

Calendar No. 252

106TH CONGRESS
1ST Session

S. 632

A BILL

To provide assistance for poison prevention and to stabilize the funding of regional poison control centers.

AUGUST 4, 1999

Reported with an amendment

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To provide assistance for poison prevention and to stabilize the funding
of regional poison control centers.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 16, 1999

Mr. DEWINE (for himself, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. CHAFEE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. BOND, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BURNS, Mr. DODD, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. KERRY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. COVERDELL, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. WELLSTONE, Mr. ENZI, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. INOUE, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. MACK, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. REED, Mr. GREGG, Mr. FRIST, and Mr. MOYNIHAN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

AUGUST 4, 1999

Reported by Mr. JEFFORDS, with an amendment

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italic*]

A BILL

To provide assistance for poison prevention and to stabilize
the funding of regional poison control centers.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Poison Control Center
3 Enhancement and Awareness Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress makes the following findings:

6 (1) Each year more than 2,000,000 poisonings
7 are reported to poison control centers throughout
8 the United States. More than 90 percent of these
9 poisonings happen in the home. 53 percent of poi-
10 soning victims are children younger than 6 years of
11 age.

12 (2) Poison control centers are a valuable na-
13 tional resource that provide life-saving and cost-ef-
14 fective public health services. For every dollar spent
15 on poison control centers, \$7 in medical costs are
16 saved. The average cost of a poisoning exposure call
17 is \$32, while the average cost if other parts of the
18 medical system are involved is \$932. Over the last
19 2 decades, the instability and lack of funding has re-
20 sulted in a steady decline in the number of poison
21 control centers in the United States. Within just the
22 last year, 2 poison control centers have been forced
23 to close because of funding problems. A third poison
24 control center is scheduled to close in April 1999.
25 Currently, there are 73 such centers.

1 (3) Stabilizing the funding structure and in-
 2 creasing accessibility to poison control centers will
 3 increase the number of United States residents who
 4 have access to a certified poison control center, and
 5 reduce the inappropriate use of emergency medical
 6 services and other more costly health care services.

7 **SEC. 3. DEFINITION.**

8 In this Act, the term “Secretary” means the Sec-
 9 retary of Health and Human Services.

10 **SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL TOLL-FREE**
 11 **NUMBER.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide co-
 13 ordination and assistance to regional poison control cen-
 14 ters for the establishment of a nationwide toll-free phone
 15 number to be used to access such centers.

16 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
 17 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section,
 18 \$2,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2000 through
 19 2004.

20 **SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONWIDE MEDIA**
 21 **CAMPAIGN.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a
 23 national media campaign to educate the public and health
 24 care providers about poison prevention and the availability
 25 of poison control resources in local communities and to

1 conduct advertising campaigns concerning the nationwide
 2 toll-free number established under section 4.

3 (b) ~~CONTRACT WITH ENTITY.~~—The Secretary may
 4 carry out subsection (a) by entering into contracts with
 5 1 or more nationally recognized media firms for the devel-
 6 opment and distribution of monthly television, radio, and
 7 newspaper public service announcements.

8 (c) ~~AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.~~—There is
 9 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section,
 10 \$600,000 for each of the fiscal years 2000 through 2004.

11 **SEC. 6. ESTABLISHMENT OF A GRANT PROGRAM.**

12 (a) ~~REGIONAL POISON CONTROL CENTERS.~~—The
 13 Secretary shall award grants to certified regional poison
 14 control centers for the purposes of achieving the financial
 15 stability of such centers, and for preventing and providing
 16 treatment recommendations for poisonings.

