

117TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 8151

To amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to awards to support community health workers and community health.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 21, 2022

Mr. RUIZ introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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## A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to awards to support community health workers and community health.

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 “Building a Sustainable  
5       Workforce for Healthy Communities Act”.

6       **SEC. 2. AWARDS TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY HEALTH WORK-**  
7       **ERS AND COMMUNITY HEALTH.**

8       Section 399V of the Public Health Service Act (42  
9       U.S.C. 280g–11) is amended—

1 (1) by amending the section heading to read as  
2 follows: “**AWARDS TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY**  
3 **HEALTH WORKERS AND COMMUNITY HEALTH**”;

4 (2) by amending subsection (a) to read as fol-  
5 lows:

6 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through  
7 the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Pre-  
8 vention and in coordination with the Administrator of the  
9 Health Resources and Services Administration, shall  
10 award grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements to el-  
11 igible entities to promote healthy behaviors and outcomes  
12 for populations in medically underserved communities  
13 through the use of community health workers, including  
14 by addressing ongoing and longer-term community health  
15 needs, and by building the capacity of the community  
16 health worker workforce. Such grants, contracts, and co-  
17 operative agreements shall be awarded in alignment and  
18 coordination with existing funding arrangements sup-  
19 porting community health workers.”;

20 (3) in subsection (b)—

21 (A) in the matter preceding paragraph

22 (1)—

23 (i) by striking “Grants awarded” and  
24 inserting “Subject to any requirements for  
25 the scope of licensure, registration, or cer-

tification of a community health worker under applicable State law, grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements awarded”; and

(ii) by striking “support community health workers”;

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (3) through (5) as paragraphs (4) through (6), respectively;

(C) by striking paragraphs (1) and (2) and inserting the following:

“(1) recruit, hire, and train community health workers that reflect the needs of the community;

“(2) support community health workers in providing education and outreach, in a community setting, regarding—

“(A) health conditions prevalent in—

“(i) medically underserved communities (as defined in section 799B), particularly racial and ethnic minority populations; and

“(ii) other such populations or geographic areas that may require additional support during public health emergencies, which may include counties identified by

1 the Secretary using applicable measures  
2 developed by the Centers for Disease Con-  
3 trol and Prevention or other Federal agen-  
4 cies; and

5 “(B) addressing social determinants of  
6 health and eliminating health disparities, in-  
7 cluding by—

8 “(i) promoting awareness of services  
9 and resources to increase access to health  
10 care, child services, technology, housing  
11 services, educational services, nutrition  
12 services, employment services, and other  
13 services; and

14 “(ii) assisting in conducting individual  
15 and community needs assessments;

16 “(3) educate community members, including re-  
17 garding effective strategies to promote healthy be-  
18 haviors;”;

19 (D) in paragraph (4), as so redesignated,  
20 by striking “to educate” and inserting “edu-  
21 cate”;

22 (E) in paragraph (5), as so redesignated—

23 (i) by striking “to identify” and in-  
24 serting “identify”;

1 (ii) by striking “healthcare agencies”  
2 and inserting “health care agencies”; and

3 (iii) by striking “healthcare services  
4 and to eliminate duplicative care; or” and  
5 inserting “health care services and to  
6 streamline care, including serving as a liai-  
7 son between communities and health care  
8 agencies; and”; and

9 (F) in paragraph (6), as so redesignated—

10 (i) by striking “to educate, guide, and  
11 provide” and inserting “support commu-  
12 nity health workers in educating, guiding,  
13 or providing”; and

14 (ii) by striking “maternal health and  
15 prenatal care” and inserting “chronic dis-  
16 eases, maternal health, and prenatal care  
17 in order to improve maternal and infant  
18 health outcomes”;

19 (4) in subsection (c), by striking “Each eligible  
20 entity” and all that follows through “accompanied  
21 by” and inserting “To be eligible to receive an  
22 award under subsection (a), an entity shall prepare  
23 and submit to the Secretary an application at such  
24 time, in such manner, and containing”;

25 (5) in subsection (d)—

1 (A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1),  
2 by striking “grants” and inserting “awards”;

3 (B) by amending paragraph (1) to read as  
4 follows:

5 “(1) propose to serve—

6 “(A) areas with populations that have a  
7 high rate of chronic disease, infant mortality, or  
8 maternal morbidity and mortality;

9 “(B) low-income populations, including  
10 medically underserved populations (as defined  
11 in section 330(b)(3));

12 “(C) populations residing in health profes-  
13 sional shortage areas (as defined in section  
14 332(a));

