

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 3023

To amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Director of the National Institutes of Health to make awards to outstanding scientists, including physician-scientists, to support researchers focusing on pediatric research, including basic, clinical, translational, or pediatric pharmacological research, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 11, 2019

Ms. ERNST (for herself, Mr. COONS, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. BROWN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Director of the National Institutes of Health to make awards to outstanding scientists, including physician-scientists, to support researchers focusing on pediatric research, including basic, clinical, translational, or pediatric pharmacological research, 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 “Pediatricians Accel-
3 erate Childhood Therapies Act of 2019” or the “PACT
4 Act of 2019”.

5 **SEC. 2. TRANS-NIH AWARDS FOR EARLY-CAREER PEDI-**
6 **ATRIC RESEARCHERS.**

7 Part G of title IV of the Public Health Service Act
8 (42 U.S.C. 288 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
9 the following new section:

10 **“SEC. 489A. TRANS-NIH AWARDS FOR EARLY-CAREER PEDI-**
11 **ATRIC RESEARCHERS.**

12 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the NIH shall
13 make awards to outstanding scientists, including physi-
14 cian-scientists, to support researchers focusing on pedi-
15 atric research, including basic, clinical, translational, or
16 pediatric pharmacological research.

17 “(b) PRIORITY RESEARCH TOPIC AREAS.—In car-
18 rying out subsection (a), the Director of NIH, in consulta-
19 tion with the Director of the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Na-
20 tional Institute of Child Health and Human Development
21 and the directors of other national research institutes and
22 national centers that participate within the Trans-NIH
23 Pediatric Research Consortium, shall—

24 “(1) establish priority research topic areas, in-
25 formed by external stakeholders, including research

1 institutions, research societies, patient organizations,
2 and industry; and

3 “(2) consider opportunities to align such pri-
4 ority pediatric research topic areas with current and
5 future priorities of the National Institutes of Health,
6 including—

7 “(A) childhood cancer;

8 “(B) precision medicine, genetics, and
9 genomics;

10 “(C) rare diseases and disorders, such as
11 sickle cell disease, and other diseases and dis-
12 orders with significant unmet training needs;

13 “(D) fetal, placental, and neonatal develop-
14 ment; and

15 “(E) child and adolescent mental health.

16 “(c) PRIORITY AWARDS.—In making awards under
17 this section, the Director of NIH shall—

18 “(1) give priority to researchers, including phy-
19 sician-scientists, who have a demonstrated pro-
20 ficiency in conducting pediatric research, but have
21 not yet achieved research independence at the time
22 of their application; and

23 “(2) give special consideration to researchers
24 from populations that are historically underrep-
25 resented in pediatric medical research.

1 “(d) REQUIREMENTS.—The Director of NIH—

2 “(1) shall require recipients of awards under
3 this section to use such awards to support pediatric
4 research activities, including costs associated with
5 laboratory staff and other costs associated with the
6 conduct of research; and

7 “(2) may allow recipients of awards under this
8 section to use such awards for costs associated with
9 receiving guidance and training from senior re-
10 searchers as necessary to help such recipients reach
11 a state of research independence, including con-
12 ferences and other meeting participation.

13 “(e) SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.—Awards made
14 under this section shall be used to supplement, and not
15 supplant, other funding for research career development
16 awards.”.

17 **SEC. 3. TRANS-NIH PEDIATRIC CONSORTIUM.**

18 Title IV of the Public Health Service is amended by
19 inserting after section 409D (42 U.S.C. 284h) the fol-
20 lowing new section:

21 **“SEC. 409D–1. TRANS-NIH PEDIATRIC CONSORTIUM.**

22 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Director of NIH shall
23 establish and maintain a consortium to be known as the
24 Trans-NIH Pediatric Research Consortium (in this sec-
25 tions referred to as the ‘Consortium’) to coordinate pedi-

1 atric research programs across the National Institutes of
2 Health.

3 “(b) MEMBERSHIP.—The members of the Consor-
4 tium shall consist of representatives of multiple national
5 research institutes and national centers.

6 “(c) CHAIR.—The Chair of the Consortium shall be
7 the Director of the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National In-
8 stitute of Child Health and Human Development (or the
9 Director’s designee).

10 “(d) DUTIES.—In coordinating pediatric research
11 programs across the National Institutes of Health, the
12 Consortium shall—

13 “(1) establish pediatric research priorities;

14 “(2) identify gaps and opportunities for re-
15 search collaborations involving multiple national re-
16 search institutes and national centers; and

17 “(3) identify opportunities to develop the next
18 generation of pediatric researchers.

19 “(e) CONSULTATION.—The Consortium shall consult
20 regularly with external experts in the field of pediatric re-
21 search, including children’s hospitals, children’s research
22 institutions, patient organizations, and other stake-
23 holders.”.

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