

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8552

To provide for the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish grant programs to improve the health and positive youth development impacts of youth sports participation, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 28, 2022

Mr. ALLRED (for himself and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) 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 provide for the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish grant programs to improve the health and positive youth development impacts of youth sports participation, 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,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Physical activity, Liv-
5 ing healthy, Access, Youth development, and Safety in
6 Youth Sports Act” or the “PLAYS in Youth Sports Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. GRANT PROGRAMS.**

2 (a) ORGANIZATION GRANT PROGRAM.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and
4 Human Services, acting through the Centers for
5 Disease Control and Prevention, shall establish a
6 competitive grants program (in this section referred
7 to as the “Organization Grants Program”) to award
8 grants, in accordance with paragraph (3), to eligible
9 national non-profit organizations to improve the
10 health and positive youth development impacts of
11 youth sports participation and to increase access to
12 youth sports for all children and youth, especially
13 underserved populations as defined by section 40002
14 of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (34
15 U.S.C. 12291), in accordance with paragraph (4).

16 (2) ELIGIBLE NATIONAL NON-PROFIT ORGANI-
17 ZATION.—For purposes of this subsection, a national
18 non-profit organization shall be eligible for a grant
19 under this subsection if such organization—

20 (A) has experience with working with re-
21 gional and local non-profit youth sports organi-
22 zations in the areas of improved health, positive
23 youth development, and safe playing environ-
24 ments consistent with the types of activities de-
25 scribed in paragraph (5);

1 (B) submits to the Secretary a plan for
2 awarding subgrants to regional and local non-
3 profit youth sports organizations to improve
4 physical activity or sports programs carried out
5 in the areas served by such organizations to im-
6 prove the health of youth through, and have
7 positive impacts on, youth sports participation;

8 (C) can demonstrate a track record and
9 plan for serving low-income and under-
10 resourced communities, as well as providers of
11 adaptive sports programming; and

12 (D) can demonstrate policies and practices
13 in place for ensuring background checks for
14 staff and volunteers working with children and
15 youth.

16 (3) ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.—

17 (A) AMOUNT OF GRANTS.—Each grant
18 awarded under this subsection shall be no more
19 than \$2,500,000 for national organizations and
20 no more than \$250,000 for State and local or-
21 ganizations.

22 (B) SELECTION OF GRANTEEES THROUGH
23 GRANT SELECTION BOARD.—

24 (i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one
25 year after the date on which funds are first

1 appropriated to carry out this section, the
2 Secretary shall establish a grant selection
3 board to select the eligible national non-
4 profit organizations to be awarded grants
5 under this subsection.

6 (ii) COMPOSITION.—Such board shall
7 consist of 10 members to be selected from
8 the Department of Health and Human
9 Services, including from the following:

10 (I) The Administration for Chil-
11 dren and Families (ACF), in par-
12 ticular the Family and Youth Services
13 Bureau.

14 (II) The Office of the Assistant
15 Secretary for Health, in particular the
16 Office of Adolescent Health and the
17 President’s Council on Fitness,
18 Sports, and Nutrition.

19 (III) The Centers for Disease
20 Control and Prevention, in particular
21 the Office of Noncommunicable Dis-
22 eases, Injury and Environment
23 Health, and the National Center for
24 Injury Prevention and Control.

1 (IV) The Center for Faith-Based
2 and Neighborhood Partnerships.

3 (V) The National Institutes of
4 Health, in particular the National In-
5 stitute of Child Health and Human
6 Development and the National Insti-
7 tute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal
8 and Skin Diseases.

9 (iii) CONSIDERATIONS.—In selecting
10 grantees under this subsection, the board
11 under this subparagraph shall, with respect
12 to a plan described in paragraph (2)(B)
13 submitted by a national non-profit organi-
14 zation, evaluate the plan based on the abil-
15 ity of the plan to ensure that the grant will
16 help improve the physical activity or sports
17 program involved in at least one of the fol-
18 lowing areas:

19 (I) Effectiveness, through activi-
20 ties described in paragraph (5)(B).

21 (II) Participation, through activi-
22 ties described in paragraph (5)(C).

23 (III) Health and Safety, through
24 activities described in paragraph
25 (5)(D).

