

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8067

To direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, to conduct or support research related to the United States health care system’s response to COVID–19, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 18, 2020

Mr. BEYER (for himself, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, and Mrs. DINGELL) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, to conduct or support research related to the United States health care system’s response to COVID–19, 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 “Addressing COVID-
5 19 Health Disparities Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. RESEARCH ON UNITED STATES HEALTH CARE SYS-**
2 **TEM'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and
4 Human Services, acting through the Director of the Agen-
5 cy for Healthcare Research and Quality, shall conduct or
6 support research related to the United States health care
7 system's response to COVID-19, including with respect
8 to—

9 (1) the expansion and efficacy of telehealth use,
10 including—

11 (A) identifying obstacles to access for vet-
12 erans, the elderly, and low-income communities;

13 (B) evaluating and identifying potential
14 gaps or other weaknesses that bear on racial
15 and ethnic disparities in COVID-19 infection
16 rates, severity of symptoms, and outcomes;

17 (C) gaps in compliance with health care
18 privacy and security rules; and

19 (D) evaluate whether access to, or treat-
20 ment associated with, telemedicine and care de-
21 livered in different settings varied by racial and
22 ethnic group; and

23 (2) conducting and support rapid turnaround
24 research to—

25 (A) identify health care strategies that
26 help mitigate racial and ethnic disparities in

1 COVID–19 infection rates, severity of symp-
2 toms, and outcomes;

3 (B) identify health care-related factors
4 contributing to such disparities racial and eth-
5 nic disparities in COVID–19 infection rates,
6 hospitalizations, severity of disease, complica-
7 tions, and outcomes;

8 (C) provide recommendations on ensuring
9 equity in access to other health care interven-
10 tions, such as flu and pneumococcal pneumonia
11 vaccination, that may be advanced to mitigate
12 such disparities, going forward;

13 (D) identify deficiencies in the health care
14 system’s supply chain; and

15 (E) shortfalls in the health care delivery
16 planning, coordination, and capacity, including
17 health care delivery to vulnerable communities.

18 (b) PROTOCOLS ON COVID–19 DISPARITIES.—The
19 Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through
20 the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and
21 Quality, shall coordinate cross-agency engagement with
22 leaders from racial and ethnic minority groups and other
23 populations disproportionately affected by COVID–19—

1 (1) to develop protocols that ensure these
2 groups have timely access to safe and effective
3 COVID–19 vaccines; and

4 (2) to provide guidance on a COVID–19 vac-
5 cination strategy that takes into account racial and
6 ethnic disparities in COVID–19 infection rates, se-
7 verity of symptoms, and health outcomes.

8 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
9 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
10 \$121,000,000, to remain available until expended.

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