

117TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 4448

To authorize a pilot program to expand and intensify surveillance of self-harm in partnership with State and local public health departments, to establish a grant program to provide self-harm and suicide prevention services in hospital emergency departments, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 22, 2022

Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. MORAN) 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 authorize a pilot program to expand and intensify surveillance of self-harm in partnership with State and local public health departments, to establish a grant program to provide self-harm and suicide prevention services in hospital emergency departments, 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 “Suicide Prevention  
5       Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. SYNDROMIC SURVEILLANCE OF SELF-HARM BEHAV-**  
 2 **IORS PROGRAM.**

3 Title III of the Public Health Service Act is amended  
 4 by inserting after section 317U of such Act (42 U.S.C.  
 5 247b–23) the following:

6 **“SEC. 317V. SYNDROMIC SURVEILLANCE OF SELF-HARM BE-**  
 7 **HAVIORS PROGRAM.**

8 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award  
 9 grants to State, local, Tribal, and territorial public health  
 10 departments for the expansion of surveillance of self-harm.

11 “(b) DATA SHARING BY GRANTEES.—As a condition  
 12 of receipt of such grant under subsection (a), each grantee  
 13 shall agree to share with the Centers for Disease Control  
 14 and Prevention in real time, to the extent feasible and as  
 15 specified in the grant agreement, data on suicides and self-  
 16 harm for purposes of—

17 “(1) tracking and monitoring self-harm to in-  
 18 form response activities to suicide clusters;

19 “(2) informing prevention programming for  
 20 identified at-risk populations; and

21 “(3) conducting or supporting research.

22 “(c) DISAGGREGATION OF DATA.—The Secretary  
 23 shall provide for the data collected through surveillance  
 24 of self-harm under subsection (b) to be disaggregated by  
 25 the following categories:

26 “(1) Nonfatal self-harm data of any intent.

1 “(2) Data on suicidal ideation.

2 “(3) Data on self-harm where there is no evi-  
3 dence, whether implicit or explicit, of suicidal intent.

4 “(4) Data on self-harm where there is evidence,  
5 whether implicit or explicit, of suicidal intent.

6 “(5) Data on self-harm where suicidal intent is  
7 unclear based on the available evidence.

8 “(d) PRIORITY.—In making awards under subsection  
9 (a), the Secretary shall give priority to eligible entities that  
10 are—

11 “(1) located in a State with an age-adjusted  
12 rate of nonfatal suicidal behavior that is above the  
13 national rate of nonfatal suicidal behavior, as deter-  
14 mined by the Director of the Centers for Disease  
15 Control and Prevention;

16 “(2) serving an Indian Tribe (as defined in sec-  
17 tion 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-  
18 cation Assistance Act) with an age-adjusted rate of  
19 nonfatal suicidal behavior that is above the national  
20 rate of nonfatal suicidal behavior, as determined  
21 through appropriate mechanisms determined by the  
22 Secretary in consultation with Indian Tribes; or

23 “(3) located in a State with a high rate of cov-  
24 erage of statewide (or Tribal) emergency department

1 visits, as determined by the Director of the Centers  
2 for Disease Control and Prevention.

3 “(e) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—In making  
4 grants under this section, the Secretary shall make an ef-  
5 fort to ensure geographic distribution, taking into account  
6 the unique needs of rural communities, including—

7 “(1) communities with an incidence of individ-  
8 uals with serious mental illness, demonstrated suici-  
9 dal ideation or behavior, or suicide rates that are  
10 above the national average, as determined by the As-  
11 sistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance  
12 Use;

13 “(2) communities with a shortage of prevention  
14 and treatment services, as determined by the Assist-  
15 ant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use  
16 and the Administrator of the Health Resources and  
17 Services Administration; and

18 “(3) other appropriate community-level factors  
19 and social determinants of health such as income,  
20 employment, and education.

21 “(f) PERIOD OF PARTICIPATION.—To be selected as  
22 a grant recipient under this section, a State, local, Tribal,  
23 or territorial public health department shall agree to par-  
24 ticipate in the program for a period of not less than 4  
25 years.

1       “(g) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall  
2 provide technical assistance and training to grantees for  
3 collecting and sharing the data under subsection (b).

4       “(h) DATA SHARING BY HHS.—Subject to sub-  
5 section (b), the Secretary shall, with respect to data on  
6 self-harm that is collected pursuant to this section, share  
7 and integrate such data through—

8               “(1) the platform of the National Syndromic  
9 Surveillance Program Early Notification of Commu-  
10 nity Epidemics (ESSENCE) (or any successor plat-  
11 form);

12              “(2) the National Violent Death Reporting Sys-  
13 tem, as appropriate; or

14              “(3) another appropriate surveillance program,  
15 including such a program that collects data on sui-  
16 cides and self-harm among special populations, such  
17 as members of the military and veterans.

18       “(i) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION REGARDING APPLICA-  
19 BILITY OF PRIVACY PROTECTIONS.—Nothing in this sec-  
20 tion shall be construed to limit or alter the application  
21 of Federal or State law relating to the privacy of informa-  
22 tion to data or information that is collected or created  
23 under this section.