1 (4) USES OF GRANTS.—A grant awarded under
2 this subsection to an eligible non-profit organization
3 may be used by such organization only for awarding
4 subgrants in accordance with paragraph (5) and
5 consistent with the plan submitted by the organiza-
6 tion under paragraph (2)(B).

7 (5) USES OF SUBGRANTS.—

8 (A) IN GENERAL.—

9 (i) PERMISSIBLE ACTIVITIES.—A
10 subgrant awarded to a regional and local
11 non-profit youth sports organization pursu-
12 ant to this subsection may be used by such
13 organization for only the activities de-
14 scribed in the subsequent subparagraphs of
15 this paragraph in accordance with the pro-
16 visions of the respective subparagraph.

17 (ii) EXCLUDED ACTIVITIES.—A
18 subgrant awarded to a regional and local
19 non-profit youth sports organization pursu-
20 ant to this subsection may not be used by
21 such organization for any of the following:

22 (I) Any activity the organization
23 is in the process of conducting or
24 planning to conduct as of the date of

1 application for a subgrant under this
2 subsection.

3 (II) Any activity primarily de-
4 signed to expand the organization
5 among those portions of the commu-
6 nity that would otherwise participate
7 in youth sports, rather than those ef-
8 forts aimed at a particularly under-
9 served participating portion of the
10 community.

11 (III) Efforts that are not likely
12 to be continued after funding from
13 the subgrant has expired.

14 (iii) AMOUNT OF SUBGRANTS.—A
15 subgrant under this subsection shall be not
16 more than \$10,000 and not less than
17 \$1,000.

18 (B) ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE EFFECTIVE-
19 NESS OF YOUTH SPORTS.—

20 (i) ACTIVITIES.—The activities de-
21 scribed in this subparagraph are activities
22 that promote effectiveness of physical ac-
23 tivities or youth sports, including the fol-
24 lowing:

1 (I) Training and certification
2 programs for coaches, in accordance
3 with clause (ii).

4 (II) Developing and imple-
5 menting coaching guidelines described
6 in clause (iii).

7 (III) Training for youth develop-
8 ment and character development.

9 (IV) Developing or implementing
10 evaluation and results implementation
11 process.

12 (V) Instructing positive parental
13 involvement.

14 (VI) Developing and imple-
15 menting an athlete code of conduct
16 and instruction.

17 (VII) Developing and imple-
18 menting coach and volunteer retention
19 efforts.

20 (VIII) Fostering a positive sport
21 experience for all involved that em-
22 phasizes athlete development over win-
23 ning at all costs.

24 (IX) Activities to enhance effects
25 beyond the playing field, such as with

1 respect to nutrition practices, aca-
2 demic performance, encouragement of
3 life-long practices, and promotion of
4 positive self-image.

5 (ii) TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION
6 PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS.—For pur-
7 poses of clause (i)(I), a training or certifi-
8 cation program for coaches described in
9 such clause—

10 (I) shall be based on consensus
11 within the youth sports non-profit
12 community;

13 (II) should be interactive;

14 (III) should aspire to coaching
15 education at the youth sport level that
16 provides coaches with baseline knowl-
17 edge in the areas of coaching philos-
18 ophy and style, communication, team
19 management, practice and game-day
20 planning, first aid, and rules as well
21 as sport-specific content on teaching
22 the techniques and tactics of the re-
23 spective sport;

24 (IV) should include content that
25 is complete, comprehensive, afford-

1 able, and user-friendly; a convenient
2 online 24/7 delivery system; supple-
3 mental resources and support mate-
4 rials, such as coaching youth sports
5 books, study guides, forms, checklists,
6 and plans; and a web-based tracking
7 and reporting interface that docu-
8 ments a national coaches registry;

9 (V) should emphasize whole child
10 development over winning at all costs;
11 and

12 (VI) should emphasize the stages
13 of youth development and the impor-
14 tance of providing children with a
15 level of challenge commensurate with
16 their physical, mental and emotional
17 maturity and their emerging athletic
18 ability; and should emphasize the im-
19 portance of treating children with dig-
20 nity and respect and giving all chil-
21 dren the opportunity to have fun and
22 grow as people and athletes.

23 (iii) COACHING REQUIREMENTS.—For
24 purposes of clause (i)(II), the coaching
25 guidelines described in this clause, with re-

1 spect to planning and practice of youth
2 sports, are guidelines to achieve the fol-
3 lowing:

4 (I) Developing and refining the
5 philosophy and style of such coaching.

