

116TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 3877

To establish or expand programs to improve health equity regarding COVID–19 and reduce or eliminate inequities in the prevalence and health outcomes of COVID–19.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 3, 2020

Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. WARREN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Ms. BALDWIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

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## A BILL

To establish or expand programs to improve health equity regarding COVID–19 and reduce or eliminate inequities in the prevalence and health outcomes of COVID–19.

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 Solutions  
5       for COVID–19 Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. ADDRESSING COVID-19 HEALTH INEQUITIES AND**  
2 **IMPROVING HEALTH EQUITY.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the  
4 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and  
5 Human Services (referred to in this section as the “Sec-  
6 retary”), acting through the Director of the Centers for  
7 Disease Control and Prevention, shall award grants to eli-  
8 gible entities to establish or expand programs to improve  
9 health equity regarding COVID-19 and reduce or elimi-  
10 nate inequities, including racial and ethnic inequities, in  
11 the incidence, prevalence, and health outcomes of COVID-  
12 19.

13 (b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a grant  
14 under subsection (a), an entity shall—

15 (1) be a nongovernmental entity or consortium  
16 of entities that works to improve health and health  
17 equity in populations or communities disproportion-  
18 ately affected by adverse health outcomes, includ-  
19 ing—

20 (A) racial and ethnic minority commu-  
21 nities;

22 (B) Indian Tribes, Tribal organizations,  
23 and urban Indian organizations;

24 (C) people with disabilities;

25 (D) English language learners;

26 (E) older adults;

1 (F) low-income communities;

2 (G) justice-involved communities;

3 (H) immigrant communities; and

4 (I) communities on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity;

5  
6 (2) have demonstrated experience in successfully working in and partnering with such communities, and have an established record of accomplishment in improving health outcomes or preventing, reducing or eliminating health inequities, including racial and ethnic inequities, in those communities;

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11 (3) communicate with State, local, and Tribal health departments to coordinate grant activities, as appropriate; and

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14 (4) submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

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17 (c) USE OF FUNDS.—An entity shall use amounts received under grant under this section to establish, improve upon, or expand programs to improve health equity regarding COVID–19 and reduce or eliminate inequities, including racial and ethnic inequities, in the incidence, prevalence, and health outcomes of COVID–19. Such uses may  
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24 include—

1           (1) acquiring and distributing medical supplies,  
2           such as personal protective equipment, to commu-  
3           nities that are at an increased risk of COVID-19;

4           (2) helping people enroll in a health insurance  
5           plan that meets minimum essential coverage;

6           (3) increasing the availability of COVID-19  
7           testing and any future COVID-19 treatments or  
8           vaccines in communities that are at an increased  
9           risk of COVID-19;

10          (4) aiding communities and individuals in fol-  
11          lowing guidelines and best practices in regards to  
12          COVID-19, including physical distancing guidelines;

13          (5) helping communities and COVID-19 sur-  
14          vivors recover and cope with the long-term health  
15          impacts of COVID-19;

16          (6) addressing social determinants of health,  
17          such as transportation, nutrition, housing, discrimi-  
18          nation, health care access, including mental health  
19          care and substance use disorder prevention, treat-  
20          ment, and recovery, health literacy, employment sta-  
21          tus, and working conditions, education, income, and  
22          stress, that impact COVID-19 incidence, prevalence,  
23          and health outcomes, and facilitating or providing  
24          access to needed services;

1           (7) the provision of anti-racism and implicit  
2           and explicit bias training for health care providers  
3           and other relevant professionals;

4           (8) creating and disseminating culturally in-  
5           formed, linguistically appropriate, accessible, and  
6           medically accurate outreach and education regarding  
7           COVID–19;

8           (9) acquiring, retaining, and training a diverse  
9           workforce; and

10          (10) improving the accessibility to health care,  
11          including accessibility to health care providers, men-  
12          tal health care, and COVID–19 testing for people  
13          with disabilities.

14          (d) ADMINISTRATION.—

15           (1) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this  
16           section, the Secretary shall give priority to eligible  
17           entities that are a community-based organization or  
18           have an established history of successfully working  
19           in and partnering with the community or with popu-  
20           lations which the entity intends to provide services  
21           under the grant. The Secretary shall also utilize  
22           available demographic data to give priority to eligible  
23           entities working with populations or communities  
24           disproportionately affected by COVID–19.

1           (2) GEOGRAPHICAL DIVERSITY.—The Secretary  
2 shall seek to ensure geographical diversity among  
3 grant recipients.

4           (3) REDUCTION OF BURDENS.—In admin-  
5 istering the grant program under this section, the  
6 Secretary shall make every effort to minimize unnec-  
7 essary administrative burdens on eligible entities re-  
8 ceiving such grants.

9           (4) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary  
10 shall provide technical assistance to eligible entities  
11 on best practices for applying grants under this sec-  
12 tion.

13          (e) DURATION.—A grant awarded under this section  
14 shall be for a period of 3 years.

15          (f) REPORTING.—

16           (1) BY GRANTEE.—Not later than 180 days  
17 after the end of a grant period under this section,  
18 the grantee shall submit to the Secretary a report on  
19 the activities conducted under the grant, including—

20                   (A) a description of the impact of grant  
21 activities, including on—

22                           (i) outreach and education related to  
23 COVID–19; and

1 (ii) improving public health activities  
2 related to COVID–19, including physical  
3 distancing;

4 (B) the number of individuals reached by  
5 the activities under the grant and, to the extent  
6 known, the disaggregated demographic data of  
7 such individuals, such as by race, ethnicity, sex  
8 (including sexual orientation and gender iden-  
9 tity), income, disability status, or primary lan-  
10 guage; and

11 (C) any other information the Secretary  
12 determines is necessary.

13 (2) BY SECRETARY.—Not later than 1 year  
14 after the end of the grant program under this sec-  
15 tion, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report  
16 on the grant program, including a summary of the  
17 information gathered under paragraph (1).

18 (g) SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.—Grants awarded  
19 under this Act shall be used to supplement and not sup-  
20 plant any other Federal funds made available to carry out  
21 the activities described in this Act.

22 (h) FUNDING.—Out of funds in the Treasury not oth-  
23 erwise appropriated, there are appropriated to carry out

1 this section, \$500,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2020  
2 through 2022.

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