24       “(j) REPORT.—

1           “(1) SUBMISSION.—Not later than 3 years  
2 after the date of enactment of the Suicide Preven-  
3 tion Act, the Secretary shall evaluate the suicide and  
4 self-harm syndromic surveillance systems at the Fed-  
5 eral, State, and local levels and submit a report to  
6 Congress on the data collected under subsections (b)  
7 and (c) in a manner that prevents the disclosure of  
8 individually identifiable information, at a minimum,  
9 consistent with all applicable privacy laws and regu-  
10 lations.

11           “(2) CONTENTS.—In addition to the data col-  
12 lected under subsections (b) and (c), the report  
13 under paragraph (1) shall include—

14           “(A) challenges and gaps in data collection  
15 and reporting;

16           “(B) recommendations to address such  
17 gaps and challenges; and

18           “(C) a description of any public health re-  
19 sponses initiated at the Federal, State, or local  
20 level in response to the data collected.

21           “(k) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To  
22 carry out this section, there are authorized to be appro-  
23 priated \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2023 through  
24 2027.”.

1 **SEC. 3. GRANTS TO PROVIDE SELF-HARM AND SUICIDE**  
 2 **PREVENTION SERVICES.**

3 Part B of title V of the Public Health Service Act  
 4 (42 U.S.C. 290bb et seq.) is amended by adding at the  
 5 end the following:

6 **“SEC. 520N. GRANTS TO PROVIDE SELF-HARM AND SUICIDE**  
 7 **PREVENTION SERVICES.**

8 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award  
 9 grants to hospital emergency departments to provide self-  
 10 harm and suicide prevention services.

11 “(b) ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED.—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A hospital emergency de-  
 13 partment awarded a grant under subsection (a) shall  
 14 use amounts under the grant to implement a pro-  
 15 gram or protocol to better prevent suicide attempts  
 16 among hospital patients after discharge, which may  
 17 include—

18 “(A) screening patients for self-harm and  
 19 suicide in accordance with the standards of  
 20 practice described in subsection (e)(1) and  
 21 standards of care established by appropriate  
 22 medical and advocacy organizations;

23 “(B) providing patients short-term self-  
 24 harm and suicide prevention services in accord-  
 25 ance with the results of the screenings de-  
 26 scribed in subparagraph (A); and

1           “(C) referring patients, as appropriate, to  
2           a health care facility or provider for purposes of  
3           receiving long-term self-harm and suicide pre-  
4           vention services, and providing any additional  
5           follow up services and care identified as appro-  
6           priate as a result of the screenings and short-  
7           term self-harm and suicide prevention services  
8           described in subparagraphs (A) and (B).

9           “(2) USE OF FUNDS TO HIRE AND TRAIN  
10          STAFF.—Amounts awarded under subsection (a)  
11          may be used to hire clinical social workers, mental  
12          and behavioral health care professionals, and sup-  
13          port staff as appropriate, and to train existing staff  
14          and newly hired staff to carry out the activities de-  
15          scribed in paragraph (1).

16          “(c) GRANT TERMS.—A grant awarded under sub-  
17          section (a)—

18                 “(1) shall be for a period of 3 years; and

19                 “(2) may be renewed subject to the require-  
20          ments of this section.

21          “(d) APPLICATIONS.—A hospital emergency depart-  
22          ment seeking a grant under subsection (a) shall submit  
23          an application to the Secretary at such time, in such man-  
24          ner, and accompanied by such information as the Sec-  
25          retary may require.



1 “(e) STANDARDS OF PRACTICE.—

2 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days  
3 after the date of the enactment of this section, the  
4 Secretary shall develop standards of practice for  
5 screening patients for self-harm and suicide for pur-  
6 poses of carrying out subsection (b)(1)(C).

7 “(2) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall de-  
8 velop the standards of practice described in para-  
9 graph (1) in consultation with individuals and enti-  
10 ties with expertise in self-harm and suicide preven-  
11 tion, including public, private, and nonprofit entities.

12 “(f) REPORTING.—

13 “(1) REPORTS TO THE SECRETARY.—

14 “(A) IN GENERAL.—A hospital emergency  
15 department awarded a grant under subsection  
16 (a) shall, at least quarterly for the duration of  
17 the grant, submit to the Secretary a report  
18 evaluating the activities supported by the grant.

19 “(B) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The  
20 report required under subparagraph (A) shall  
21 include—

22 “(i) the number of patients receiv-  
23 ing—

24 “(I) screenings carried out at the  
25 hospital emergency department;

1 “(II) short-term self-harm and  
2 suicide prevention services at the hos-  
3 pital emergency department; and

4 “(III) referrals to health care fa-  
5 cilities for the purposes of receiving  
6 long-term self-harm and suicide pre-  
7 vention;

8 “(ii) information on the adherence of  
9 the hospital emergency department to the  
10 standards of practice described in sub-  
11 section (f)(1); and

12 “(iii) other information as the Sec-  
13 retary determines appropriate to evaluate  
14 the use of grant funds.

15 “(2) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than  
16 2 years after the date of the enactment of the Sui-  
17 cide Prevention Act, and biennially thereafter, the  
18 Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Health,  
19 Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and  
20 the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the  
21 House of Representatives a report on the grant pro-  
22 gram under this section, including—

23 “(A) a summary of reports received by the  
24 Secretary under paragraph (1); and

1                   “(B) an evaluation of the program by the  
2                   Secretary.

3           “(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To  
4 carry out this section, there are authorized to be appro-  
5 priated \$30,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2023 through  
6 2027.”.

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