6 (II) Developing the character of
7 the youth athletes through role-mod-
8 eling, teaching, and exhibiting appro-
9 priate citizenship behaviors.

10 (III) Communicating effectively
11 by role-modeling, teaching, and ex-
12 pecting honest and effective commu-
13 nication.

14 (IV) Guiding athletes to develop
15 self-confidence by modeling and teach-
16 ing self-confident attributes and be-
17 haviors and creating situations in
18 which athletes experience success.

19 (V) Teaching the sport involved
20 effectively by teaching the rules, sys-
21 tems, and defined plays of the sport
22 involved.

23 (VI) Teaching technical and tac-
24 tical skills effectively by instructing
25 athletes in the use of correct and safe

1 techniques and teaching how to proc-
2 ess game situations to gain a competi-
3 tive advantage.

4 (VII) Teaching sport decision-
5 making skills effectively by modeling
6 and teaching perception, attention,
7 and concentration skills.

8 (VIII) Challenging athletes in
9 practice and competition by devel-
10 oping season and practice plans to
11 create optimally challenging, safe, and
12 effective practices and competitions.

13 (IX) Physically preparing ath-
14 letes by modeling, teaching, and ex-
15 pecting appropriate physical training,
16 nutrition, and drug-free habits.

17 (X) Taking all measures feasible
18 to ensure the safety of athletes by
19 checking facilities and equipment (and
20 how such equipment fits), monitoring
21 athletes' activities closely, and cor-
22 recting unsafe behavior immediately.

23 (XI) Managing relationships ef-
24 fectively by modeling, teaching, and
25 expecting positive interactions between

1 coaches, athletes, parents, administra-
2 tors, medical personnel, officials, and
3 media.

4 (XII) Supporting scholastic
5 achievement by expecting commitment
6 to academics and teaching the value
7 of education.

8 (C) ACTIVITIES RELATING TO PARTICIPA-
9 TION.—The activities described in this subpara-
10 graph are activities to lead to sustained in-
11 creases in participation in youth sports, includ-
12 ing the following:

13 (i) Activities to lower barriers to par-
14 ticipation, such as by making it easier for
15 youth with disabilities to participate, ac-
16 quiring or modifying space, raising money
17 for an endowment to keep participation
18 fees low or free, including through scholar-
19 ships.

20 (ii) Activities to target populations
21 under-represented in youth sports or par-
22 ticularly at-risk communities, such as girls
23 and other under-represented minorities,
24 populations in geographical areas with par-
25 ticular low participation rates, populations

1 with high obesity risk, populations in high
2 crime and violence areas, homeless youth,
3 youth with behavioral issues, youth with
4 physical or mental disabilities.

5 (iii) Activities for capacity building.

6 (iv) Activities to engage parents and
7 other family members to encourage life-
8 long physical activity.

9 (D) ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE SAFETY AND
10 HEALTH.—

11 (i) ACTIVITIES.—The activities de-
12 scribed in this subparagraph are activities
13 to promote safety and health, including the
14 following:

15 (I) Background checks described
16 in clause (ii)(I) and the establishment
17 of procedures for such background
18 checks in accordance with clause
19 (ii)(II).

20 (II) Abuse prevention and re-
21 sponse activities described in clause
22 (iii).

23 (III) Measures to implement pro-
24 gram improvements as broadly as pos-
25 sible within the organization receiving

1 the subgrant by providing resources
2 for activities, such as administrative
3 guidelines and materials, training op-
4 portunities, and codes of conduct.

5 (IV) Training programs to ad-
6 dress the matters described in clause
7 (iv).

8 (V) Prevention efforts to prevent
9 and reduce the occurrence of concus-
10 sions (through baseline screening,
11 clear return to play and other post-
12 concussion protocols, prevention ef-
13 forts, parent and participant edu-
14 cation) and of overuse and overload
15 and injury risk.

16 (VI) Practices to encourage
17 water drinking, increased physical
18 movement, nutritious snacks, and na-
19 tional healthy eating practices.

20 (VII) Targeted programs for par-
21 ticular at-risk behavior or at-risk pop-
22 ulations, such as with respect to lat-
23 eral injuries in girls and for partici-
24 pants with physical and mental dis-

1 abilities, such as Type 1 diabetes, eat-
2 ing disorders, and sickle cell trait.

