

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 1573

To require Federal law enforcement and prison officials to obtain or provide immediate medical attention to individuals in custody who display medical distress.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 11, 2021

Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. MERKLEY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

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## A BILL

To require Federal law enforcement and prison officials to obtain or provide immediate medical attention to individuals in custody who display medical distress.

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 “Andrew Kearsce Ac-  
5 countability for Denial of Medical Care Act of 2021”.

1 **SEC. 2. MEDICAL ATTENTION FOR INDIVIDUALS IN FED-**  
 2 **ERAL CUSTODY DISPLAYING MEDICAL DIS-**  
 3 **TRESS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 13 of title 18, United  
 5 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-  
 6 lowing:

7 **“§ 250. Medical attention for individuals in Federal**  
 8 **custody displaying medical distress**

9 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

10 “(1) the term ‘appropriate Inspector General’,  
 11 with respect to a covered official, means—

12 “(A) the Inspector General of the Federal  
 13 agency that employs the covered official; or

14 “(B) in the case of a covered official em-  
 15 ployed by a Federal agency that does not have  
 16 an Inspector General, the Inspector General of  
 17 the Department of Justice;

18 “(2) the term ‘covered official’ means—

19 “(A) a Federal law enforcement officer (as  
 20 defined in section 115);

21 “(B) an officer or employee of the Bureau  
 22 of Prisons; or

23 “(C) an officer or employee of the United  
 24 States Marshals Service; and

25 “(3) the term ‘medical distress’ includes breath-  
 26 ing difficulties.

1 “(b) REQUIREMENT.—

2 “(1) OFFENSE.—It shall be unlawful for a cov-  
3 ered official to negligently fail to obtain or provide  
4 immediate medical attention to an individual in Fed-  
5 eral custody who displays medical distress in the  
6 presence of the covered official, if the individual suf-  
7 fers unnecessary pain, injury, or death as a result of  
8 that failure.

9 “(2) PENALTY.—A covered official who violates  
10 paragraph (1) shall be fined under this title, impris-  
11 oned for not more than 1 year, or both.

12 “(3) STATE CIVIL ENFORCEMENT.—Whenever  
13 an attorney general of a State has reasonable cause  
14 to believe that a resident of the State has been ag-  
15 grievied by a violation of paragraph (1) by a covered  
16 official, the attorney general, or another official,  
17 agency, or entity designated by the State, may bring  
18 a civil action in any appropriate district court of the  
19 United States to obtain appropriate equitable and  
20 declaratory relief.

21 “(c) INSPECTOR GENERAL INVESTIGATION.—

22 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The appropriate Inspector  
23 General shall investigate any instance in which—

24 “(A) a covered official fails to obtain or  
25 provide immediate medical attention to an indi-

1           vidual in Federal custody who displays medical  
2           distress in the presence of the covered official;  
3           and

4           “(B) the individual suffers unnecessary  
5           pain, injury, or death as a result of the failure  
6           to obtain or provide immediate medical atten-  
7           tion.

8           “(2) REFERRAL FOR PROSECUTION.—If an In-  
9           spector General, in conducting an investigation  
10          under paragraph (1), concludes that the covered offi-  
11          cial acted negligently in failing to obtain or provide  
12          immediate medical attention to the individual in  
13          Federal custody, the Inspector General shall refer  
14          the case to the Attorney General for prosecution  
15          under this section.

16          “(3) CONFIDENTIAL COMPLAINT PROCESS.—  
17          The Inspector General of a Federal agency that em-  
18          ploys covered officials shall establish a process under  
19          which an individual may confidentially submit a  
20          complaint to the Inspector General regarding an in-  
21          cident described in paragraph (1) involving a covered  
22          official employed by the Federal agency (or, in the  
23          case of the Inspector General of the Department of  
24          Justice, involving a covered official employed by a

1 Federal agency that does not have an Inspector Gen-  
2 eral).

3 “(d) TRAINING.—The head of an agency that em-  
4 ploys covered officials shall provide training to each such  
5 covered official on obtaining or providing medical assist-  
6 ance to individuals in medical distress.”.

7 (b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—  
8 The table of sections for chapter 13 of title 18, United  
9 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-  
10 lowing:

“250. Medical attention for individuals in Federal custody displaying medical  
distress.”.

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