

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4534

To amend the Public Health Service Act to improve the public health system in tribal communities and increase the number of American Indians and Alaska Natives pursuing health careers, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 26, 2019

Mr. RUIZ (for himself and Mr. PALLONE) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to improve the public health system in tribal communities and increase the number of American Indians and Alaska Natives pursuing health careers, 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 “Native Health and
5 Wellness Act of 2019”.

1 **SEC. 2. TRIBAL HEALTH BLOCK GRANT.**

2 Title III of the Public Health Service Act is amended
3 by inserting after section 317T of such Act (42 U.S.C.
4 247b–22) the following new section:

5 **“SEC. 317U. TRIBAL HEALTH BLOCK GRANT.**

6 “(a) IN GENERAL.—To the extent and in the
7 amounts made available in advance by appropriations, the
8 Secretary, acting through the Director of the Centers for
9 Disease Control and Prevention, shall award a grant, in
10 an amount determined pursuant to the formula developed
11 under subsection (e), to each eligible Indian tribe or tribal
12 organization for the purposes of promoting health, pre-
13 venting disease, and reducing health disparities among
14 American Indians and Alaska Natives.

15 “(b) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall carry out
16 this section, including the development of the formula re-
17 quired by subsection (e), in consultation with eligible In-
18 dian tribes and tribal organizations.

19 “(c) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible for a grant under
20 this section for a fiscal year, an Indian tribe or tribal orga-
21 nization shall submit to the Secretary a plan at such time,
22 in such manner, and containing such information as the
23 Secretary may require.

24 “(d) USE OF FUNDS.—Each grantee under this sec-
25 tion shall use the grant funds—

1 “(1) to establish or support preventive health
2 service programs that facilitate the achievement of
3 health-status goals;

4 “(2) to establish or support public health serv-
5 ices that reduce the prevalence of chronic disease
6 among American Indians and Alaska Natives; or

7 “(3) to strengthen public health infrastructure
8 to facilitate the surveillance and response to infec-
9 tious disease and foodborne illness outbreaks.

10 “(e) FORMULA.—The Secretary shall develop a for-
11 mula to be used in allocating the total amount of funds
12 made available to carry out this section for a fiscal year
13 among the eligible Indian tribes and tribal organizations.

14 “(f) REPORTS.—Each grantee under this section
15 shall submit reports at such time, in such manner, and
16 containing such information as the Secretary may require.

17 “(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms ‘In-
18 dian tribe’ and ‘tribal organization’ have the meanings
19 given to such terms in section 4 of the Indian Health Care
20 Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603).

21 “(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To
22 carry out this section, there is authorized to be appro-
23 priated \$56,700,000 for each of fiscal years 2020 through
24 2024.”.

1 **SEC. 3. GRANT PROGRAM TO RECRUIT AND MENTOR AMER-**
2 **ICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE YOUTH**
3 **AND YOUNG ADULTS.**

4 Subpart 3 of part E of title VII of the Public Health
5 Service Act (42 U.S.C. 295f et seq.) is amended by adding
6 at the end the following new section:

7 **“SEC. 779. RECRUITMENT AND MENTORING OF AMERICAN**
8 **INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE YOUTH AND**
9 **YOUNG ADULTS.**

10 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall make grants
11 to Indian tribes and tribal organizations for the purpose
12 of recruiting and mentoring American Indian and Alaska
13 Native youth and young adults in health professions.

14 “(b) USE OF FUNDS.—An Indian tribe or tribal orga-
15 nization receiving a grant under subsection (a) shall use
16 the grant funds—

17 “(1) to expose American Indian and Alaska Na-
18 tive adolescent youth or young adults to health pro-
19 fessions;

20 “(2) to promote science education;

21 “(3) to establish mentoring relationships be-
22 tween—

23 “(A) American Indian and Alaska Native
24 youth or young adults; and

25 “(B) health professionals;

1 “(4) to provide hands-on learning experiences in
2 a health care setting;

3 “(5) to establish partnerships with institutions
4 of higher education (including tribal colleges), local
5 educational agencies, and other community-based en-
6 tities to develop a larger and more competitive appli-
7 cant pool for health professional careers; or

8 “(6) to provide counseling, mentoring, and
9 other services designed to assist American Indian
10 and Alaska Native youth or young adults in the pur-
11 suit of higher education with respect to health pro-
12 fessions.

13 “(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

14 “(1) HEALTH PROFESSION.—The term ‘health
15 profession’ has the meaning given to the term
16 ‘Health profession’ in section 4 of the Indian Health
17 Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603).

18 “(2) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term ‘Indian tribe’
19 has the meaning given to such term in section 4 of
20 the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C.
21 1603).

22 “(3) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term ‘tribal
23 organization’ has the meaning given such term in
24 section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-
25 cation Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

1 “(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To
2 carry out this section, there is authorized to be appro-
3 priated \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2020 through
4 2024.”.

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