

119TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 4903

To amend the Public Health Service Act to carry out, expand, and coordinate programs relating to plastic exposure health research, to authorize grants, contracts, and agreements with respect to such research, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 5, 2025

Ms. STEVENS (for herself and Mr. LUCAS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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## A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to carry out, expand, and coordinate programs relating to plastic exposure health research, to authorize grants, contracts, and agreements with respect to such research, 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 “Plastic Health Re-  
5       search Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. PLASTIC EXPOSURE HEALTH RESEARCH.**

2 (a) EXPANSION AND COORDINATION; RESEARCH  
3 GRANTS.—The Public Health Service Act is amended by  
4 inserting after section 399V–7 (42 U.S.C. 280g–18) the  
5 following:

6 **“SEC. 399V–8. PLASTIC EXPOSURE HEALTH RESEARCH.**

7 “(a) EXPANSION AND COORDINATION OF RESEARCH  
8 ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Ad-  
9 ministrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the  
10 Commissioner of Food and Drugs, the Administrator of  
11 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,  
12 the Director of the National Institute of Standards and  
13 Technology, and the Director of the National Institute of  
14 Environmental Health Sciences, shall carry out, expand,  
15 and coordinate programs for the conduct and support of  
16 research with respect to understanding plastic exposures  
17 and the potential health effects stemming from plastic ex-  
18 posure. The Secretary shall prioritize such research that—

19 “(1) promotes the improvement of scientific  
20 quality through the development of vetted research  
21 methods that are reproducible, improve com-  
22 parability of results among research studies, and de-  
23 velop standards definitions for microplastics and  
24 nanoplastics materials;

25 “(2) develops validated testing methodologies  
26 and reference materials for microplastics and nano-

1 plastics in different media that are reproducible and  
2 improve comparability of results among research  
3 studies; or

4 “(3) fills gaps in the field of potential health ef-  
5 fects research through the use of methods that im-  
6 prove the quality and comparability of scientific re-  
7 sults.

8 “(b) PLASTIC EXPOSURE HEALTH RESEARCH  
9 GRANTS.—

10 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consulta-  
11 tion with the Administrator of the Environmental  
12 Protection Agency, the Commissioner of Food and  
13 Drugs, the Administrator of the National Oceanic  
14 and Atmospheric Administration, the Director of the  
15 National Institute of Standards and Technology, and  
16 the Director of the National Institute of Environ-  
17 mental Health Sciences, may award grants or con-  
18 tracts to public entities, nonprofit entities, academic  
19 research institutions, or consortia of such entities  
20 (including such consortia that collaborate with pri-  
21 vate entities) to conduct scientific research on plastic  
22 exposure and the potential health effects stemming  
23 from such exposure. In awarding such grants and  
24 contracts, the Secretary shall prioritize research  
25 that—

1           “(A) improves the quality of scientific in-  
2           formation through the development of vetted re-  
3           search methods that are reproducible, improve  
4           comparability of results among research studies,  
5           and develop standard definitions for micro-  
6           plastic and nanoplastic materials;

7           “(B) develops validated testing methodolo-  
8           gies and reference materials for microplastics  
9           and nanoplastics in different media that are re-  
10          producible and improve comparability of results  
11          among research studies; or

12          “(C) fills gaps in the field of potential  
13          health effects research through the use of meth-  
14          ods that improve the quality and comparability  
15          of scientific results.

16          “(2) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible for a grant  
17          or contract under this subsection, an entity shall  
18          submit to the Secretary an application in such form,  
19          in such manner, and containing such agreements,  
20          assurances, and information as the Secretary deter-  
21          mines necessary.

22          “(3) REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the  
23          date of enactment of this section, and annually  
24          thereafter for each of the following 4 years, the Sec-  
25          retary shall submit to Congress, and make publicly

1 available, a report that provides an overview of the  
2 research conducted or supported under this section,  
3 together with any relevant findings.

4 “(4) INFORMATION SHARING.—The Secretary  
5 shall share the findings of the research supported by  
6 grants and contracts under this subsection with—

7 “(A) the heads of relevant institutes and  
8 agencies of the Department of Health and  
9 Human Services (including the Director of the  
10 National Institute of Environmental Health  
11 Sciences and the Commissioner of Food and  
12 Drugs);

13 “(B) the Administrator of the Environ-  
14 mental Protection Agency;

15 “(C) the Director of the National Institute  
16 of Standards and Technology;

17 “(D) the Administrator of the National  
18 Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and

19 “(E) the centers of excellence for plastic  
20 exposure health research described in section  
21 463C.

22 “(5) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—  
23 There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out  
24 this subsection \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years  
25 2026 through 2030.

1       “(c) PLASTIC EXPOSURE DEFINED.—In this section,  
 2 the term ‘plastic exposure’ means exposure to  
 3 macroplastics, microplastics, and nanoplastics, including  
 4 through plastic production and manufacturing, occupa-  
 5 tional exposure, environmental exposure, end-user inter-  
 6 action (such as handling and use of food packaging, manu-  
 7 factured goods, and textiles), plastic recycling, plastic deg-  
 8 radation through natural or human-made processes, and  
 9 plastic waste and disposal.”.

