

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

To direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award grants to States, political subdivisions of States, Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, community-based entities, and primary care and behavioral health organizations to address behavioral health needs caused by the public health emergency declared with respect to COVID–19.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Ms. SMITH (for herself and Ms. MURKOWSKI) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award grants to States, political subdivisions of States, Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, community-based entities, and primary care and behavioral health organizations to address behavioral health needs caused by the public health emergency declared with respect to COVID–19.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “COVID-19 Behavioral
3 Health Support Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. GRANTS TO SUPPORT INCREASED BEHAVIORAL**
5 **HEALTH NEEDS DUE TO COVID-19.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the
7 Assistant Secretary of Mental Health and Substance Use,
8 shall award grants to States, political subdivisions of
9 States, Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, commu-
10 nity-based entities, and primary care and behavioral
11 health organizations to address behavioral health needs
12 caused by the public health emergency declared pursuant
13 to section 319 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C.
14 247d) with respect to COVID-19.

15 (b) USE OF FUNDS.—An entity that receives a grant
16 under subsection (a) may use funds received through such
17 grant to—

18 (1) increase behavioral health treatment and
19 prevention capacity, including to—

20 (A) promote coordination among local enti-
21 ties;

22 (B) train the behavioral health workforce,
23 relevant stakeholders, and community members;

24 (C) upgrade technology to support effective
25 delivery of health care services through tele-

1 health modalities, including the purchase of
2 telehealth equipment;

3 (D) purchase medical supplies and equip-
4 ment for behavioral health treatment entities,
5 providers, and patients;

6 (E) address and support surge capacity for
7 behavioral health needs (such as through mobile
8 units), including the purchasing of supplies and
9 equipment;

10 (F) promote collaboration between primary
11 care and mental health providers; and

12 (G) cover overhead costs, including rent
13 and utility costs; and

14 (2) support or enhance behavioral health serv-
15 ices, including—

16 (A) emergency crisis intervention, includ-
17 ing mobile crisis units, 24/7 crisis call centers,
18 and medically staffed crisis stabilization pro-
19 grams;

20 (B) screening, assessment, diagnosis, and
21 treatment;

22 (C) mental health awareness trainings;

23 (D) evidence-based suicide prevention;

24 (E) evidence-based integrated care models;

25 (F) community recovery and peer supports;

1 (G) outreach to underserved and minority
2 communities; and

3 (H) support for front line health care
4 workers.

5 (c) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall give priority to
6 applicants that are—

7 (1) culturally specific organizations, Tribal be-
8 havioral health and substance use disorder providers,
9 or organizations that are intentional about serving
10 populations where COVID–19 has had the most im-
11 pact; or

12 (2) proposing to serve areas with a high num-
13 ber of COVID–19 cases.

14 (d) EVALUATION.—An entity that receives a grant
15 under this section shall prepare and submit an evaluation
16 to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and con-
17 taining such information as the Secretary may reasonably
18 require, including—

19 (1) an evaluation of activities carried out with
20 funds received through the grant; and

21 (2) a process and outcome evaluation.

22 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To carry
23 out this section, there is authorized to be appropriated
24 \$75,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2020 and 2021, to
25 remain available until expended.