

Calendar No. 309

119TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. 2169

To require the development of a comprehensive rural hospital cybersecurity workforce development strategy, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 25 (legislative day, JUNE 24), 2025

Mr. HAWLEY (for himself, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. KELLY, Mr. OSSOFF, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. WARNOCK) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

JANUARY 28, 2026

Reported by Mr. CASSIDY, with an amendment

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italic*]

A BILL

To require the development of a comprehensive rural hospital cybersecurity workforce development strategy, 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 “~~Rural Hospital Cyber-~~
5 security Enhancement Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) AGENCY.—The term “agency” has the
4 meaning given the term in section 551 of title 5,
5 United States Code.

6 (2) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CON-
7 GRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Con-
8 gress” means—

9 (A) the Committee on Health, Education,
10 Labor, and Pensions of the Senate; and

11 (B) the Committee on Energy and Com-
12 merce of the House of Representatives.

13 (3) GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION.—The term “geo-
14 graphic division” means a geographic division that is
15 among the 9 geographic divisions determined by the
16 Bureau of the Census.

17 (4) RURAL HOSPITAL.—The term “rural hos-
18 pital” means a healthcare facility that—

19 (A) is located in a non-urbanized area, as
20 determined by the Bureau of the Census; and

21 (B) provides inpatient and outpatient
22 healthcare services, including primary care,
23 emergency care, and diagnostic services.

24 (5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
25 the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

1 **SEC. 3. RURAL HOSPITAL CYBERSECURITY WORKFORCE**
2 **DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY.**

3 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the
4 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop
5 and transmit to the appropriate committees of Congress
6 a comprehensive rural hospital cybersecurity workforce de-
7 velopment strategy to address the growing need for skilled
8 cybersecurity professionals in rural hospitals.

9 (b) **CONSULTATION.**—

10 (1) **AGENCIES.**—In carrying out subsection (a),
11 the Secretary may consult with the Director of the
12 Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency,
13 the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Labor,
14 and any other appropriate head of an agency.

15 (2) **PROVIDERS.**—In carrying out subsection
16 (a), the Secretary shall consult with not fewer than
17 2 representatives of rural healthcare providers from
18 each geographic division in the United States.

19 (c) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—The rural hospital cybersecu-
20 rity workforce development strategy developed under sub-
21 section (a) shall, at a minimum, consider the following
22 components:

23 (1) Partnerships between rural hospitals, non-
24 rural healthcare systems, educational institutions,
25 private sector entities, and nonprofit organizations
26 to develop, promote, and expand the rural hospital

1 cybersecurity workforce, including through education
2 and training programs tailored to the needs of rural
3 hospitals.

4 (2) The development of a cybersecurity cur-
5 riculum and teaching resources that focus on teach-
6 ing technical skills and abilities related to cybersecu-
7 rity in rural hospitals for use in community colleges,
8 vocational schools, and other educational institutions
9 located in rural areas.

10 (3) Identification of—

11 (A) cybersecurity workforce challenges that
12 are specific to rural hospitals, as well as chal-
13 lenges that are relative to hospitals generally;
14 and

15 (B) common practices to mitigate both sets
16 of challenges described in subparagraph (A).

17 (4) Recommendations for legislation, rule-
18 making, or guidance to implement the components
19 of the rural hospital cybersecurity workforce develop-
20 ment strategy.

21 (d) ANNUAL BRIEFING.—Not later than 60 days
22 after the date on which the first full fiscal year ends fol-
23 lowing the date on which the Secretary transmits the rural
24 hospital cybersecurity workforce development strategy de-
25 veloped under subsection (a), and not later than 60 days

1 after the date on which each fiscal year thereafter ends,
2 the Secretary shall provide a briefing to the appropriate
3 committees of Congress that includes, at a minimum, in-
4 formation relating to—

5 (1) updates to the rural hospital cybersecurity
6 workforce development strategy, as appropriate;

7 (2) any programs or initiatives established pur-
8 suant to the rural hospital cybersecurity workforce
9 development strategy, as well as the number of indi-
10 viduals trained or educated through such programs
11 or initiatives;

12 (3) additional recommendations for legislation,
13 rulemaking, or guidance to implement the compo-
14 nents of the rural hospital cybersecurity workforce
15 development strategy; and

16 (4) the effectiveness of the rural hospital cyber-
17 security workforce development strategy in address-
18 ing the need for skilled cybersecurity professionals in
19 rural hospitals.

