

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 448

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 12, 2009

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

AN ACT

To protect seniors in the United States from elder abuse by establishing specialized elder abuse prosecution and research programs and activities to aid victims of elder abuse, to provide training to prosecutors and other law enforcement related to elder abuse prevention and protection, to establish programs that provide for emergency crisis response teams to combat elder abuse, 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 “Elder Abuse Victims
5 Act of 2009”.

6 **TITLE I—ELDER ABUSE VICTIMS**

7 **SEC. 101. ANALYSIS, REPORT, AND RECOMMENDATIONS RE-**
8 **LATED TO ELDER JUSTICE PROGRAMS.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of ap-
10 propriations to carry out this section, the Attorney Gen-
11 eral, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and
12 Human Services, shall carry out the following:

13 (1) STUDY.—Conduct a study of laws and prac-
14 tices relating to elder abuse, neglect, and exploi-
15 tation, which shall include—

16 (A) a comprehensive description of State
17 laws and practices relating to elder abuse, ne-
18 glect, and exploitation;

19 (B) a comprehensive analysis of the effec-
20 tiveness of such State laws and practices; and

21 (C) an examination of State laws and prac-
22 tices relating to specific elder abuse, neglect,
23 and exploitation issues, including—

24 (i) the definition of—

25 (I) “elder”;

- 1 (II) “abuse”;
2 (III) “neglect”;
3 (IV) “exploitation”; and
4 (V) such related terms the Attor-
5 ney General determines to be appro-
6 priate;
7 (ii) mandatory reporting laws, with re-
8 spect to—
9 (I) who is a mandated reporter;
10 (II) to whom must they report
11 and within what time frame; and
12 (III) any consequences for not
13 reporting;
14 (iii) evidentiary, procedural, sen-
15 tencing, choice of remedies, and data re-
16 tention issues relating to pursuing cases
17 relating to elder abuse, neglect, and exploi-
18 tation;
19 (iv) laws requiring reporting of all
20 nursing home deaths to the county coroner
21 or to some other individual or entity;
22 (v) fiduciary laws, including guardian-
23 ship and power of attorney laws;
24 (vi) laws that permit or encourage
25 banks and bank employees to prevent and

1 report suspected elder abuse, neglect, and
2 exploitation;

3 (vii) laws relating to fraud and related
4 activities in connection with mail, tele-
5 marketing, or the Internet;

6 (viii) laws that may impede research
7 on elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation;

8 (ix) practices relating to the enforce-
9 ment of laws relating to elder abuse, ne-
10 glect, and exploitation; and

11 (x) practices relating to other aspects
12 of elder justice.

13 (2) DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN.—Develop objec-
14 tives, priorities, policies, and a long-term plan for
15 elder justice programs and activities relating to—

16 (A) prevention and detection of elder
17 abuse, neglect, and exploitation;

18 (B) intervention and treatment for victims
19 of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation;

20 (C) training, evaluation, and research re-
21 lated to elder justice programs and activities;
22 and

23 (D) improvement of the elder justice sys-
24 tem in the United States.

1 (3) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the
2 date of enactment of this Act, submit to the chair-
3 man and ranking member of the Special Committee
4 on Aging of the Senate, and the Speaker and minor-
5 ity leader of the House of Representatives, and the
6 Secretary of Health and Human Services, and make
7 available to the States, a report that contains—

8 (A) the findings of the study conducted
9 under paragraph (1);

10 (B) a description of the objectives, prior-
11 ities, policies, and a long-term plan developed
12 under paragraph (2); and

13 (C) a list, description, and analysis of the
14 best practices used by States to develop, imple-
15 ment, maintain, and improve elder justice sys-
16 tems, based on such findings.

17 (b) GAO RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 18
18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comp-
19 troller General shall review existing Federal programs and
20 initiatives in the Federal criminal justice system relevant
21 to elder justice and shall submit to Congress—

22 (1) a report on such programs and initiatives;
23 and

1 (2) any recommendations the Comptroller Gen-
2 eral determines are appropriate to improve elder jus-
3 tice in the United States.

4 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
5 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
6 \$6,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2009 through
7 2015.

8 **SEC. 102. VICTIM ADVOCACY GRANTS.**

9 (a) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The Attorney General,
10 after consultation with the Secretary of Health and
11 Human Services, may award grants to eligible entities to
12 study the special needs of victims of elder abuse, neglect,
13 and exploitation.