17 (b) ~~OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.~~—The Secretary shall
 18 also use amounts received under this section to—

- 19 (1) develop standard education programs;
- 20 (2) develop standard patient management pro-
 21 tocols for commonly encountered toxic exposures;
- 22 (3) improve and expand the poison control data
 23 collection systems;
- 24 (4) improve national toxic exposure surveillance;
- 25 and

1 ~~(5) expand the physician/medical toxicologist~~
2 ~~supervision of poison control centers.~~

3 ~~(c) CERTIFICATION.—Except as provided in sub-~~
4 ~~section (d), the Secretary may make a grant to a center~~
5 ~~under subsection (a) only if—~~

6 ~~(1) the center has been certified by a profes-~~
7 ~~sional organization in the field of poison control, and~~
8 ~~the Secretary has approved the organization as hav-~~
9 ~~ing in effect standards for certification that reason-~~
10 ~~ably provide for the protection of the public health~~
11 ~~with respect to poisoning; or~~

12 ~~(2) the center has been certified by a State gov-~~
13 ~~ernment, and the Secretary has approved the State~~
14 ~~government as having in effect standards for certifi-~~
15 ~~cation that reasonably provide for the protection of~~
16 ~~the public health with respect to poisoning.~~

17 ~~(d) WAIVER OF CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.—~~

18 ~~(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may grant a~~
19 ~~waiver of the certification requirement of subsection~~
20 ~~(c) with respect to a noncertified poison control cen-~~
21 ~~ter or a newly established center that applies for a~~
22 ~~grant under this section if such center can reason-~~
23 ~~ably demonstrate that the center will obtain such a~~
24 ~~certification within a reasonable period of time as~~
25 ~~determined appropriate by the Secretary.~~

1 (2) RENEWAL.—The Secretary may only renew
 2 a waiver under paragraph (1) for a period of 3
 3 years.

4 (e) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—Amounts made
 5 available to a poison control center under this section shall
 6 be used to supplement and not supplant other Federal,
 7 State, local or private funds provided for such center.

8 (f) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.—A poison control
 9 center, in utilizing the proceeds of a grant under this sec-
 10 tion, shall maintain the expenditures of the center for ac-
 11 tivities of the center at a level that is not less than the
 12 level of such expenditures maintained by the center for
 13 the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the
 14 grant is received.

15 (g) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary may
 16 impose a matching requirement with respect to amounts
 17 provided under a grant under this section if the Secretary
 18 determines appropriate.

19 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
 20 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section,
 21 \$25,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2000 through
 22 2004.

23 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

24 *This Act may be cited as the “Poison Control Center*
 25 *Enhancement and Awareness Act”.*

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 *Congress makes the following findings:*

3 *(1) Each year more than 2,000,000 poisonings*
4 *are reported to poison control centers throughout the*
5 *United States. More than 90 percent of these*
6 *poisonings happen in the home. 53 percent of poi-*
7 *soning victims are children younger than 6 years of*
8 *age.*

9 *(2) Poison control centers are a valuable na-*
10 *tional resource that provide life-saving and cost-effec-*
11 *tive public health services. For every dollar spent on*
12 *poison control centers, \$7 in medical costs are saved.*
13 *The average cost of a poisoning exposure call is \$32,*
14 *while the average cost if other parts of the medical*
15 *system are involved is \$932. Over the last 2 decades,*
16 *the instability and lack of funding has resulted in a*
17 *steady decline in the number of poison control centers*
18 *in the United States. Within just the last year, 2 poi-*
19 *son control centers have been forced to close because*
20 *of funding problems. A third poison control center is*
21 *scheduled to close in April 1999. Currently, there are*
22 *73 such centers.*

23 *(3) Stabilizing the funding structure and in-*
24 *creasing accessibility to poison control centers will in-*
25 *crease the number of United States residents who have*
26 *access to a certified poison control center, and reduce*

1 *the inappropriate use of emergency medical services*
 2 *and other more costly health care services.*

3 **SEC. 3. DEFINITION.**

4 *In this Act, the term “Secretary” means the Secretary*
 5 *of Health and Human Services.*

6 **SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL TOLL-FREE**
 7 **NUMBER.**

8 *(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide coordi-*
 9 *nation and assistance to regional poison control centers for*
 10 *the establishment of a nationwide toll-free phone number*
 11 *to be used to access such centers.*