15 “(D) populations residing in maternity  
16 care health professional target areas identified  
17 under section 332(k); or

18 “(E) rural or traditionally underserved  
19 populations, including racial and ethnic minor-  
20 ity populations or low-income populations;”;

21 (C) in paragraph (2), by striking “; and”  
22 and inserting “, including rural populations and  
23 racial and ethnic minority populations;”;

24 (D) in paragraph (3), by striking “with  
25 community health workers.” and inserting “and

1 established relationships with community health  
2 workers in the communities expected to be  
3 served by the program; or” and

4 (E) by adding at the end the following:

5 “(4) develop a plan for providing services to the  
6 extent practicable, in the language and cultural con-  
7 text most appropriate to individuals expected to be  
8 served by the program.”;

9 (6) in subsection (e)—

10 (A) by striking “community health worker  
11 programs” and inserting “eligible entities”; and

12 (B) by striking “and one-stop delivery sys-  
13 tems under section 121(e)” and inserting “,  
14 health professions schools, minority-serving in-  
15 stitutions (as described in section 371 of the  
16 Higher Education Act of 1965), area health  
17 education centers under section 751 of this Act,  
18 and one-stop delivery systems under section  
19 121”;

20 (7) by striking subsections (f), (g), (h), (i), and  
21 (j) and inserting the following:

22 “(f) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may  
23 provide to eligible entities that receive awards under sub-  
24 section (a) technical assistance with respect to planning,

1 development, and operation of community health worker  
2 programs authorized or supported under this section.

3 “(g) DISSEMINATION OF BEST PRACTICES.—Not  
4 later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the  
5 Building a Sustainable Workforce for Healthy Commu-  
6 nities Act, the Secretary shall, based on activities carried  
7 out under this section and in collaboration with relevant  
8 stakeholders, identify and disseminate evidence-based or  
9 evidence-informed practices regarding recruitment and re-  
10 tention of community health workers to address ongoing  
11 public health and community health needs, and to prepare  
12 for, and respond to, future public health emergencies.

13 “(h) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 4 years  
14 after the date of enactment of the Building a Sustainable  
15 Workforce for Healthy Communities Act, the Secretary  
16 shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education,  
17 Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on  
18 Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives  
19 a report concerning the effectiveness of the program under  
20 this section in addressing ongoing public health and com-  
21 munity health needs. Such report shall include rec-  
22 ommendations regarding any improvements to such pro-  
23 gram, including recommendations for how to improve re-  
24 cruitment, training, and retention of the community  
25 health workforce.



1       “(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For  
2 purposes of carrying out this section, there are authorized  
3 to be appropriated \$75,000,000 for each of fiscal years  
4 2023 through 2027.”;

5           (8) by redesignating subsection (k) as sub-  
6 section (j); and

7           (9) in subsection (j), as so redesignated—

8               (A) by striking paragraphs (1), (2), and  
9               (4);

10            (B) by redesignating paragraph (3) as  
11 paragraph (1);

12            (C) in paragraph (1), as so redesignated—

13               (i) by striking “entity (including a  
14 State or public subdivision of a State” and  
15 inserting “entity, including a State or po-  
16 litical subdivision of a State, an Indian  
17 Tribe or Tribal organization, an urban In-  
18 dian organization, a community-based or-  
19 ganization”; and

20               (ii) by striking “as defined in section  
21 1861(aa) of the Social Security Act))” and  
22 inserting “(as described in section  
23 1861(aa)(4)(B) of the Social Security  
24 Act)”; and

25            (D) by adding at the end the following:

1           “(2) INDIAN TRIBE; TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—  
2       The terms ‘Indian Tribe’ and ‘Tribal organization’  
3       have the meanings given the terms ‘Indian tribe’ and  
4       ‘tribal organization’, respectively, in section 4 of the  
5       Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance  
6       Act.

7           “(3) URBAN INDIAN ORGANIZATION.—The term  
8       ‘urban Indian organization’ has the meaning given  
9       such term in section 4 of the Indian Health Care  
10      Improvement Act.”.

11 **SEC. 3. GAO STUDY AND REPORT.**

12      Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment  
13 of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States  
14 shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education,  
15 Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on  
16 Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives  
17 a report on the program authorized under section 399V  
18 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280g–11) (as  
19 amended by section 2, including a review of the outcomes  
20 and effectiveness of the program and coordination with ap-  
21 plicable programs of the Health Resources and Services  
22 Administration to ensure there is no unnecessary duplica-  
23 tion of efforts among such programs.