10       (b) CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE FOR PLASTIC EXPO-  
 11 SURE HEALTH RESEARCH.—The Public Health Service  
 12 Act is amended by inserting after section 463B (42 U.S.C.  
 13 2851–6) the following:

14       **“SEC. 463C. CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE FOR PLASTIC EXPO-  
 15 SURE HEALTH RESEARCH.**

16       “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through  
 17 the Director of the Institute (in this section referred to  
 18 as the ‘Secretary’) may award grants to, or enter into ap-  
 19 propriate funding agreements with, public entities, non-  
 20 profit entities, academic research institutions, or consortia  
 21 of such entities (including such consortia that collaborate  
 22 with private entities) to pay all or part of the cost of plan-  
 23 ning, establishing, or strengthening, and providing basic  
 24 operating support for, centers of excellence to conduct and  
 25 improve the quality of scientific research to inform public

1 health determinations and increase public awareness  
2 (where scientifically warranted) with respect to the poten-  
3 tial health effects caused by plastic exposure. Such centers  
4 shall prioritize research that—

5           “(1) develops standard material definitions;

6           “(2) improves the quality of scientific results to  
7 fill gaps in the field of research;

8           “(3) fills gaps in the field of health research  
9 through the use of methods that improve the quality  
10 and comparability of scientific results; or

11           “(4) develops vetted testing methodologies for  
12 microplastics and nanoplastics that can be replicated  
13 and can be compared to other testing methodologies.

14           “(b) PURPOSES OF CENTERS.—The purposes of the  
15 centers of excellence referred to in subsection (a) are—

16           “(1) to improve the quality of scientific results  
17 while researching the potential health effects stem-  
18 ming from plastic exposure, including identifying po-  
19 tential links between plastic exposure and such po-  
20 tential health effects;

21           “(2) to identify potential exposures to plastic  
22 and conduct hazard assessments and risk assess-  
23 ments; and

24           “(3) to increase public awareness (where sci-  
25 entifically warranted) of—

1           “(A) the potential health effects of plastic  
2           exposure, sources of such exposure, outcomes of  
3           hazard assessments, and the results of risk as-  
4           sessments relating to such exposure; and

5           “(B) the research referred to in—

6                   “(i) paragraph (1); or

7                   “(ii) section 399V–8(a).

8           “(c) USE OF FUNDS.—Funds made available under  
9           this section may be used for—

10           “(1) the development of plastic hazard, expo-  
11           sure, or risk assessment methodologies that can be  
12           replicated and compared to other methodologies,  
13           which shall include—

14                   “(A) the comprehensive characterization  
15                   and methods for characterization of the chem-  
16                   ical and physical properties of microplastics,  
17                   nanoplastics, macroplastics, and other plastics;

18                   “(B) the development of validated testing  
19                   methodologies for microplastics and nanoplas-  
20                   tics in different media that can be replicated  
21                   and compared to other testing methodologies;  
22                   and

23                   “(C) detailing the quality assurance and  
24                   quality control measures taken to improve the  
25                   scientific results;

1           “(2) the application of exposure methodologies  
2           (including both new and existing methodologies), if  
3           appropriately validated and controlled, to assess the  
4           potential burden of plastic exposures;

5           “(3) the support of research to assess potential  
6           health impacts of plastic exposure; and

7           “(4) increasing public awareness of research re-  
8           sults, as scientifically warranted.

9           “(d) POLICIES.—A grant or agreement under this  
10          section shall be entered into in accordance with policies  
11          established by the Secretary.

12          “(e) DURATION OF GRANT OR AGREEMENT.—A  
13          grant or agreement under this section shall be for a period  
14          of 5 years, and may be renewed by the Secretary for sub-  
15          sequent 5-year periods in the case of a center of excellence  
16          for which an appropriate technical and scientific peer re-  
17          view group established by the Secretary has—

18                 “(1) reviewed the operations of such center; and

19                 “(2) submitted to the Secretary a recommenda-  
20          tion that such grant or agreement be renewed.

21          “(f) COORDINATION AND INFORMATION SHARING  
22          WITH OTHER INSTITUTES AND AGENCIES.—

23                 “(1) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall co-  
24          ordinate the activities under this section with related  
25          activities of other institutes and agencies of the De-

1       partment of Health and Human Services (including  
2       the National Institute of Environmental Health  
3       Sciences and the Food and Drug Administration),  
4       the Environmental Protection Agency, the National  
5       Institute of Standards and Technology, and the Na-  
6       tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

7               “(2) INFORMATION SHARING.—The Secretary  
8       shall share research findings of the centers of excel-  
9       lence referred to in subsection (a) with other insti-  
10      tutes and agencies of the Department of Health and  
11      Human Services (including the National Institute of  
12      Environmental Health Sciences and the Food and  
13      Drug Administration), the Environmental Protection  
14      Agency, the National Institute of Standards and  
15      Technology, and the National Oceanic and Atmos-  
16      pheric Administration.

17              “(3) REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the  
18      date of enactment of this section, and annually  
19      thereafter for each of the following 4 years, the Sec-  
20      retary shall submit to Congress, and make publicly  
21      available, a report that provides an overview of the  
22      research conducted or supported under this section,  
23      together with any relevant findings.

24              “(g) PLASTIC EXPOSURE DEFINED.—In this section,  
25      the term ‘plastic exposure’ means exposure to

1 macroplastics, microplastics, and nanoplastics, including  
2 through plastic production and manufacturing, occupa-  
3 tional exposure, environmental exposure, end-user inter-  
4 action (such as handling and use of food packaging, manu-  
5 factured goods, and textiles), plastic recycling, plastic deg-  
6 radation through natural or human-made processes, and  
7 plastic waste and disposal.

8 “(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
9 is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section  
10 \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2030.”.

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