3 (VIII) Parent education.

4 (IX) Parent code of conduct and
5 instruction.

6 (X) Athlete code of conduct and
7 instruction.

8 (XI) Bullying prevention.

9 (XII) Safety procedures for en-
10 gagement of youth sports photog-
11 raphers.

12 (XIII) Venue and event safety.

13 (XIV) Participant comprehensive
14 health history and pre-screening re-
15 cording, evaluation, and privacy secur-
16 ing, including in a standardized form
17 or way that make it easy for partici-
18 pants to share their information with
19 other organizations.

20 (XV) Encouraging and facili-
21 tating participation in the Presidential
22 Active Lifestyle Award (PALA) of
23 participants.

24 (ii) BACKGROUND CHECKS.—

1 (I) IN GENERAL.—For purposes
2 of clause (i)(I), background checks de-
3 scribed in this clause—

4 (aa) check for known of-
5 fenses and pending actions of
6 abuse, harm, or violent behavior
7 and molestation of youth by
8 coaches, mentors, or other adults
9 with access to youth sports par-
10 ticipants;

11 (bb) screen employees, con-
12 tractors, and volunteer forces
13 who have regular contact with
14 youth participants, authority or
15 supervision roles with respect to
16 such youth, opportunity to estab-
17 lish a position of trust with re-
18 spect to such youth, or oppor-
19 tunity for one-on-one contact
20 with such youth;

21 (cc) should utilize advance-
22 ments in technology that make
23 criminal history information
24 available to these organizations;

1 (dd) must provide for reli-
2 able, rapid, comprehensive, up-to-
3 date checks at a very reasonable
4 cost so that the organizations can
5 make informed screening deci-
6 sions;

7 (ee) provide access to crimi-
8 nal background information that
9 has been recently updated, and is
10 dependable, complete, and
11 accessed from national databases,
12 county courts (county of resi-
13 dence) and all available State sex
14 offender registries; and

15 (ff) provide screenings that
16 generally cover identity
17 verification, using social security
18 number validation and address
19 trace report; National Criminal
20 database search, updated regu-
21 larly with more than 300 million
22 criminal records; the Office of
23 Foreign Assets Control terrorist
24 database search; Sex Offender
25 Registry search of all available

1 States with at least one county
2 search that generally covers long-
3 est and most recent residency in
4 the past five years.

5 (II) PROCEDURES.—For pur-
6 poses of clause (i)(I), the establish-
7 ment of procedures for conducting
8 and reviewing background checks de-
9 scribed in subclause (I) shall identify
10 who is responsible for conducting the
11 checks, reviewing the criminal history
12 records, determining fitness, notifying
13 the volunteer or staff of the decision,
14 managing legally compliant notices,
15 and the dissemination, control, stor-
16 age, and destruction of information
17 gained in the background check.

18 (iii) ABUSE PREVENTION AND RE-
19 SPONSE ACTIVITIES.—For purposes of
20 clause (i)(II), abuse prevention and re-
21 sponse activities described in this clause
22 are the following:

23 (I) The development and rein-
24 forcement of appropriate communica-
25 tion, training, and response protocols

1 for abuse and other inappropriate be-
2 havior.

3 (II) Awareness, prevention, and
4 response guidelines, including a pro-
5 tocol to immediately report potential
6 criminal behavior on the part of any
7 coach or official to the appropriate
8 law enforcement agency.

9 (III) Reference checking of vol-
10 unteers, including previous clubs,
11 teams, or athletes with whom the indi-
12 vidual has worked.

13 (IV) Questioning about the indi-
14 vidual's behaviors and if anyone has
15 reported any inappropriate behavior
16 that might be of concern.

17 (V) Work with insurance pro-
18 viders or other risk management ex-
19 perts to help maintain a safe environ-
20 ment.

21 (iv) TRAINING PROGRAMS.—For pur-
22 poses of clause (i)(IV), the matters de-
23 scribed in this clause are the following:

24 (I) First aid, CPR, and
25 defibrillator.

1 (II) Mild traumatic brain injury
2 or concussion.

3 (III) Heat acclimatization and
4 heat illness prevention.

5 (IV) Human kinetics coaching
6 education.

7 (V) Risk management.

8 (VI) Legal issues.

9 (VII) Pre-participation Physical
10 Evaluation (PPE).

11 (VIII) Emergency planning.

