

119TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 8486

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a program to award grants for the development of predictive models to evaluate risk factors that contribute to the incidence of suicide among veterans, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 23, 2026

Mr. MACKENZIE (for himself and Mr. GOTTHEIMER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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## A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a program to award grants for the development of predictive models to evaluate risk factors that contribute to the incidence of suicide among veterans, 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 “Data Driven Suicide  
5 Prevention and Outreach Act of 2026”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS GRANT PRO-**  
2 **GRAM FOR PREDICTIVE MODELS TO EVALU-**  
3 **ATE RISK FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO**  
4 **SUICIDE AMONG VETERANS.**

5 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than one year after  
6 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of  
7 Veterans Affairs, acting through the Center for Innovation  
8 for Care and Payment of the Department of Veterans Af-  
9 fairs, shall establish and carry out a program (in this sec-  
10 tion referred to as the “Program”) to award grants to eli-  
11 gible organizations described in subsection (b) to use arti-  
12 ficial intelligence to develop a predictive model to evaluate  
13 risk factors contributing to the incidence of suicide among  
14 veterans.

15 (b) ELIGIBILITY.—An eligible organization described  
16 in this subsection is a nonprofit entity, academic institu-  
17 tion, private research organization, or other entity with  
18 demonstrated capability and experience—

19 (1) developing and deploying artificial intel-  
20 ligence and machine learning solutions;

21 (2) analyzing health care data, including de-  
22 identification and protection of—

23 (A) personally identifiable information; and

24 (B) protected health information;

1           (3) developing predictive models or decision-  
2       support tools used in clinical or population health  
3       settings;

4           (4) applying advanced statistical methods or  
5       machine learning techniques to large, complex health  
6       datasets; and

7           (5) complying with Department data security  
8       and interoperability standards.

9       (c) APPLICATIONS.—An eligible organization desiring  
10   a grant under the Program shall submit to the Secretary  
11   an application in such form, at such time, and containing  
12   such information and assurances as the Secretary deter-  
13   mines appropriate.

14       (d) SELECTION PROCEDURES.—

15           (1) NUMBER.—Subject to paragraph (4), the  
16       Secretary shall select not fewer than two eligible or-  
17       ganizations to which to award a grant under the  
18       Program.

19           (2) CRITERIA.—In selecting an eligible organi-  
20       zation pursuant to paragraph (1), the Secretary  
21       shall consider the following criteria:

22                (A) With respect to the VISN in which the  
23       organization is located—

24                       (i) the geographic distribution;

- 1 (ii) the complexity of applicable Vet-  
2 erans Health Administration facilities; and  
3 (iii) the density of the veteran popu-  
4 lation.

5 (B) Geographic proximity to Veterans  
6 Health Administration facilities.

7 (C) Demonstrated experience in collabo-  
8 rating with local Department facilities and com-  
9 munity partners.

10 (D) Demonstrated capability to deploy a  
11 predictive analysis solution in a health care sys-  
12 tem that serves more than 500,000 patients  
13 and beneficiaries.

14 (3) PRIORITY.—In evaluating the criteria de-  
15 scribed in paragraph (2), the Secretary shall give  
16 priority for selection under paragraph (1) to eligible  
17 organizations—

18 (A) located in areas with—

19 (i) a high rate of suicide among vet-  
20 erans;

21 (ii) a high rate of calls to the Vet-  
22 erans Crisis Line; and

23 (iii) long wait times for mental health  
24 care services at Department facilities;

1 (B) with experience in administering pre-  
2 dictive analytics or population health solutions  
3 for Government-owned health care systems pur-  
4 suant to an agreement with the Federal Gov-  
5 ernment (including the Department of Veterans  
6 Affairs, the Department of Defense, and the  
7 Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services);

8 (C) with a demonstrated capability to de-  
9 liver tools that are—

10 (i) explicable;

11 (ii) interoperable; and

12 (iii) clinically actionable;

13 (D) that employ data scientists, clinicians,  
14 and suicide prevention specialists;

15 (E) with existing infrastructure for secure  
16 data storage and transmission that complies  
17 with Federal cybersecurity requirements; and

18 (F) that agree to make any predictive  
19 model or finding resulting from activities fund-  
20 ed with a grant under this section available to  
21 the Secretary for Department of Veterans Af-  
22 fairs-wide implementation and evaluation.

23 (4) LIMITATION.—The Secretary may not, pur-  
24 suant to paragraph (1), select an eligible organiza-  
25 tion located in a VISN in which another eligible or-

1        ganization in receipt of a grant under the Program  
2        is located.

3        (e) CAPABILITY.—Each eligible organization in re-  
4        ceipt of a grant under the Program shall ensure that the  
5        predictive model developed using such grant has the capa-  
6        bility to integrate data under the jurisdiction of the Vet-  
7        erans Benefits Administration, including the military serv-  
8        ice records of veterans, with clinical data under the juris-  
9        diction of the Veterans Health Administration.

10       (f) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in subsection  
11       (d) may be construed to require an eligible organization  
12       in receipt of a grant under the Program to transfer to  
13       the Secretary ownership of the predictive model developed  
14       using such grant, or any proprietary technology associated  
15       with such predictive model.

16       (g) TERMINATION DATE.—The authority of the Sec-  
17       retary to carry out the pilot program under this section  
18       shall terminate on September 30, 2029.

19       (h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

20            (1) The term “artificial intelligence” has the  
21            meaning given such term in section 238 of the John  
22            S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for  
23            Fiscal Year 2019 (Public Law 115–232; 10 U.S.C.  
24            2358 note).

1           (2) The term “veteran” has the meaning given  
2           such term in section 101 of title 38, United States  
3           Code.

4           (3) The term “Veterans Crisis Line” means the  
5           toll-free hotline for veterans established and oper-  
6           ated under section 1720F of such title.

7           (4) The term “VISN” means a Veteran Inte-  
8           grated Services Network.

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