

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6559

To require the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to promulgate an emergency temporary standard to protect employees from occupational exposure to SARS-CoV-2, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 21, 2020

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia (for himself, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. SHALALA, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. NORTON, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mrs. BEATTY, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. NORCROSS, Ms. WILD, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. ROSE of New York, Ms. FINKENAUER, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. COHEN, Mrs. TRAHAN, Mr. LEVIN of Michigan, Mr. TRONE, Mrs. MCBATH, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. MORELLE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. SUOZZI, Mrs. HAYES, Ms. OMAR, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, and Mr. GRIJALVA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To require the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to promulgate an emergency temporary standard to protect employees from occupational exposure to SARS-CoV-2, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “COVID–19 Every
3 Worker Protection Act of 2020”.

4 **SEC. 2. EMERGENCY TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT STAND-**
5 **ARDS.**

6 (a) **EMERGENCY TEMPORARY STANDARD.—**

7 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—In consideration of the grave
8 risk presented by COVID–19 and the need to
9 strengthen protections for employees, pursuant to
10 section 6(c)(1) of the Occupational Safety and
11 Health Act of 1970 (29 U.S.C. 655(c)(1)) and not-
12 withstanding the provisions of law and the Executive
13 order listed in paragraph (7), not later than 7 days
14 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Sec-
15 retary of Labor shall promulgate an emergency tem-
16 porary standard to protect from occupational expo-
17 sure to SARS–CoV–2—

18 (A) employees of health care sector em-
19 ployers;

20 (B) employees of employers in the para-
21 medic and emergency medical services, includ-
22 ing such services provided by firefighters and
23 other emergency responders; and

24 (C) other employees at occupational risk of
25 such exposure.

1 (2) CONSULTATION.—In developing the stand-
2 ard under this subsection, the Secretary of Labor
3 shall consult with the Director of the Centers for
4 Disease Control and Prevention, the Director of the
5 National Institute for Occupational Safety and
6 Health, and professional associations and represent-
7 atives of the employees in the occupations and sec-
8 tors described in subparagraphs (A) through (C) of
9 paragraph (1) and the employers of such employees.

10 (3) ENFORCEMENT DISCRETION.—If the Sec-
11 retary of Labor determines it is not feasible for an
12 employer to comply with a requirement of the stand-
13 ard promulgated under this subsection (such as a
14 shortage of the necessary personal protective equip-
15 ment), the Secretary may exercise discretion in the
16 enforcement of such requirement if the employer
17 demonstrates that the employer—

18 (A) is exercising due diligence to come into
19 compliance with such requirement; and

20 (B) is implementing alternative methods
21 and measures to protect employees.

22 (4) EXTENSION OF STANDARD.—Notwith-
23 standing paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 6(c) of
24 the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29
25 U.S.C. 655(c)), the emergency temporary standard

1 promulgated under this subsection shall be in effect
2 until the date on which the final standard promul-
3 gated under subsection (b) is in effect.

4 (5) STATE PLAN ADOPTION.—With respect to a
5 State with a State plan that has been approved by
6 the Secretary of Labor under section 18 of the Oc-
7 cupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29
8 U.S.C. 667), not later than 14 days after the date
9 of enactment of this Act, such State shall promul-
10 gate an emergency temporary standard that is at
11 least as effective in protecting from occupational ex-
12 posure to SARS-CoV-2 the employees in the occu-
13 pations and sectors described in subparagraphs (A)
14 through (C) of paragraph (1) as the emergency tem-
15 porary standard promulgated under this subsection.

16 (6) EMPLOYER DEFINED.—For purposes of the
17 standard promulgated under this subsection, the
18 term “employer” (as defined in section 3 of the Oc-
19 cupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29
20 U.S.C. 652)) includes any State or political subdivi-
21 sion of a State, except for a State or political sub-
22 division of a State already subject to the jurisdiction
23 of a State plan approved under section 18(b) of the
24 Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29
25 U.S.C. 667(b)).

1 (7) INAPPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF LAW AND
2 EXECUTIVE ORDER.—The requirements of chapter 6
3 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to
4 as the “Regulatory Flexibility Act”), subchapter I of
5 chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (com-
6 monly referred to as the “Paperwork Reduction
7 Act”), the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995
8 (2 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.), and Executive Order 12866
9 (58 Fed. Reg. 190; relating to regulatory planning
10 and review), as amended, shall not apply to the
11 standard promulgated under this subsection.

