

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7394

To amend the Public Health Service Act to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use, to establish a Mental and Behavioral Health Career Promotion Grant Program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 5, 2026

Ms. BALINT (for herself, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Ms. NORTON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use, to establish a Mental and Behavioral Health Career Promotion Grant Program, 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 Career
5 Promotion Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CAREER PRO-**
2 **MOTION GRANT PROGRAM.**

3 Subpart 3 of part B of title V of the Public Health
4 Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb–31 et seq.) is amended by
5 adding at the end the following:

6 **“SEC. 5200. MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CAREER**
7 **PROMOTION GRANT PROGRAM.**

8 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through
9 the Assistant Secretary, shall establish a program, to be
10 known as the Mental and Behavioral Health Career Pro-
11 motion Grant Program, to award grants to eligible entities
12 to establish or expand eligible mental and behavioral
13 health career promotion programs in schools served by
14 local educational agencies or in public junior or community
15 colleges.

16 “(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—To be eligible to receive
17 a grant under this section, an entity shall be a partnership
18 that includes—

19 “(1)(A) 1 or more local educational agencies, or
20 a consortium of such local educational agencies; or

21 “(B) a State educational agency;

22 “(2) 1 or more public junior or community col-
23 leges, or a consortium of such public junior or com-
24 munity colleges; and

25 “(3) at least 1—

1 “(A) community-based mental or behav-
2 ioral health provider (such as a certified com-
3 munity behavioral health clinic, a community
4 mental health center, an opioid treatment pro-
5 gram, or a nonprofit mental health or substance
6 use professional association); or

7 “(B) other community-based entity, as de-
8 termined appropriate by the Secretary, acting
9 through the Assistant Secretary (such as a
10 State or local behavioral health authority, a
11 human service agency, a child welfare agency,
12 or an institution of higher education, such as a
13 historically Black college or university).

14 “(c) ELIGIBLE MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
15 CAREER PROMOTION PROGRAMS.—To be eligible for a
16 grant under this section, a mental and behavioral health
17 career promotion program shall promote careers in mental
18 and behavioral health to students in grades 9 through 12
19 or in public junior or community colleges, such as by—

20 “(1) providing educational presentations to stu-
21 dents that increase exposure to and knowledge of ca-
22 reers in the mental and behavioral health field;

23 “(2) coordinating internships and externships
24 for students who demonstrate an interest in mental
25 and behavioral health;

1 “(3) providing opportunities for students to
2 interact with and shadow mental and behavioral
3 health care professionals;

4 “(4) providing students with mentorships and
5 experiential learning opportunities; or

6 “(5) partnering with local institutions of higher
7 education and community behavioral health organi-
8 zations to promote careers in mental and behavioral
9 health.

10 “(d) **ACTIVITY REQUIREMENT.**—A grant awarded
11 under this section may only be used for activities that are
12 developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate.

13 “(e) **AWARD DURATION; RENEWAL.**—A grant award-
14 ed under this section shall be for a period of 5 years and
15 may be renewed.

16 “(f) **GEOGRAPHICAL DIVERSITY.**—The Secretary,
17 acting through the Assistant Secretary, shall ensure that
18 grants awarded under this section cover a diverse range
19 of geographical areas.

20 “(g) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**—The Secretary, act-
21 ing through the Assistant Secretary, may provide technical
22 assistance in seeking grants under this section to high-
23 need local educational agencies and to public junior and
24 community colleges.

25 “(h) **EVALUATION AND MEASURES OF OUTCOMES.**—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting
2 through the Assistant Secretary, shall develop a fis-
3 cally appropriate process for evaluating activities
4 carried out through grants awarded under this sec-
5 tion. Under such process, the Secretary, acting
6 through the Assistant Secretary, shall—

7 “(A) provide to recipients of such grants—

8 “(i) guidelines for the submission to
9 the Assistant Secretary of data concerning
10 such activities; and

11 “(ii) measures of outcomes to be used
12 by such recipients in evaluating the effec-
13 tiveness of such activities (including out-
14 comes related to the student, family, and
15 local educational systems supported by
16 such activities);

17 “(B) require each such recipient to submit
18 to the Assistant Secretary annual reports—

19 “(i) containing data on such activities
20 carried out by the recipient; and

21 “(ii) that use the measures of out-
22 comes described in subparagraph (A)(ii) to
23 evaluate the effectiveness of such activities;
24 and

1 “(C) not later than 1 year after the date
2 of enactment of this section, and annually
3 thereafter, submit to Congress a report describ-
4 ing the results and effectiveness of the pro-
5 grams under this section.

6 “(2) LIMITATION.—A recipient of a grant
7 under this section may not use more than 10 per-
8 cent of the amounts received for data collection, per-
9 formance measurement, and performance assess-
10 ment.

11 “(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

12 “(1) CAREERS IN MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL
13 HEALTH.—The term ‘careers in mental and behav-
14 ioral health’ means occupations whose primary in-
15 tent and function is the direct treatment or recovery
16 support of patients with, or in recovery from, a men-
17 tal or behavioral health disorder, which may in-
18 clude—

19 “(A) physicians (including physicians with
20 a degree of Doctor of Medicine or Doctor of Os-
21 teopathic Medicine);

22 “(B) advanced practice registered nurse
23 practitioners;

24 “(C) social workers;

25 “(D) marriage and family therapists;

1 “(E) counselors (including addiction and
2 mental health licensed professionals);

3 “(F) psychologists;

4 “(G) psychiatrists (including child and ad-
5 olescent psychiatrists);

6 “(H) psychiatric aides;

7 “(I) neurologists;

8 “(J) peer support specialists;

9 “(K) addiction specialists and prevention
10 specialists;

11 “(L) community health workers; and

12 “(M) physician assistants.

13 “(2) ESEA TERMS.—The terms ‘local edu-
14 cational agency’ and ‘State educational agency’ have
15 the meanings given such terms in section 8101 of
16 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of
17 1965.

18 “(3) HEA TERMS.—(A) The terms ‘institution
19 of higher education’, ‘high-need local educational
20 agency’, and ‘junior or community college’ have the
21 meanings given such terms, respectively, in sections
22 101(a), 200, and 312(f) of the Higher Education
23 Act of 1965.

24 “(B) The term ‘historically Black college or
25 university’ has the meaning given the term ‘part B

1 institution' under section 322 of the Higher Edu-
2 cation Act of 1965.

3 “(j) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
4 is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
5 \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2031.”.

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