

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5706

To establish a grant program to assist eligible entities in developing or expanding behavioral health crisis response programs that do not rely primarily on law enforcement, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 8, 2025

Ms. ANSARI (for herself, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Mr. GOLDMAN of New York, Ms. NORTON, Ms. SALINAS, Mr. THANEDAR, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Ms. TLAIB) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To establish a grant program to assist eligible entities in developing or expanding behavioral health crisis response programs that do not rely primarily on law enforcement, 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 “Mental Health Emer-
5 gency Responder Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. GRANT PROGRAM TO EXPAND BEHAVIORAL**
2 **HEALTH CRISIS RESPONSE.**

3 (a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Secretary of Health and
4 Human Services, acting through the Assistant Secretary
5 for Mental Health and Substance Use, shall establish a
6 competitive grant program (in this section referred to as
7 the “program”) to assist eligible entities in developing or
8 expanding behavioral health crisis response programs that
9 do not rely primarily on law enforcement.

10 (b) **ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.**—The following entities
11 shall be eligible to receive grants under the program—

12 (1) a local or Tribal government;

13 (2) a regional emergency medical services agen-
14 cy or fire department;

15 (3) a certified community behavioral health
16 clinic, as defined by section 1905(jj) of the Social
17 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(jj)); and

18 (4) a nonprofit organization in partnership with
19 a local government or health authority.

20 (c) **USE OF GRANT FUNDS.**—Grant funds received
21 by an eligible entity under the program may be used—

22 (1) to recruit, train, and equip behavioral
23 health professionals and paramedics for a behavioral
24 health crisis response;

25 (2) to integrate co-response teams into 911 or
26 988 call dispatch systems;

1 (3) to provide community education and out-
2 reach regarding alternatives to police-led crisis re-
3 sponse;

4 (4) to develop or implement protocols to enable
5 emergency medical services agencies to accept cus-
6 tody of civilians from police for transport to mental
7 health facilities, if permitted under State law; and

8 (5) to establish emergency medical services
9 agencies, or clinician-led mobile crisis teams, as the
10 primary responders to behavioral health emergencies
11 in lieu of law enforcement, in a manner consistent
12 with State and local laws.

13 (d) LIMITATION ON STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.—
14 Nothing in this section shall be construed—

15 (1) to require any State or local government to
16 modify an emergency detention or custody law; or

17 (2) to authorize any entity to engage in emer-
18 gency detention or involuntary transport beyond
19 what is permitted under an applicable State law.

20 (e) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary shall
21 require each recipient of a grant under the program to
22 submit to the Secretary, during such period of time as
23 the Secretary determines appropriate, an annual report
24 detailing response outcomes, diversion rates, and commu-
25 nity feedback.

1 (f) PRIORITY CONSIDERATION.—In awarding grants
2 under the program, the Secretary shall prioritize applica-
3 tions from eligible entities located in jurisdictions that do
4 not currently operate a non-law enforcement behavioral
5 health crisis response program, or whose existing pro-
6 grams are limited in scope or capacity.

7 (g) CO-RESPONSE TEAM DEFINED.—In this section,
8 the term “co-response team” means a team that includes
9 at least one behavioral health professional (such as a li-
10 censed clinician or social worker) and at least one emer-
11 gency medical services provider, firefighter, or peace offi-
12 cer who jointly respond to behavioral health crisis calls in
13 real time.

14 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
15 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
16 such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years
17 2026 through 2030.

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