

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6993

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out programs to award grants to eligible entities to conduct research with respect to treatments for traumatic brain injury prospective randomized control trials for neurorehabilitation treatments, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 9, 2026

Mr. BERGMAN (for himself, Ms. ELFRETH, Ms. KING-HINDS, Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, Mr. VAN ORDEN, and Mr. LUTTRELL) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out programs to award grants to eligible entities to conduct research with respect to treatments for traumatic brain injury prospective randomized control trials for neurorehabilitation treatments, 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 “Veterans TBI Break-
5 through Exploration of Adaptive Care Opportunities Na-
6 tionwide Act of 2026” or the “BEACON Act of 2026”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS GRANT PRO-**
2 **GRAM FOR SUPPLEMENTAL**
3 **NEUROREHABILITATION APPROACHES TO**
4 **CHRONIC MILD TBI TREATMENT.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
6 shall establish a grant program (to be known as the “TBI
7 Innovation Grant Program”) to award grants to eligible
8 entities described in subsection (b) for the development,
9 implementation, and evaluation of approaches and meth-
10 odologies for prospective randomized control trials for
11 neurorehabilitation treatments for the treatment of chron-
12 ic mild TBI (mTBI) in veterans.

13 (b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES DESCRIBED.—An eligible
14 entity described in this subsection is any of the following:

15 (1) A nonprofit organization.

16 (2) An academic institution engaged in research
17 with respect to TBI.

18 (3) A non-Department health care provider with
19 expertise in neurorehabilitative therapies.

20 (4) An entity the Secretary determines appro-
21 priate for an award of a grant under this section.

22 (c) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity in receipt of
23 a grant under this section shall use such grant to support
24 activities that include—

1 (1) designing and testing novel or integrative
2 treatments for mTBI that prioritize patient-centered
3 care, including non-pharmacological therapies;

4 (2) conducting clinical studies and assessments
5 to measure the effectiveness of funded approaches
6 to—

7 (A) improve mental health outcomes
8 among veterans;

9 (B) reduce suicidality, and common risk
10 factors for completing suicide, including depres-
11 sion and substance use disorders among vet-
12 erans; and

13 (C) mitigate long-term effects of mTBI;

14 (3) providing training for clinicians and out-
15 reach to veterans and their families to improve
16 awareness and accessibility of innovative mTBI
17 treatments; and

18 (4) establishing partnerships with community
19 organizations, academic institutions, and health care
20 facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs to
21 implement and evaluate best practices.

22 (d) LIMITATION ON GRANT AMOUNT.—The Secretary
23 may not award an eligible entity a grant under this section
24 in an amount that exceeds \$5,000,000 per fiscal year.

1 (e) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this sec-
2 tion, the Secretary shall give priority to eligible entities
3 that the Secretary determines have demonstrated experi-
4 ence in delivering or researching effective treatments for
5 mTBI.

6 (f) PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION.—

7 (1) APPLICATIONS.—An eligible entity desiring
8 a grant under this section shall submit to the Sec-
9 retary an application in such form, at such time,
10 and containing such information and assurances as
11 the Secretary determines appropriate, including a
12 detailed description of—

13 (A) proposed activities;

14 (B) expected outcomes; and

15 (C) plans for evaluating effectiveness.

16 (2) PERIODIC REPORTS.—An eligible entity in
17 receipt of a grant under this section shall, not less
18 frequently than annually, submit to the Secretary a
19 report that includes, with respect to the period cov-
20 ered by the report—

21 (A) a description of how the eligible entity
22 used such grant;

23 (B) a summary of the progress of activities
24 funded with amounts from such grant; and

1 (C) measured outcomes relating to such
2 activities.

3 (3) OVERSIGHT; ANNUAL EVALUATIONS.—The
4 Secretary shall—

5 (A) ensure rigorous oversight with respect
6 to the grant program under this section; and

7 (B) on an annual basis during the period
8 the authority to carry out the grant program is
9 effective, evaluate the efficacy of activities fund-
10 ed with a grant awarded under such program.

11 (g) COORDINATION WITH VA MENTAL HEALTH
12 SERVICES.—The Secretary shall ensure that the grant
13 program under this section aligns with the Staff Sergeant
14 Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program of the Department
15 to—

16 (1) provide for cohesive and comprehensive sup-
17 port for veterans with mTBI and associated mental
18 health conditions; and

19 (2) increase research and development on inte-
20 grated mTBI and mental health interventions out-
21 side of the scope of traditional Department of Vet-
22 erans Affairs pathways, interventions, programs,
23 procedures, and pharmaceuticals.

1 (h) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after
2 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall
3 prescribe regulations to carry out this section.

4 (i) AVAILABLE AMOUNTS; AUTHORIZATION OF AP-
5 PROPRIATIONS.—

6 (1) AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—The Secretary may
7 carry out the program under this section using
8 amounts available to the Secretary for general men-
9 tal health care programs.

10 (2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
11 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
12 retary \$30,000,000 for fiscal years 2026 through
13 2028 to carry out the pilot program under this sec-
14 tion, which shall remain available until expended.

