

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6620

To authorize grants to address substance use during COVID–19.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 24, 2020

Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire (for herself and Mr. KATKO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To authorize grants to address substance use during
COVID–19.

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. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress finds the following:

5 (1) In 2018, an estimated 164,800,000 people
6 aged 12 or older in the United States, or 60.2 per-
7 cent, were past month substance users (including,
8 tobacco, alcohol, or illicit drugs).

9 (2) In 2018, nearly 1 in 5 people aged 12 or
10 older in the United States, or 19.4 percent, used an

1 illicit drug in the past year, which is a higher per-
2 centage than in 2015 and 2016.

3 (3) In 2018, an estimated 10,300,000 people
4 aged 12 or older in the United States misused
5 opioids in the past year, including 9,900,000 pre-
6 scription pain reliever misusers and 808,000 heroin
7 users.

8 (4) In 2017, overdose deaths involving opioids
9 in the United States, including fentanyl, was 6 times
10 higher than in 1999.

11 (5) The age-adjusted rate of drug overdose
12 deaths involving synthetic opioids in the United
13 States other than methadone increased by 10 per-
14 cent from 2017 to 2018.

15 (6) In 2018, approximately 20,300,000 people
16 aged 12 or older in the United States had a sub-
17 stance use disorder related to their use of alcohol or
18 illicit drugs in the past year.

19 (7) In 2018, an estimated 21,200,000 people
20 aged 12 or older in the United States needed sub-
21 stance use treatment.

22 (8) According to the Substance Abuse and Men-
23 tal Health Services Administration, COVID-19 will
24 certainly contribute to growth in the numbers re-
25 ferred to in the preceding paragraphs. Individuals

1 across the United States will struggle with increases
2 in depression, anxiety, trauma, and grief. There is
3 also anticipated increase in substance misuse in the
4 United States as lives are impacted for individuals
5 and families.

6 **SEC. 2. GRANT PROGRAM ON HARMS OF DRUG MISUSE.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Assistant Secretary shall
8 award grants to States, territories, counties, Tribes, Trib-
9 al organizations, and community-based entities to address
10 the harms of drug misuse, such as by—

11 (1) addressing the spread of HIV/AIDS and
12 hepatitis C;

13 (2) connecting individuals with a substance use
14 disorder to overdose education, counseling, and
15 health education; or

16 (3) encouraging such individuals to take steps
17 to reduce the negative personal and public health
18 impacts of substance use during any emergency pe-
19 riod, as defined in subparagraph (B) of section
20 1135(g)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
21 1320b–5(g)(1)).

22 (b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In prioritizing grant awards
23 under this section, the Secretary shall take into account—

24 (1) the proportion of people in the area served
25 by the applicant who meet criteria for dependence on

1 or abuse of illicit drugs who have not received any
2 treatment;

3 (2) drug overdose death rates;

4 (3) telemedicine infrastructure needs;

5 (4) workforce needs;

6 (5) prevention and recovery supports; and

7 (6) efforts to reduce stigma.

8 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To carry
9 out this section, there is authorized to be appropriated
10 \$5,000,000 for the period beginning on the date of enact-
11 ment of this Act and ending on the later of—

12 (1) November 30, 2020; and

13 (2) the end of the emergency period (as defined
14 in section 1135(g)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act
15 (42 U.S.C. 1320b–5(g)(1)(B))).

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