12 *(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section*
 13 *shall be construed as prohibiting the establishment or con-*
 14 *tinued operation of any privately funded nationwide toll-*
 15 *free phone number used to provide advice and other assist-*
 16 *ance for poisonings or accidental exposures.*

17 *(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is*
 18 *authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section,*
 19 *\$2,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2000 through 2004.*
 20 *Funds appropriated under this subsection shall not be used*
 21 *to fund any toll-free phone number described in subsection*
 22 *(b).*

1 **SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONWIDE MEDIA**
 2 **CAMPAIGN.**

3 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—*The Secretary shall establish a na-*
 4 *tional media campaign to educate the public and health*
 5 *care providers about poison prevention and the availability*
 6 *of poison control resources in local communities and to con-*
 7 *duct advertising campaigns concerning the nationwide toll-*
 8 *free number established under section 4.*

9 (b) *CONTRACT WITH ENTITY.*—*The Secretary may*
 10 *carry out subsection (a) by entering into contracts with 1*
 11 *or more nationally recognized media firms for the develop-*
 12 *ment and distribution of monthly television, radio, and*
 13 *newspaper public service announcements.*

14 (c) *AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.*—*There is*
 15 *authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section,*
 16 *\$600,000 for each of the fiscal years 2000 through 2004.*

17 **SEC. 6. ESTABLISHMENT OF A GRANT PROGRAM.**

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 19 *retary shall award grants to certified regional poison con-*
 20 *trol centers for the purposes of achieving the financial sta-*
 21 *bility of such centers, and for preventing and providing*
 22 *treatment recommendations for poisonings.*

23 (b) *OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.*—*The Secretary shall also*
 24 *use amounts received under this section to—*

25 (1) *develop standard education programs;*

1 (2) *develop standard patient management proto-*
2 *cols for commonly encountered toxic exposures;*

3 (3) *improve and expand the poison control data*
4 *collection systems;*

5 (4) *improve national toxic exposure surveillance;*
6 *and*

7 (5) *expand the physician/medical toxicologist su-*
8 *pervision of poison control centers.*

9 (c) *CERTIFICATION.—Except as provided in subsection*
10 *(d), the Secretary may make a grant to a center under sub-*
11 *section (a) only if—*

12 (1) *the center has been certified by a professional*
13 *organization in the field of poison control, and the*
14 *Secretary has approved the organization as having in*
15 *effect standards for certification that reasonably pro-*
16 *vide for the protection of the public health with re-*
17 *spect to poisoning; or*

18 (2) *the center has been certified by a State gov-*
19 *ernment, and the Secretary has approved the State*
20 *government as having in effect standards for certifi-*
21 *cation that reasonably provide for the protection of*
22 *the public health with respect to poisoning.*

23 (d) *WAIVER OF CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.—*

24 (1) *IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may grant a*
25 *waiver of the certification requirement of subsection*

1 (c) *with respect to a noncertified poison control center*
2 *or a newly established center that applies for a grant*
3 *under this section if such center can reasonably dem-*
4 *onstrate that the center will obtain such a certifi-*
5 *cation within a reasonable period of time as deter-*
6 *mined appropriate by the Secretary.*

7 (2) *RENEWAL.*—*The Secretary may only renew a*
8 *waiver under paragraph (1) for a period of 3 years.*

9 (e) *SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.*—*Amounts made*
10 *available to a poison control center under this section shall*
11 *be used to supplement and not supplant other Federal,*
12 *State, or local funds provided for such center.*

13 (f) *MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.*—*A poison control cen-*
14 *ter, in utilizing the proceeds of a grant under this section,*
15 *shall maintain the expenditures of the center for activities*
16 *of the center at a level that is not less than the level of*
17 *such expenditures maintained by the center for the fiscal*
18 *year preceding the fiscal year for which the grant is re-*
19 *ceived.*

20 (g) *MATCHING REQUIREMENT.*—*The Secretary may*
21 *impose a matching requirement with respect to amounts*
22 *provided under a grant under this section if the Secretary*
23 *determines appropriate.*

1 *(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is*
2 *authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section,*
3 *\$25,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2000 through 2004.*