14 (b) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—Funds awarded pur-
15 suant to subsection (a) shall be used for pilot programs
16 that—

17 (1) develop programs for and provide training
18 to health care, social, and protective services pro-
19 viders, law enforcement, fiduciaries (including
20 guardians), judges and court personnel, and victim
21 advocates; and

22 (2) examine special approaches designed to
23 meet the needs of victims of elder abuse, neglect,
24 and exploitation.

1 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
2 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
3 \$3,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2009 through
4 2015.

5 **SEC. 103. SUPPORTING LOCAL PROSECUTORS AND COURTS**
6 **IN ELDER JUSTICE MATTERS.**

7 (a) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—Subject to the avail-
8 ability of appropriations under this section, the Attorney
9 General, after consultation with the Secretary of Health
10 and Human Services, shall award grants to eligible enti-
11 ties to provide training, technical assistance, policy devel-
12 opment, multidisciplinary coordination, and other types of
13 support to local prosecutors and courts handling elder jus-
14 tice-related cases, including—

15 (1) funding specially designated elder justice
16 positions or units in local prosecutors' offices and
17 local courts; and

18 (2) funding the creation of a Center for the
19 Prosecution of Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploi-
20 tation to advise and support local prosecutors and
21 courts nationwide in the pursuit of cases involving
22 elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

23 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
24 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section

1 \$6,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2009 through
2 2015.

3 **SEC. 104. SUPPORTING STATE PROSECUTORS AND COURTS**
4 **IN ELDER JUSTICE MATTERS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of ap-
6 propriations under this section, the Attorney General,
7 after consultation with the Secretary of Health and
8 Human Services, shall award grants to eligible entities to
9 provide training, technical assistance, multidisciplinary co-
10 ordination, policy development, and other types of support
11 to State prosecutors and courts, employees of State Attor-
12 neys General, and Medicaid Fraud Control Units handling
13 elder justice-related matters.

14 (b) CREATING SPECIALIZED POSITIONS.—Grants
15 under this section may be made for—

16 (1) the establishment of specially designated
17 elder justice positions or units in State prosecutors’
18 offices and State courts; and

19 (2) the creation of a position to coordinate elder
20 justice-related cases, training, technical assistance,
21 and policy development for State prosecutors and
22 courts.

23 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
24 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section

1 \$6,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2009 through
2 2015.

3 **SEC. 105. SUPPORTING LAW ENFORCEMENT IN ELDER JUS-**
4 **TICE MATTERS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of ap-
6 propriations under this section, the Attorney General,
7 after consultation with the Secretary of Health and
8 Human Services, the Postmaster General, and the Chief
9 Postal Inspector for the United States Postal Inspection
10 Service, shall award grants to eligible entities to provide
11 training, technical assistance, multidisciplinary coordina-
12 tion, policy development, and other types of support to po-
13 lice, sheriffs, detectives, public safety officers, corrections
14 personnel, and other first responders who handle elder jus-
15 tice-related matters, to fund specially designated elder jus-
16 tice positions or units designed to support first responders
17 in elder justice matters.

18 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
19 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
20 \$8,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2009 through
21 2015.

22 **SEC. 106. EVALUATIONS.**

23 (a) GRANTS UNDER THIS TITLE.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the grant
2 programs under this title, the Attorney General
3 shall—

4 (A) require each recipient of a grant to use
5 a portion of the funds made available through
6 the grant to conduct a validated evaluation of
7 the effectiveness of the activities carried out
8 through the grant by such recipient; or

9 (B) as the Attorney General considers ap-
10 propriate, use a portion of the funds available
11 under this title for a grant program under this
12 title to provide assistance to an eligible entity to
13 conduct a validated evaluation of the effective-
14 ness of the activities carried out through such
15 grant program by each of the grant recipients.

16 (2) APPLICATIONS.—

17 (A) SUBMISSION.—To be eligible to receive
18 a grant under this title, an entity shall submit
19 an application to the Attorney General at such
20 time, in such manner, and containing such in-
21 formation as the Attorney General may require,
22 which shall include—

23 (i) a proposal for the evaluation re-
24 quired in accordance with paragraph
25 (1)(A); and

1 (ii) the amount of assistance under
2 paragraph (1)(B) the entity is requesting,
3 if any.

4 (B) REVIEW AND ASSISTANCE.—

5 (i) IN GENERAL.—An employee of the
6 Department of Justice, after consultation
7 with an employee of the Department of
8 Health and Human Services with expertise
9 in evaluation methodology, shall review
10 each application described in subparagraph
11 (A) and determine whether the method-
12 ology described in the proposal under sub-
13 paragraph (A)(i) is adequate to gather
14 meaningful information.