20 **SEC. 4. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR RURAL HOS-**
21 **PITALS.**

22 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the
23 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall make
24 available instructional materials for rural hospitals that

1 can be used to train staff on fundamental cybersecurity
2 efforts.

3 (b) DUTIES.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Sec-
4 retary shall—

5 (1) consult with appropriate heads of agencies,
6 experts in cybersecurity education, and rural
7 healthcare experts;

8 (2) identify existing cybersecurity instructional
9 materials that can be adapted for use in rural hos-
10 pitals and create new materials as needed; and

11 (3) conduct an awareness campaign to promote
12 the materials available to rural hospitals developed
13 under subsection (a).

14 **SEC. 5. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS.**

15 No additional funds are authorized to be appro-
16 priated for the purpose of carrying out this Act.

17 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

18 *This Act may be cited as the “Rural Hospital Cyberse-*
19 *curity Enhancement Act”.*

20 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

21 *In this Act:*

22 (1) AGENCY.—*The term “agency” has the mean-*
23 *ing given the term in section 551 of title 5, United*
24 *States Code.*

1 (2) *APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.*—

2 The term “appropriate committees of Congress”
3 means—

4 (A) *the Committee on Health, Education,*
5 *Labor, and Pensions of the Senate;*

6 (B) *the Committee on Finance of the Sen-*
7 *ate;*

8 (C) *the Committee on Energy and Com-*
9 *merce of the House of Representatives; and*

10 (D) *the Committee on Ways and Means of*
11 *the House of Representatives.*

12 (3) *GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION.*—The term “geo-
13 *graphic division*” means a geographic division that is
14 among the 9 geographic divisions determined by the
15 *Bureau of the Census.*

16 (4) *RURAL HOSPITAL.*—The term “rural hos-
17 *pital*” means—

18 (A) *a subsection (d) hospital (as defined in*
19 *section 1886(d)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act*
20 *(42 U.S.C. 1395ww(d)(1)(B))) that—*

21 (i) *is located in a rural area (as de-*
22 *fin ed in paragraph (2)(D) of section*
23 *1886(d) of such Act);*

1 (ii) is treated as being located in a
2 rural area pursuant to paragraph (8)(E) of
3 such section 1886(d); or

4 (iii) is located in a rural census tract
5 of a metropolitan statistical area (as deter-
6 mined under the most recent modification of
7 the Goldsmith Modification, originally pub-
8 lished in the Federal Register on February
9 27, 1992 (57 Fed. Reg. 6725));

10 (B) a critical access hospital (as defined in
11 section 1861(mm)(1) of such Act (42 U.S.C.
12 1395x(mm)(1)));

13 (C) a sole community hospital (as defined
14 in section 1886(d)(5)(D)(iii) of such Act (42
15 U.S.C. 1395ww(d)(5)(D)(iii)));

16 (D) a medicare-dependent, small rural hos-
17 pital (as defined in section 1886(d)(5)(G)(iv) of
18 such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395(ww)(d)(5)(G)(iv)));

19 (E) a low-volume hospital (as defined in
20 section 1886(d)(12)(C) of such Act (42 U.S.C.
21 1395ww(d)(12)(C))); or

22 (F) a rural emergency hospital (as defined
23 in section 1861(kkk)(2) of such Act (42 U.S.C.
24 1395x(kkk)(2))).

