

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 696

To designate the same individual serving as the Chief Nurse Officer of the Public Health Service as the National Nurse for Public Health.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 7, 2019

Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To designate the same individual serving as the Chief Nurse Officer of the Public Health Service as the National Nurse for Public Health.

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 “National Nurse Act
5 of 2019”.

6 **SEC. 2. NATIONAL NURSE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH.**

7 Title XVII of the Public Health Service Act (42
8 U.S.C. 300u et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
9 the following:

1 **“SEC. 1712. NATIONAL NURSE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH.**

2 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The same individual des-
3 ignated as the Chief Nurse Officer of the Public Health
4 Service under section 205 shall also be designated by the
5 Secretary as the National Nurse for Public Health.

6 “(b) AUTHORITY.—The National Nurse for Public
7 Health shall have the authority and flexibility to carry out
8 the following:

9 “(1) Provide leadership and coordination of
10 Public Health Service nursing professional affairs
11 for the Office of the Surgeon General and other
12 agencies of the Public Health Service, including pro-
13 viding representation for the Government of the
14 United States at the Global Forum for Government
15 Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers and serving as
16 a member of the Federal Nursing Service Council.

17 “(2) Represent the Surgeon General and the
18 agencies of Public Health Service in communications
19 with groups and societies concerned with nursing
20 issues at the local, State, national, and international
21 levels.

22 “(3) Provide guidance and advice to the Sur-
23 geon General and the Nurse Professional Advisory
24 Committee on matters such as standards, recruit-
25 ment, retention, readiness, and career development

1 of nurses employed by and contracted with agencies
2 of the Public Health Service.

3 “(4) Conduct outreach and education for pur-
4 poses of paragraphs (5) through (7).

5 “(5) Provide guidance and leadership for activi-
6 ties to promote the public health, including encour-
7 aging nurses and other health professionals to be
8 volunteers and developing projects that educate the
9 public about and engage the public in prevention
10 practices to achieve better health.

11 “(6) Provide guidance and leadership to encour-
12 age nurses to engage in furthering their education in
13 order to conduct nursing research, increase the
14 awareness of evidence-based practice, and educate
15 future nurses.

16 “(7) Provide guidance and leadership for activi-
17 ties that will increase public safety and emergency
18 preparedness.

19 “(8) Prepare and publish a biennial report on
20 the state of the Commissioned Corps of the Public
21 Health Service Nurse Category.

22 “(c) NATIONAL HEALTH PRIORITIES—NATIONAL
23 PREVENTION STRATEGY.—

24 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The National Nurse for
25 Public Health, in cooperation with the Surgeon Gen-

1 eral of the Public Health Service, heads of the agen-
 2 cies of the Public Health Service, States, and orga-
 3 nizations that represent health professionals, shall
 4 continue to participate in the identification of na-
 5 tional health priorities.

6 “(2) ADDRESSING NATIONAL HEALTH PRIOR-
 7 ITIES.—The National Nurse for Public Health, in
 8 addressing national health priorities, shall encourage
 9 volunteerism of nurses and other individuals, and
 10 strengthen the relationship between Government
 11 agencies and health-related national organizations.

12 “(3) COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECTS.—

13 “(A) IMPLEMENTATION.—In addressing
 14 national health priorities, the National Nurse
 15 for Public Health shall—

16 “(i) provide guidance and coordination
 17 on recommended activities to organiza-
 18 tions;

19 “(ii) acknowledge successful programs
 20 and encourage their replication;

21 “(iii) promote the dissemination of
 22 evidence-based practice in educating the
 23 public on health promotion and disease
 24 prevention activities;

1 “(iv) encourage practicing nurses and
2 other health professionals, including retired
3 health professionals and students enrolled
4 in health professional programs, to partici-
5 pate in health promotion activities and rep-
6 licate successful health promotion activities
7 in their local communities; and

8 “(v) collaborate with Federal agencies
9 to monitor activities being conducted
10 through the collection and evaluation of
11 data to determine if national health prior-
12 ities are being addressed.

13 “(B) OUTREACH AND EDUCATION.—In
14 conducting outreach and education under sub-
15 section (b)(4), the National Nurse for Public
16 Health shall give priority to the inclusion of di-
17 verse approaches, including social media cam-
18 paigns, to address national health priorities.

19 “(C) DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.—
20 The National Nurse for Public Health shall dis-
21 seminate information to governmental agencies,
22 schools, and community-based, nonprofit orga-
23 nizations interested in health promotion and

- 1 improving public health through community ac-
- 2 tion.”.

