

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4903

To amend the Public Health Service Act to carry out, expand, and coordinate programs relating to plastic exposure health research, to authorize grants, contracts, and agreements with respect to such research, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 5, 2025

Ms. STEVENS (for herself and Mr. LUCAS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to carry out, expand, and coordinate programs relating to plastic exposure health research, to authorize grants, contracts, and agreements with respect to such research, 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 “Plastic Health Re-
5 search Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. PLASTIC EXPOSURE HEALTH RESEARCH.**

2 (a) EXPANSION AND COORDINATION; RESEARCH
3 GRANTS.—The Public Health Service Act is amended by
4 inserting after section 399V–7 (42 U.S.C. 280g–18) the
5 following:

6 **“SEC. 399V–8. PLASTIC EXPOSURE HEALTH RESEARCH.**

7 “(a) EXPANSION AND COORDINATION OF RESEARCH
8 ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Ad-
9 ministrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the
10 Commissioner of Food and Drugs, the Administrator of
11 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,
12 the Director of the National Institute of Standards and
13 Technology, and the Director of the National Institute of
14 Environmental Health Sciences, shall carry out, expand,
15 and coordinate programs for the conduct and support of
16 research with respect to understanding plastic exposures
17 and the potential health effects stemming from plastic ex-
18 posure. The Secretary shall prioritize such research that—

19 “(1) promotes the improvement of scientific
20 quality through the development of vetted research
21 methods that are reproducible, improve com-
22 parability of results among research studies, and de-
23 velop standards definitions for microplastics and
24 nanoplastics materials;

25 “(2) develops validated testing methodologies
26 and reference materials for microplastics and nano-

1 plastics in different media that are reproducible and
2 improve comparability of results among research
3 studies; or

4 “(3) fills gaps in the field of potential health ef-
5 fects research through the use of methods that im-
6 prove the quality and comparability of scientific re-
7 sults.

8 “(b) PLASTIC EXPOSURE HEALTH RESEARCH
9 GRANTS.—

10 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consulta-
11 tion with the Administrator of the Environmental
12 Protection Agency, the Commissioner of Food and
13 Drugs, the Administrator of the National Oceanic
14 and Atmospheric Administration, the Director of the
15 National Institute of Standards and Technology, and
16 the Director of the National Institute of Environ-
17 mental Health Sciences, may award grants or con-
18 tracts to public entities, nonprofit entities, academic
19 research institutions, or consortia of such entities
20 (including such consortia that collaborate with pri-
21 vate entities) to conduct scientific research on plastic
22 exposure and the potential health effects stemming
23 from such exposure. In awarding such grants and
24 contracts, the Secretary shall prioritize research
25 that—

1 “(A) improves the quality of scientific in-
2 formation through the development of vetted re-
3 search methods that are reproducible, improve
4 comparability of results among research studies,
5 and develop standard definitions for micro-
6 plastic and nanoplastic materials;

7 “(B) develops validated testing methodolo-
8 gies and reference materials for microplastics
9 and nanoplastics in different media that are re-
10 producible and improve comparability of results
11 among research studies; or

12 “(C) fills gaps in the field of potential
13 health effects research through the use of meth-
14 ods that improve the quality and comparability
15 of scientific results.

16 “(2) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible for a grant
17 or contract under this subsection, an entity shall
18 submit to the Secretary an application in such form,
19 in such manner, and containing such agreements,
20 assurances, and information as the Secretary deter-
21 mines necessary.

22 “(3) REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the
23 date of enactment of this section, and annually
24 thereafter for each of the following 4 years, the Sec-
25 retary shall submit to Congress, and make publicly

1 available, a report that provides an overview of the
2 research conducted or supported under this section,
3 together with any relevant findings.

4 “(4) INFORMATION SHARING.—The Secretary
5 shall share the findings of the research supported by
6 grants and contracts under this subsection with—

7 “(A) the heads of relevant institutes and
8 agencies of the Department of Health and
9 Human Services (including the Director of the
10 National Institute of Environmental Health
11 Sciences and the Commissioner of Food and
12 Drugs);

13 “(B) the Administrator of the Environ-
14 mental Protection Agency;

15 “(C) the Director of the National Institute
16 of Standards and Technology;

17 “(D) the Administrator of the National
18 Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and

19 “(E) the centers of excellence for plastic
20 exposure health research described in section
21 463C.

22 “(5) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
23 There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out
24 this subsection \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years
25 2026 through 2030.

1 “(c) PLASTIC EXPOSURE DEFINED.—In this section,
2 the term ‘plastic exposure’ means exposure to
3 macroplastics, microplastics, and nanoplastics, including
4 through plastic production and manufacturing, occupa-
5 tional exposure, environmental exposure, end-user inter-
6 action (such as handling and use of food packaging, manu-
7 factured goods, and textiles), plastic recycling, plastic deg-
8 radation through natural or human-made processes, and
9 plastic waste and disposal.”.

