117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3489

To establish or continue a multidisciplinary research program to advance the discovery and preclinical development of medical products for priority virus families and other viral pathogens with a significant potential to cause a pandemic, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 12 (legislative day, JANUARY 10), 2022

Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. HICKENLOOPER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

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A BILL

To establish or continue a multidisciplinary research program to advance the discovery and preclinical development of medical products for priority virus families and other viral pathogens with a significant potential to cause a pandemic, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. RESEARCH CENTERS FOR PATHOGENS OF PANDEMIC CONCERN.

Subpart 6 of part C of title IV of the Public Health Service Act is amended by inserting after section 447C (42 U.S.C. 285f–4) the following:

"SEC. 447D. RESEARCH CENTERS FOR PATHOGENS OF PANDEMIC CONCERN.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Institute, in collaboration, as appropriate, with the directors of applicable institutes, centers, and divisions of the National Institutes of Health, and the Director of the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority, shall establish or continue a multidisciplinary research program to advance the discovery and preclinical development of medical products for priority virus families and other viral pathogens with a significant potential to cause a pandemic, through support for research centers.

''(b) USES OF FUNDS.—The Director of the Institute shall award funding through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements to public or private entities, or consortia of such entities, to provide support for research centers described in subsection (a) for the purpose of—

''(1) conducting basic research through preclinical development of new medical products or technologies, including platform technologies, to address pathogens of pandemic concern;

''(2) identifying potential targets for therapeutic candidates, including antivirals, to treat such pathogens;

''(3) identifying existing medical products with the potential to address such pathogens, including

candidates that could be used in outpatient settings; and

''(4) carrying out or supporting other research related to medical products to address such pathogens, as determined appropriate by the Director.

''(c) COORDINATION.—The Director of the Institute shall, as appropriate, provide for the coordination of activities among the centers described in subsection (a), including through—

''(1) facilitating the exchange of information and regular communication among the centers, as appropriate; and

''(2) requiring the periodic preparation and submission to the Director of reports on the activities of each center.

''(d) PRIORITY.—In awarding funding through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements under subsection (a), the Director of the Institute shall, as appropriate, give priority to applicants with existing frameworks and partnerships, as applicable, to support the advancement of such research.

''(e) COLLABORATION.—The Director of the Institute shall—

''(1) collaborate with the heads of other appropriate Federal departments, agencies, and offices

with respect to the identification of additional priority virus families and other viral pathogens with a significant potential to cause a pandemic; and

''(2) collaborate with the Director of the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority with respect to the research conducted by centers described in subsection (a), including, as appropriate, providing any updates on the research advancements made by such centers, identifying any advanced research and development needs for such countermeasures, consistent with section 319L(a)(6), and taking into consideration existing manufacturing capacity and future capacity needs for such medical products or technologies, including platform technologies, supported by the centers described in subsection (a).

''(f) SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.—Any support received by a center described in subsection (a) under this section shall be used to supplement, and not supplant, other public or private support for activities authorized to be supported.''.

SEC. 2. IMPROVING MEDICAL COUNTERMEASURE RESEARCH COORDINATION.

Section 402(b) in the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 282(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (24), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (25), by striking the period and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (25) the following:

''(26) shall consult with the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, the Director of the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority, the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the heads of other Federal agencies and offices, as appropriate, regarding research needs to advance medical countermeasures to diagnose, mitigate, prevent, or treat harm from any biological agent or toxin, including emerging infectious diseases, chemical, radiological, or nuclear agent that may cause a public health emergency or other research needs related to emerging public health threats.''.

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