15 (ii) DENIAL.—If the reviewing em-
16 ployee determines the methodology de-
17 scribed in such proposal is inadequate, the
18 reviewing employee shall recommend that
19 the Attorney General deny the application
20 for the grant, or make recommendations
21 for how the application should be amended.

22 (iii) NOTICE TO APPLICANT.—If the
23 Attorney General denies the application on
24 the basis of such proposal, the Attorney
25 General shall inform the applicant of the

1 reasons the application was denied, and
2 offer assistance to the applicant in modi-
3 fying the proposal.

4 (b) OTHER GRANTS.—Subject to the availability of
5 appropriations under this section, the Attorney General
6 shall award grants to appropriate entities to conduct vali-
7 dated evaluations of grant activities that are funded by
8 Federal funds not provided under this title, or other funds,
9 to reduce elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

10 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
11 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
12 \$7,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2009 through
13 2015.

14 **SEC. 107. DEFINITIONS.**

15 In this title:

16 (1) ELDER.—The term “elder” means an indi-
17 vidual age 60 or older.

18 (2) ELDER JUSTICE.—The term “elder justice”
19 means—

20 (A) from a societal perspective, efforts
21 to—

22 (i) prevent, detect, treat, intervene in,
23 and prosecute elder abuse, neglect, and ex-
24 ploitation; and

1 (ii) protect elders with diminished ca-
2 pacity while maximizing their autonomy;
3 and

4 (B) from an individual perspective, the rec-
5 ognition of an elder’s rights, including the right
6 to be free of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

7 (3) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—The term “eligible
8 entity” means a State or local government agency,
9 Indian tribe or tribal organization, or any other pub-
10 lic or nonprofit private entity that is engaged in and
11 has expertise in issues relating to elder justice or a
12 field necessary to promote elder justice efforts.

13 **TITLE II—ELDER SERVE VICTIM** 14 **GRANT PROGRAMS**

15 **SEC. 201. ESTABLISHMENT OF ELDER SERVE VICTIM** 16 **GRANT PROGRAMS.**

17 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Attorney General, acting
18 through the Director of the Office of Victims of Crime
19 of the Department of Justice (in this section referred to
20 as the “Director”), shall, subject to appropriations, carry
21 out a three-year grant program to be known as the Elder
22 Serve Victim grant program (in this section referred to
23 as the “Program”) to provide grants to eligible entities
24 to establish programs to facilitate and coordinate pro-

1 grams described in subsection (e) for victims of elder
2 abuse.

3 (b) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTEEES.—

4 To be eligible to receive a grant under the Program, an
5 entity must meet the following criteria:

6 (1) ELIGIBLE CRIME VICTIM ASSISTANCE PRO-
7 GRAM.—The entity is a crime victim assistance pro-
8 gram receiving a grant under the Victims of Crime
9 Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 1401 et seq.) for the period
10 described in subsection (c)(2) with respect to the
11 grant sought under this section.

12 (2) COORDINATION WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY
13 BASED AGENCIES AND SERVICES.—The entity shall
14 demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Director that
15 such entity has a record of community coordination
16 or established contacts with other county and local
17 services that serve elderly individuals.

18 (3) ABILITY TO CREATE ECRT ON TIMELY
19 BASIS.—The entity shall demonstrate to the satisfac-
20 tion of the Director the ability of the entity to cre-
21 ate, not later than 6 months after receiving such
22 grant, an Emergency Crisis Response Team pro-
23 gram described in subsection (e)(1) and the pro-
24 grams described in subsection (e)(2).

1 For purposes of meeting the criteria described in para-
2 graph (2), for each year an entity receives a grant under
3 this section the entity shall provide a record of community
4 coordination or established contacts described in such
5 paragraph through memoranda of understanding, con-
6 tracts, subcontracts, and other such documentation.

7 (c) ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.—

8 (1) CONSULTATION.—Each program established
9 pursuant to this section shall be developed and car-
10 ried out in consultation with the following entities,
11 as appropriate:

12 (A) Relevant Federal, State, and local pub-
13 lic and private agencies and entities, relating to
14 elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation and other
15 crimes against elderly individuals.

16 (B) Local law enforcement including po-
17 lice, sheriffs, detectives, public safety officers,
18 corrections personnel, prosecutors, medical ex-
19 aminers, investigators, and coroners.

20 (C) Long-term care and nursing facilities.

21 (2) GRANT PERIOD.—Grants under the Pro-
22 gram shall be issued for a three-year period.