15 (j) DURATION; ANNUAL REVIEW.—The authority of
16 the Secretary to carry out the grant program under this
17 section shall terminate at the end of the 3-year period be-
18 ginning on the date of the enactment of this Act. During
19 such period, the Secretary shall, on an annual basis, re-
20 view the effectiveness of such grant program to determine
21 the potential of such grant program for continuation or
22 expansion.

1 **SEC. 3. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS GRANT PRO-**
2 **GRAM FOR INDEPENDENT THIRD-PARTY RE-**
3 **SEARCH STUDIES AND TREATMENT WITH RE-**
4 **SPECT TO SUPPLEMENTAL**
5 **NEUROREHABILITATION TREATMENTS FOR**
6 **MTBI.**

7 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Veterans
8 Affairs shall establish and carry out a research grant pro-
9 gram to award grants to eligible entities described in sub-
10 section (b) for studies and applied programs on ap-
11 proaches and methodologies for the treatment of TBI in
12 veterans.

13 (b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES DESCRIBED.—An eligible
14 entity described in this subsection is any of the following:

15 (1) An academic institution that conducts sig-
16 nificant research on TBI.

17 (2) A nonprofit organization with—

18 (A) expertise in TBI research and
19 neurorehabilitation; and

20 (B) demonstrated capabilities in clinical
21 trials and TBI treatment evaluation and patient
22 care delivery.

23 (3) An entity, or a partnership among entities,
24 that the Secretary determines appropriate to receive
25 a grant under this section.

1 (c) APPLICATIONS.—An eligible entity desiring a
2 grant under this section shall submit to the Secretary an
3 application in such form, at such time, and containing
4 such information and assurances as the Secretary deter-
5 mines appropriate, including a summary of—

- 6 (1) proposed research and treatment activities;
7 (2) methodology; and
8 (3) expected outcomes.

9 (d) GRANT CATEGORIES.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to the research
11 grant program under this section, the Secretary
12 shall, each fiscal year—

13 (A) subject to the requirement under para-
14 graph (2), award four grants in amounts of not
15 more than \$625,000 for exploratory or pilot re-
16 search and treatment projects; and

17 (B) award five grants in amounts of not
18 more than \$1,500,000 for collaborative or mul-
19 tidisciplinary research and treatment initiatives.

20 (2) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall award not
21 fewer than three grants described in paragraph

22 (1)(A) to nonprofit organizations.

23 (e) RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE THIRD-PARTY ORGA-
24 NIZATION.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter
2 into an agreement with an independent third-party
3 organization comparable to the National Center for
4 Posttraumatic Stress Disorder of the Department of
5 Veterans Affairs to—

6 (A) administer the research grant pro-
7 gram; and

8 (B) carry out studies and implement ef-
9 forts that include—

10 (i) analyzing data from TBI treat-
11 ment methodologies developed pursuant to
12 the research grant program to assess the
13 effect, among veterans, of such methodolo-
14 gies on mental health outcomes and long-
15 term recovery;

16 (ii) identifying evidence-based best
17 practices and providing recommendations
18 for further research or clinical application;
19 and

20 (iii) randomized, controlled clinical
21 trials to—

22 (I) validate and deliver treat-
23 ments;

24 (II) establish a standard of care;
25 and

1 (III) improve access to such
2 treatments for veterans.

3 (2) REPORT.—The independent third-party or-
4 ganization with which the Secretary enters into an
5 agreement under paragraph (1) shall submit to Con-
6 gress and the Secretary a comprehensive report that
7 includes—

8 (A) the findings of the studies required
9 under such agreement; and

10 (B) recommendations with respect to the
11 expansion of successful TBI treatment meth-
12 odologies and standard of care recommenda-
13 tions, if any, developed pursuant to the research
14 grant program.

15 (f) AVAILABLE AMOUNTS; AUTHORIZATION OF AP-
16 PROPRIATIONS.—

17 (1) AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—The Secretary may
18 use amounts available to the Secretary for the oper-
19 ating budget of the National Center for
20 Posttraumatic Stress Disorder to carry out the re-
21 search grant program under this section.

22 (2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
23 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
24 retary \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026
25 through 2028 to carry out this section.

1 (g) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than two
2 years after the date on which the Secretary commences
3 the research grant program under this section, and on an
4 annual basis thereafter during the period the authority of
5 the Secretary to carry out such research grant program
6 is effective, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a re-
7 port that includes—

8 (1) the findings of the studies under—

9 (A) section 2(f)(2); and

10 (B) the agreement required by section
11 3(e); and

12 (2) recommendations of the Secretary with re-
13 spect to policy and programmatic improvements to
14 services of the Department to treat TBI among vet-
15 erans.

16 (h) TERMINATION DATE.—The authority of the Sec-
17 retary to carry out the research grant program under this
18 section shall terminate on the date that is three years after
19 the date of the enactment of this Act.

20 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

21 In this Act:

22 (1) The term “TBI” means traumatic brain in-
23 jury.

1 (2) The term “treatment” means clinical inter-
2 ventions, therapeutic devices, or rehabilitation care
3 provided directly to a veteran with TBI.

4 (3) The term “veteran” has the meaning given
5 such term in section 101 of title 38, United States
6 Code.

