

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8605

To authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to award grants to certain entities to conduct research on, or to establish, wastewater surveillance and other early warning systems, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 16, 2020

Mr. KIM (for himself and Mr. BILIRAKIS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to award grants to certain entities to conduct research on, or to establish, wastewater surveillance and other early warning systems, 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 “Community Readiness
5 Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. GRANTS FOR RESEARCH ON, OR ESTABLISHING,**
2 **WASTEWATER SURVEILLANCE AND OTHER**
3 **EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS.**

4 Subtitle C of title XVIII of the Public Health Service
5 Act (42 U.S.C. 300hh–31 et seq.) is amended by adding
6 at the end the following:

7 **“SEC. 2823. GRANTS FOR RESEARCH ON, OR ESTABLISHING,**
8 **WASTEWATER SURVEILLANCE AND OTHER**
9 **EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS.**

10 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and
11 Human Services, in consultation with the Administrator
12 of the Environmental Protection Agency, may award
13 grants to eligible entities to conduct research on, or to es-
14 tablish, a wastewater surveillance or other early warning
15 system through—

16 “(1) wastewater testing;

17 “(2) temperature tracking to monitor axillary
18 body temperature; and

19 “(3) other methods deemed permissible by the
20 Secretary and Administrator.

21 “(b) PERMISSIBLE USES OF FUNDS.—A grant recipi-
22 ent under this section may use grant funds to support the
23 activities described in subsection (a), including by—

24 “(1) paying for data-centric services that can
25 detect infectious diseases before positive cases or
26 hospitalizations;

1 “(2) entering into contracts with private compa-
2 nies to implement early warning detection methods;
3 or

4 “(3) funding research to study early warning
5 detection methods.

6 “(c) PRIORITY.—In selecting grant recipients under
7 this section, the Secretary shall give priority to eligible en-
8 tities proposing to conduct research on, or to establish,
9 wastewater surveillance or other early warning system in
10 one or more areas that—

11 “(1) are (or include one or more areas that are)
12 a hot spot; or

13 “(2) a higher percentage of vulnerable popu-
14 lations than the national average.

15 “(d) FEDERAL PRIVACY REQUIREMENTS.—Nothing
16 in this section shall be construed to supersede any Federal
17 privacy or confidentiality requirement, including the regu-
18 lations promulgated under section 264(c) of the Health
19 Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (42
20 U.S.C. 1320d–2 note) and section 543 of the Public
21 Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290dd–2).

22 “(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

23 “(1) The term ‘Administrator’ means the Ad-
24 ministrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

25 “(2) The term ‘eligible entity’ means—

1 “(A) a State government;

2 “(B) a local government;

3 “(C) a Tribal government;

4 “(D) an entity that conducts health re-
5 search; and

6 “(E) an academic institution.

7 “(3) The term ‘emergency period’ has the
8 meaning given to that term in section 1135(g)(1)(B)
9 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b-
10 5(g)(1)(B)).

11 “(4) The term ‘hot spot’ means a geographic
12 area where the rate of infection with a particular
13 pathogen exceeds the national average.

14 “(5) The term ‘local government’ means a
15 county, municipality, town, township, village, parish,
16 borough, or other unit of general local government.

17 “(6) The term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary
18 of Health and Human Services.

19 “(7) The term ‘State’ means each of the several
20 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth
21 of Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, the Com-
22 monwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the
23 Virgin Islands, and the Trust Territory of the Pa-
24 cific Islands.

1 “(8) The term ‘vulnerable population’ means
2 people at increased risk of severe illness.

3 “(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To
4 carry out this section, there are authorized to be appro-
5 priated \$18,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through
6 2025.”.

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