23 (3) LOCATIONS.—The Program shall be carried
24 out in six geographically and demographically di-
25 verse locations, taking into account—

1 (A) the number of elderly individuals resid-
2 ing in or near an area; and

3 (B) the difficulty of access to immediate
4 short-term housing and health services for vic-
5 tims of elder abuse.

6 (d) PERSONNEL.—In providing care and services,
7 each program established pursuant to this section may
8 employ a staff to assist in creating an Emergency Crisis
9 Response Teams under subsection (e)(1).

10 (e) USE OF GRANTS.—

11 (1) EMERGENCY CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM.—
12 Each entity that receives a grant under this section
13 shall use such grant to establish an Emergency Cri-
14 sis Response Team program by not later than the
15 date that is six months after the entity receives the
16 grant. Under such program the following shall
17 apply:

18 (A) Such program shall include immediate,
19 short-term emergency services, including shel-
20 ter, care services, food, clothing, transportation
21 to medical or legal appointment as appropriate,
22 and any other life services deemed necessary by
23 the entity for victims of elder abuse.

24 (B) Such program shall provide services to
25 victims of elder abuse, including those who have

1 been referred to the program through the adult
2 protective services agency of the local law en-
3 forcement or any other relevant law enforce-
4 ment or referral agency.

5 (C) A victim of elder abuse may not re-
6 ceive short-term housing under the program for
7 more than 30 consecutive days.

8 (D) The entity that established the pro-
9 gram shall enter into arrangements with the
10 relevant local law enforcement agencies so that
11 the program receives quarterly reports from
12 such agencies on elder abuse.

13 (2) ADDITIONAL SERVICES REQUIRED TO BE
14 PROVIDED.—Not later than one year after the date
15 an entity receives a grant under this section, such
16 entity shall have established the following programs
17 (and community collaborations to support such pro-
18 grams):

19 (A) COUNSELING.—A program that pro-
20 vides counseling and assistance for victims of
21 elder abuse accessing health care, educational,
22 pension, or other benefits for which seniors may
23 be eligible under Federal or applicable State
24 law.

1 (B) MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING.—A
2 program that provides mental health screenings
3 for victims of elder abuse to identify and seek
4 assistance for potential mental health disorders
5 such as depression or substance abuse.

6 (C) EMERGENCY LEGAL ADVOCACY.—A
7 program that provides legal advocacy for vic-
8 tims of elder abuse and, as appropriate, their
9 families.

10 (D) JOB PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE.—A pro-
11 gram that provides job placement assistance
12 and information on employment, training, or
13 volunteer opportunities for victims of elder
14 abuse.

15 (E) BEREAVEMENT COUNSELING.—A pro-
16 gram that provides bereavement counseling for
17 families of victims of elder abuse.

18 (F) OTHER SERVICES.—A program that
19 provides such other care, services, and assist-
20 ance as the entity considers appropriate for
21 purposes of the program.

22 (f) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Director shall
23 enter into contracts with private entities with experience
24 in elder abuse coordination or victim services to provide

1 such technical assistance to grantees under this section
2 as the entity determines appropriate.

3 (g) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 12
4 months after the commencement of the Program, and an-
5 nually thereafter, the entity shall submit a report to the
6 Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on the
7 Judiciary of the House of Representatives, and the Chair-
8 man and Ranking Member of the Special Committee on
9 Aging of the Senate. Each report shall include the fol-
10 lowing:

11 (1) A description and assessment of the imple-
12 mentation of the Program.

13 (2) An assessment of the effectiveness of the
14 Program in providing care and services to seniors,
15 including a comparative assessment of effectiveness
16 for each of the locations designated under subsection
17 (c)(3) for the Program.

18 (3) An assessment of the effectiveness of the
19 coordination for programs described in subsection
20 (e) in contributing toward the effectiveness of the
21 Program.

22 (4) Such recommendations as the entity con-
23 siders appropriate for modifications of the Program
24 in order to better provide care and services to sen-
25 iors.

1 (h) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section:

2 (1) ELDER ABUSE.—The term “elder abuse”
3 means any type of violence or abuse, whether mental
4 or physical, inflicted upon an elderly individual, and
5 any type of criminal financial exploitation of an el-
6 derly individual.

7 (2) ELDERLY INDIVIDUAL.—The term “elderly
8 individual” means an individual who is age 60 or
9 older.

10 (i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
11 authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Jus-
12 tice to carry out this section \$3,000,000 for each of the
13 fiscal years 2009 through 2011.

Passed the House of Representatives February 11,
2009.

Attest: LORRAINE C. MILLER,
Clerk.