10 (b) CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE FOR PLASTIC EXPO-
11 SURE HEALTH RESEARCH.—The Public Health Service
12 Act is amended by inserting after section 463B (42 U.S.C.
13 2851–6) the following:

14 **“SEC. 463C. CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE FOR PLASTIC EXPO-
15 SURE HEALTH RESEARCH.**

16 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through
17 the Director of the Institute (in this section referred to
18 as the ‘Secretary’) may award grants to, or enter into ap-
19 propriate funding agreements with, public entities, non-
20 profit entities, academic research institutions, or consortia
21 of such entities (including such consortia that collaborate
22 with private entities) to pay all or part of the cost of plan-
23 ning, establishing, or strengthening, and providing basic
24 operating support for, centers of excellence to conduct and
25 improve the quality of scientific research to inform public

1 health determinations and increase public awareness
2 (where scientifically warranted) with respect to the poten-
3 tial health effects caused by plastic exposure. Such centers
4 shall prioritize research that—

5 “(1) develops standard material definitions;

6 “(2) improves the quality of scientific results to
7 fill gaps in the field of research;

8 “(3) fills gaps in the field of health research
9 through the use of methods that improve the quality
10 and comparability of scientific results; or

11 “(4) develops vetted testing methodologies for
12 microplastics and nanoplastics that can be replicated
13 and can be compared to other testing methodologies.

14 “(b) PURPOSES OF CENTERS.—The purposes of the
15 centers of excellence referred to in subsection (a) are—

16 “(1) to improve the quality of scientific results
17 while researching the potential health effects stem-
18 ming from plastic exposure, including identifying po-
19 tential links between plastic exposure and such po-
20 tential health effects;

21 “(2) to identify potential exposures to plastic
22 and conduct hazard assessments and risk assess-
23 ments; and

24 “(3) to increase public awareness (where sci-
25 entifically warranted) of—

1 “(A) the potential health effects of plastic
2 exposure, sources of such exposure, outcomes of
3 hazard assessments, and the results of risk as-
4 sessments relating to such exposure; and

5 “(B) the research referred to in—

6 “(i) paragraph (1); or

7 “(ii) section 399V–8(a).

8 “(c) USE OF FUNDS.—Funds made available under
9 this section may be used for—

10 “(1) the development of plastic hazard, expo-
11 sure, or risk assessment methodologies that can be
12 replicated and compared to other methodologies,
13 which shall include—

14 “(A) the comprehensive characterization
15 and methods for characterization of the chem-
16 ical and physical properties of microplastics,
17 nanoplastics, macroplastics, and other plastics;

18 “(B) the development of validated testing
19 methodologies for microplastics and nanoplas-
20 tics in different media that can be replicated
21 and compared to other testing methodologies;
22 and

23 “(C) detailing the quality assurance and
24 quality control measures taken to improve the
25 scientific results;

1 “(2) the application of exposure methodologies
2 (including both new and existing methodologies), if
3 appropriately validated and controlled, to assess the
4 potential burden of plastic exposures;

5 “(3) the support of research to assess potential
6 health impacts of plastic exposure; and

7 “(4) increasing public awareness of research re-
8 sults, as scientifically warranted.

9 “(d) POLICIES.—A grant or agreement under this
10 section shall be entered into in accordance with policies
11 established by the Secretary.

12 “(e) DURATION OF GRANT OR AGREEMENT.—A
13 grant or agreement under this section shall be for a period
14 of 5 years, and may be renewed by the Secretary for sub-
15 sequent 5-year periods in the case of a center of excellence
16 for which an appropriate technical and scientific peer re-
17 view group established by the Secretary has—

18 “(1) reviewed the operations of such center; and

19 “(2) submitted to the Secretary a recommenda-
20 tion that such grant or agreement be renewed.

21 “(f) COORDINATION AND INFORMATION SHARING
22 WITH OTHER INSTITUTES AND AGENCIES.—

23 “(1) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall co-
24 ordinate the activities under this section with related
25 activities of other institutes and agencies of the De-

1 partment of Health and Human Services (including
2 the National Institute of Environmental Health
3 Sciences and the Food and Drug Administration),
4 the Environmental Protection Agency, the National
5 Institute of Standards and Technology, and the Na-
6 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

7 “(2) INFORMATION SHARING.—The Secretary
8 shall share research findings of the centers of excel-
9 lence referred to in subsection (a) with other insti-
10 tutes and agencies of the Department of Health and
11 Human Services (including the National Institute of
12 Environmental Health Sciences and the Food and
13 Drug Administration), the Environmental Protection
14 Agency, the National Institute of Standards and
15 Technology, and the National Oceanic and Atmos-
16 pheric Administration.

17 “(3) REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the
18 date of enactment of this section, and annually
19 thereafter for each of the following 4 years, the Sec-
20 retary shall submit to Congress, and make publicly
21 available, a report that provides an overview of the
22 research conducted or supported under this section,
23 together with any relevant findings.

24 “(g) PLASTIC EXPOSURE DEFINED.—In this section,
25 the term ‘plastic exposure’ means exposure to

1 macroplastics, microplastics, and nanoplastics, including
2 through plastic production and manufacturing, occupa-
3 tional exposure, environmental exposure, end-user inter-
4 action (such as handling and use of food packaging, manu-
5 factured goods, and textiles), plastic recycling, plastic deg-
6 radation through natural or human-made processes, and
7 plastic waste and disposal.

8 “(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
9 is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
10 \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2030.”.

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