12 (IX) Training practices.

13 (X) Strength and conditioning.

14 (XI) Nutrition.

15 (XII) Recognizing sports-related
16 illnesses and injuries.

17 (XIII) Prevention and care of
18 concussions.

19 (XIV) Equipment fitting.

20 (XV) Safe playing conditions.

21 (6) FUNDING.—There is authorized to be ap-
22 propriated to carry out this subsection \$75,000,000;
23 \$15,000,000 for national organizations, \$50,000,000
24 for States, \$5,000,000 for prevention and research,
25 including no less than \$5,000,000 for CDC to carry

1 out the grant program to national organizations and
2 states and to manage an interagency committee.

3 (b) STATE AND LOCAL GRANT PROGRAM.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and
5 Human Services may establish a grant program
6 under which the Secretary shall award one-time
7 competitive grants to municipalities, counties, and
8 States to fund efforts of such municipalities, coun-
9 ties, and States to establish and implement model
10 standards, such as through surveys, studies, pilot
11 programs, and guidelines, for out-of-school youth
12 sports coaches.

13 (2) REQUIREMENTS.—A grantee under this
14 subsection must agree to enact or improve imple-
15 mentation of standards that—

16 (A) do not conflict or otherwise negatively
17 interfere with standards that apply within the
18 jurisdiction of such grantee; and

19 (B) are aimed at improving effectiveness,
20 participation, and health and safety of youth
21 sports.

22 (3) PERMITTED ACTIVITIES.—A grant under
23 this subsection may be used for activities including
24 the following:

25 (A) Surveys.

1 (B) Studies.

2 (C) Pilot programs.

3 (D) Development of guidelines and stand-
4 ards.

5 (E) Education and outreach.

6 (F) Implementation efforts.

7 (4) SELECTION CRITERIA.—Grants under this
8 subsection shall be awarded, with respect to model
9 standards described in paragraph (1), based on the
10 following criteria:

11 (A) Number of coaches affected by such
12 standards.

13 (B) Degree with which activities and
14 standards, as applicable, are easy and afford-
15 able to the organization or coach involved.

16 (C) Comprehensiveness of such standards
17 and the number of subjects covered effectively
18 by such standards.

19 (5) REPORTS.—

20 (A) BY GRANTEES.—As a condition of re-
21 ceipt of a grant under this subsection, a grantee
22 shall submit to the Secretary of Health and
23 Human Services such information as specified
24 by the Secretary, by such time as specified by

1 the Secretary, to complete the report described
2 in subparagraph (B).

3 (B) BY SECRETARY.—Not later than five
4 years after the date of the enactment of this
5 Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Serv-
6 ices shall publish a national report on lessons
7 learned from the model standards implemented
8 pursuant to grants awarded under this sub-
9 section. The report shall—

10 (i) measure the effectiveness of such
11 standards in improving health, safety, par-
12 ticipation rate, and inclusion; and

13 (ii) describe the areas in which fund-
14 ing under such grants was spent, including
15 by purposes and outcomes.

16 (6) FUNDING.—There is authorized to be ap-
17 propriated to carry out this section such sums as are
18 necessary.

19 **SEC. 3. YOUTH SPORTS RESEARCH.**

20 (a) GAO STUDY.—Not later than two years after the
21 date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General
22 of the United States shall submit to Congress a report
23 on—

24 (1) a history of the prior 50 years of Federal
25 Government programs used to help promote the ef-

1 fectiveness, participation, health, and safety of non-
2 school based organized youth sports; and

3 (2) evidence available on the effectiveness and
4 outcomes of such programs.

5 (b) HHS STUDY.—Not later than two years after the
6 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health
7 and Human Services shall submit to Congress a report
8 on—

9 (1) youth sports risk prevention efforts con-
10 ducted or supported by the Department of Health
11 and Human Services and other Federal agencies;

12 (2) beneficial practices in place relating to such
13 efforts and the effectiveness of such practices; and

14 (3) assessing further steps and resources need-
15 ed to reduce risks and increase the benefits of
16 sports.

17 **SEC. 4. SAFETY PROMOTION.**

18 The Secretary of Health and Human Services is au-
19 thorized, through the Centers for Disease Control and
20 Prevention and the National Institutes of Health, to un-
21 dertake, support, enhance, and expand research and pre-
22 vention efforts to advance youth sports safety.

○