12 (b) PERMANENT STANDARD.—Not later than 24
13 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Sec-
14 retary of Labor shall promulgate a final standard—

15 (1) to protect employees in the occupations and
16 sectors described in subparagraphs (A) through (C)
17 of subsection (a)(1) from occupational exposure to
18 infectious pathogens, including novel pathogens; and

19 (2) that shall be effective and enforceable in the
20 same manner and to the same extent as a standard
21 promulgated under section 6(b) of the Occupational
22 Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29 U.S.C. 655(b)).

23 (c) REQUIREMENTS.—Each standard promulgated
24 under this section shall include—

1 (1) a requirement that the employers of the em-
2 employees in the occupations and sectors described in
3 subparagraphs (A) through (C) of subsection (a)(1)
4 develop and implement a comprehensive infectious
5 disease exposure control plan, with the input and in-
6 volvement of employees or, where applicable, the rep-
7 resentatives of employees, as appropriate, to address
8 the risk of occupational exposure in such sectors and
9 occupations;

10 (2) no less protection for novel pathogens than
11 precautions mandated by standards adopted by a
12 State plan that has been approved by the Secretary
13 of Labor under section 18 of the Occupational Safe-
14 ty and Health Act of 1970 (296 U.S.C. 667);

15 (3) the incorporation, as appropriate, of—

16 (A) guidelines issued by the Centers for
17 Disease Control and Prevention, the National
18 Institute for Occupational Safety and Health,
19 and the Occupational Safety and Health Ad-
20 ministration which are designed to prevent the
21 transmission of infectious agents in healthcare
22 or other occupational settings; and

23 (B) relevant scientific research on novel
24 pathogens; and

1 (4) a requirement for the recording and report-
2 ing of all work-related COVID–19 infections and
3 deaths as set forth in part 1904 of title 29, Code of
4 Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of en-
5 actment of this Act).

6 (d) ANTI-RETALIATION.—

7 (1) POLICY.—Each standard promulgated
8 under this section shall require employers to adopt
9 a policy prohibiting the discrimination and retalia-
10 tion described in paragraph (2) by any person (in-
11 cluding an agent of the employer).

12 (2) PROHIBITION.—No employer (including an
13 agent of the employer) shall discriminate or retaliate
14 against an employee for—

15 (A) reporting to the employer, to a local,
16 State, or Federal Government agency, or to the
17 media or on a social media platform—

18 (i) a violation of a standard promul-
19 gated pursuant to this Act;

20 (ii) a violation of an infectious disease
21 exposure control plan described in sub-
22 section (c)(1); or

23 (iii) a good faith concern about a
24 workplace infectious disease hazard;

1 (B) seeking assistance or intervention from
2 the employer or a local, State, or Federal Gov-
3 ernment agency with respect to such a report;

4 (C) voluntary use of personal protective
5 equipment with a higher level of protection than
6 is provided by the employer; or

7 (D) exercising any other right under the
8 Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970
9 (29 U.S.C. 651 et seq.).

10 (3) ENFORCEMENT.—This subsection shall be
11 enforced in the same manner and to the same extent
12 as any standard promulgated under section 6(b) of
13 the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29
14 U.S.C. 655(b)).

15 **SEC. 3. SURVEILLANCE, TRACKING, AND INVESTIGATION**
16 **OF WORK-RELATED CASES OF COVID-19.**

17 The Director of the Centers for Disease Control and
18 Prevention, in conjunction with the Director of the Na-
19 tional Institute for Occupational Safety and Health,
20 shall—

21 (1) collect and analyze case reports, including
22 information on the work status, occupation, and in-
23 dustry classification of an individual, and other data
24 on COVID-19, to identify and evaluate the extent,
25 nature, and source of COVID-19 among employees

1 in the occupations and sectors described in subpara-
2 graphs (A) through (C) of section 2(a)(1);

3 (2) investigate, as appropriate, individual cases
4 of COVID–19 among such employees to evaluate the
5 source of exposure and adequacy of infection and ex-
6 posure control programs and measures;

7 (3) provide regular periodic reports on COVID–
8 19 among such employees to the public; and

9 (4) based on such reports and investigations,
10 make recommendations on needed actions or guid-
11 ance to protect at-risk employees from COVID–19.

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