

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6940

To direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to assess how Executive departments address mental health crisis prevention and awareness, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 6, 2026

Mrs. BIGGS of South Carolina 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 to assess how Executive departments address mental health crisis prevention and awareness, 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 “Hope Heals Act of
5 2026”.

6 **SEC. 2. MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS PREVENTION AND AWARE-**
7 **NESS.**

8 (a) ASSESSMENT.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
2 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Sec-
3 retary of Health and Human Services (in this sec-
4 tion referred to as the “Secretary”) shall assess—

5 (A) the feasibility of improving coordina-
6 tion between Executive departments that pro-
7 vide direct services to the public, with respect to
8 identifying—

9 (i) any individual experiencing a men-
10 tal health crisis; or

11 (ii) any individual that expresses con-
12 cern that they may be experiencing such a
13 crisis or related distress;

14 (B) any opportunity for an Executive de-
15 partment to improve how such department
16 shares information, best practices, and referral
17 mechanisms related to suicide prevention and
18 mental health support with an individual seek-
19 ing services during a mental health crisis; and

20 (C) for the purpose of increasing aware-
21 ness of the signs of a mental health crisis,
22 whether an Executive department may imple-
23 ment a program to distribute—

- 1 (i) a validated screening tool, includ-
2 ing the Patient Health Questionnaire-3
3 (PHQ-3) or a comparable tool; and
4 (ii) any commonly used symptom indi-
5 cator.

6 (2) COORDINATION WITH OTHER EXECUTIVE
7 DEPARTMENTS.—In carrying out the assessment
8 under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall coordinate
9 with the head of any relevant Executive department,
10 which may include—

- 11 (A) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs;
12 (B) the Secretary of Defense; and
13 (C) the Secretary of Education.

14 (3) CONSULTATION WITH EXPERTS.—In car-
15 rying out the assessment under paragraph (1), the
16 Secretary may consult with—

- 17 (A) an independent person with expertise
18 in suicide prevention, public mental health, be-
19 havioral health systems, or coordination be-
20 tween Executive departments;
21 (B) an academic institution with dem-
22 onstrated expertise in mental or behavioral
23 health research, suicide prevention, or public
24 health;
25 (C) a mental health professional; or

1 (D) any such other entity with relevant ex-
2 pertise.

3 (4) REPORT.—

4 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180
5 days after the date on which the Secretary com-
6 pletes the assessment under paragraph (1), the
7 Secretary shall submit to each appropriate con-
8 gressional committee a report containing the re-
9 sults of such assessment and any recommenda-
10 tions related to such results.

11 (B) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COM-
12 MITTEE DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term
13 “appropriate congressional committee”
14 means—

15 (i) the Committee on Energy and
16 Commerce of the House of Representa-
17 tives;

18 (ii) the Committee on Health, Edu-
19 cation, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate;
20 and

21 (iii) any congressional committee with
22 jurisdiction over the head of an Executive
23 department that the Secretary coordinates
24 with under paragraph (2).

1 (b) IMPLEMENTATION.—Each Executive department
2 shall, to the extent practicable, implement any rec-
3 ommendation contained within the report submitted under
4 subsection (a)(4).

5 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

6 (1) EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT.—The term “Ex-
7 ecutive department” means an Executive department
8 listed in section 101 of title 5, United States Code.

9 (2) MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS.—The term “men-
10 tal health crisis” means a situation in which an indi-
11 vidual—

12 (A) experiences acute psychological distress
13 or behavioral disruption that—

14 (i) places such individual at risk of
15 harming themselves or another individual; or

16 (ii) significantly impairs the ability of
17 such individual to function in daily life;
18 and

19 (B) requires support, intervention, or re-
20 ferral to services.

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