

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4309

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a grant program to facilitate the installation, on bridges, of evidence-based suicide deterrents, including suicide prevention nets and barriers, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 12, 2019

Mr. BEYER (for himself, Mr. KATKO, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a grant program to facilitate the installation, on bridges, of evidence-based suicide deterrents, including suicide prevention nets and barriers, 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 “Barriers to Suicide
5 Act of 2019”.

1 **SEC. 2. GRANT PROGRAM.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
3 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Trans-
4 portation shall establish a program (in this section re-
5 ferred to as the “Program”) to facilitate the installation
6 of evidence-based suicide deterrents on bridges, including
7 suicide prevention nets and barriers.

8 (b) GRANT AUTHORITY.—In carrying out the Pro-
9 gram, the Secretary may make grants on a competitive
10 basis in accordance with this section.

11 (c) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS.—The Secretary may
12 make a grant under the Program to a State or a political
13 subdivision of a State.

14 (d) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible for a grant under
15 the Program, an entity described in subsection (c) shall
16 submit to the Secretary an application in such form, at
17 such time, and containing such information as the Sec-
18 retary determines appropriate.

19 (e) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—The Secretary may make
20 a grant under the Program only for a project that facili-
21 tates the installation on a bridge of—

22 (1) a suicide prevention net;

23 (2) a suicide prevention barrier; or

24 (3) any other evidence-based suicide deterrent
25 that is determined by the Secretary to be appro-
26 priate.

1 (f) PRIORITY.—In making a grant under the Pro-
2 gram, the Secretary shall give priority to a project located
3 in an area with a high rate of suicide or other priority
4 characteristics, as determined by the Secretary.

5 (g) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost
6 of a project assisted with a grant under the Program may
7 not exceed 80 percent.

8 (h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

9 (1) STATE.—The term “State” means each
10 State of the United States, the District of Columbia,
11 each commonwealth, territory, or possession of the
12 United States, and each federally recognized Indian
13 Tribe.

14 (2) EVIDENCE-BASED SUICIDE DETERRENT.—
15 The term “evidence-based suicide deterrent” means
16 a suicide deterrent that demonstrates a rationale
17 based on high-quality research findings or positive
18 evaluation that such deterrent is likely to reduce or
19 prevent suicide, and includes ongoing efforts to ex-
20 amine the effects of such deterrent.

21 (i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
22 authorized to be appropriated to carry out the Program
23 \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2020 through 2024.

1 **SEC. 3. TITLE 23 AMENDMENTS.**

2 (a) NATIONAL HIGHWAY PERFORMANCE PRO-
 3 GRAM.—Section 119(d)(2)(I) of title 23, United States
 4 Code, is amended by striking “Highway System.” and
 5 adding “Highway System, including installation of safety
 6 barriers and nets on bridges of the National Highway Sys-
 7 tem.”.

8 (b) SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANTS.—
 9 Section 133(b)(4) of title 23, United States Code, is
 10 amended by striking “crossings.” and adding “crossings
 11 and installation of safety barriers and nets on bridges.”.

12 **SEC. 4. STUDY ON EFFECTIVENESS OF SUICIDE PREVEN-**
 13 **TION NETS AND BARRIERS FOR STRUCTURES**
 14 **OTHER THAN BRIDGES.**

15 (a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United
 16 States shall conduct a study to identify—

17 (1) the types of structures, other than bridges,
 18 that attract a high number of individuals attempting
 19 suicide-by-jumping;

20 (2) the characteristics that distinguish struc-
 21 tures identified under paragraph (1) from similar
 22 structures that do not attract a high number of indi-
 23 viduals attempting suicide-by-jumping;

24 (3) the types of nets or barriers that are effec-
 25 tive at reducing suicide-by-jumping with respect to
 26 the structures identified under paragraph (1);

1 (4) methods of reducing suicide-by-jumping
2 with respect to the structures identified under para-
3 graph (1) other than nets and barriers;

4 (5) quantitative measures of the effectiveness of
5 the nets and barriers identified under paragraph (3);

6 (6) quantitative measures of the effectiveness of
7 the additional methods identified under paragraph
8 (4);

9 (7) the entities that typically install the nets
10 and barriers identified under paragraph (3); and

11 (8) the costs of the nets and barriers identified
12 under paragraph (3).

13 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
14 of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall
15 submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infra-
16 structure and the Committee on Energy and Commerce
17 of the House of Representatives and the Committee on
18 Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the Com-
19 mittee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the
20 Senate a report on the results of the study conducted
21 under subsection (a).

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