1 (5) *SECRETARY.*—*The term “Secretary” means*
2 *the Secretary of Health and Human Services.*

3 **SEC. 3. RURAL HOSPITAL CYBERSECURITY WORKFORCE DE-**
4 **VELOPMENT STRATEGY.**

5 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—*Not later than 1 year after the date*
6 *of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop and*
7 *transmit to the appropriate committees of Congress a com-*
8 *prehensive rural hospital cybersecurity workforce develop-*
9 *ment strategy to address the growing need for skilled cyber-*
10 *security professionals in rural hospitals.*

11 (b) *CONSULTATION.*—

12 (1) *AGENCIES.*—*In carrying out subsection (a),*
13 *the Secretary shall consult with the Director of the*
14 *Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency,*
15 *the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Labor,*
16 *the National Cyber Director, and any other appro-*
17 *priate head of an agency.*

18 (2) *PROVIDERS.*—*In carrying out subsection (a),*
19 *the Secretary shall consult with not fewer than 2 rep-*
20 *resentatives of rural health care providers from each*
21 *geographic division in the United States.*

22 (c) *CONSIDERATIONS.*—*The rural hospital cybersecu-*
23 *rity workforce development strategy developed under sub-*
24 *section (a) shall, at a minimum, consider the following com-*
25 *ponents:*

1 (1) *Partnerships between rural hospitals, hos-*
2 *pitals that are not rural hospitals as defined in sec-*
3 *tion 2(4), educational institutions, and private non-*
4 *profit or for-profit entities, to develop, promote, and*
5 *expand the rural hospital cybersecurity workforce, in-*
6 *cluding through education and training programs*
7 *tailored to the needs of rural hospitals.*

8 (2) *The development of a cybersecurity cur-*
9 *riculum and teaching resources that focus on teaching*
10 *technical skills and abilities related to cybersecurity*
11 *in rural hospitals for use in community colleges, vo-*
12 *catiional schools, and other educational institutions lo-*
13 *cated in rural areas.*

14 (3) *Identification of—*

15 (A) *cybersecurity workforce challenges of*
16 *rural hospitals; and*

17 (B) *common practices to mitigate the chal-*
18 *lenges described in subparagraph (A).*

19 (d) *ANNUAL BRIEFING.—Not later than 60 days after*
20 *the date on which the first full fiscal year ends following*
21 *the date on which the Secretary transmits the rural hospital*
22 *cybersecurity workforce development strategy developed*
23 *under subsection (a), and not later than 60 days after the*
24 *date on which each fiscal year thereafter ends, the Secretary*
25 *shall provide a briefing to the appropriate committees of*

1 Congress that includes, at a minimum, information relat-
2 ing to—

3 (1) updates to the rural hospital cybersecurity
4 workforce development strategy, as appropriate;

5 (2) any programs or initiatives established pur-
6 suant to the rural hospital cybersecurity workforce de-
7 velopment strategy, and the number of individuals
8 trained or educated through such programs or initia-
9 tives; and

10 (3) the effectiveness of the rural hospital cyberse-
11 curity workforce development strategy in addressing
12 the need for skilled cybersecurity professionals in
13 rural hospitals.

14 **SEC. 4. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR RURAL HOS-**
15 **PITALS.**

16 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—Not later than 1 year after the date
17 of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall publish on the
18 website of the Department of Health and Human Services
19 and make available through other appropriate means, at
20 no cost, instructional materials for rural hospitals that can
21 be used to train staff on fundamental cybersecurity efforts.

22 (b) *DUTIES.*—In carrying out subsection (a), the Sec-
23 retary shall—

1 (1) *consult with appropriate heads of agencies,*
2 *experts in cybersecurity education, and rural health*
3 *care experts;*

4 (2) *identify existing cybersecurity instructional*
5 *materials that can be adapted for use in rural hos-*
6 *pitals and develop new materials as needed; and*

7 (3) *conduct an awareness campaign to promote*
8 *the materials available to rural hospitals developed*
9 *under subsection (a).*

10 **SEC. 5. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS.**

11 *No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated*
12 *for the purpose of carrying out this Act.*

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