21 State or Federal Government to perform tasks
22 assigned to such member; and

23 “(B) may receive training from or ap-
24 proved by the Secretary of Health and Human
25 Services with respect to the appropriate use of

1 contact tracing tools, including the Text Illness
2 Monitoring system.”;

3 (6) in section 157 (42 U.S.C. 12617)—

4 (A) in subsection (a)(1), by adding “public
5 health,” after “conservation,”;

6 (B) in subsection (b)(1)—

7 (i) in paragraph (A), by adding “the
8 Secretary of Health and Human Services,
9 the Director of the Centers for Disease
10 Control and Prevention, the Assistant Sec-
11 retary for Preparedness and Response,”
12 after “Transportation,”; and

13 (ii) in paragraph (B), by adding
14 “service sites” after “entities”; and

15 (C) in subsection (c), by adding the fol-
16 lowing new paragraph:

17 “(3) SUPPORTING COVID-19 RESPONSE.—The
18 campus director of participants under the national
19 public health service program shall be encouraged to
20 select projects that support the response to COVID-
21 19 which may include contact tracing.”; and

22 (7) in section 165 (42 U.S.C. 12626) by adding
23 at the end the following:

24 “(11) CONTACT TRACING.—The term ‘contact
25 tracing’ means the technological and interpersonal

1 process of identifying persons who may have come
2 into contact with an infected person and subse-
3 quently collecting further information about these
4 contacts to implement mitigation measures and re-
5 duce infections in the population.

6 “(12) COVID-19.—The term ‘COVID-19’
7 means the 2019 novel coronavirus or the SARS-
8 CoV-2.

9 “(13) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term ‘Indian Tribe’
10 means any Indian Tribe, band, nation, or other or-
11 ganized group or community (including any Native
12 village, Regional Corporation, or Village Corporation
13 (as those terms are defined in section 3 of the Alas-
14 ka Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1602)))
15 that is recognized as eligible for the special pro-
16 grams and services provided by the United States to
17 Indians because of their status as Indians.

18 “(14) MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS.—The term
19 ‘Medical Reserve Corps’ means the program estab-
20 lished under section 2813 of the Public Health Serv-
21 ice Act (42 U.S.C. 300hh-15).

22 “(15) SERVICE SITE.—The term ‘service site’
23 means any of the following:

24 “(A) An agency with the primary responsi-
25 bility for public health within the State govern-

1 ment, local government, Indian Tribe, territory,
2 or possession of the United States; and

3 “(B) A Medicare Reserve Corps unit.”.

4 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents
5 for the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42
6 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.) is amended by adding after the item
7 relating to section 154 the following:

“Sec. 154A. National public health service program.”.

8 **SEC. 3. AUTHORITIES RELATING TO COVID-19.**

9 Not later than 30 days after the date of the enact-
10 ment of this Act, the Chief Executive Officer of the Cor-
11 poration for National and Community Service shall submit
12 a report to the Committee on Education and Labor of the
13 House of Representatives, the Committee on Appropria-
14 tions of the House of Representatives, the Committee on
15 Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives,
16 the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pen-
17 sions of the Senate, and the Committee on Appropriations
18 of the Senate containing recommendations on any addi-
19 tional authorities the Chief Executive Officer believes are
20 necessary to respond to issues related to the COVID-19
21 pandemic.

○