

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 3127

To provide grants to enable nonprofit disability organizations to develop training programs that support safe interactions between law enforcement officers and individuals with disabilities and older individuals.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 11, 2021

Ms. WILD (for herself and Mr. FITZPATRICK) introduced the following bill;  
which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

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## A BILL

To provide grants to enable nonprofit disability organizations to develop training programs that support safe interactions between law enforcement officers and individuals with disabilities and older individuals.

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 “Safe Interactions Act  
5 of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1           (1) Individuals with disabilities are 2.5 times  
2 more likely to be victims of violent crime.

3           (2) Individuals with disabilities are 3 times  
4 more likely to be victims of a serious crime.

5           (3) Individuals with disabilities make up be-  
6 tween one-third and one-half of all individuals killed  
7 by law enforcement officers.

8 **SEC. 3. PURPOSE.**

9       The purposes of this Act are to—

10           (1) authorize the Secretary to award competi-  
11 tive grants to nonprofit disability organizations to  
12 administer enhanced training programs to law en-  
13 forcement officers who may encounter or provide  
14 services to covered individuals, including—

15           (A) individuals with mental health disabil-  
16 ities, including schizophrenia;

17           (B) individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind,  
18 hard of hearing, or blind, are autistic, or have  
19 other intellectual or developmental disabilities;

20           (C) older individuals with dementia or  
21 other cognitive impairments; or

22           (D) individuals with any other disabilities  
23 or chronic health condition;

24           (2) support, not replace, other specialized law  
25 enforcement officer training; and

1           (3)(A) increase the awareness, knowledge, and  
2           understanding of law enforcement officers about cov-  
3           ered individuals and their unique needs and applica-  
4           ble Federal civil rights laws;

5           (B) reduce incidences of violence between law  
6           enforcement officers and covered individuals;

7           (C) expand the knowledge of law enforcement  
8           officers, in areas such as the signs of disabilities,  
9           identifying people with disabilities, communicating  
10          with people with disabilities, and effective ways to  
11          approach covered individuals to minimize situations  
12          of risk to—

13                 (i) those individuals; and

14                 (ii) the law enforcement officers who inter-  
15          vene or provide services to those individuals;  
16          and

17          (D) increase the knowledge of law enforcement  
18          officers of community resources available for covered  
19          individuals to ultimately limit interactions with law  
20          enforcement officers.

21 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

22          In this Act:

23                 (1) COVERED GRANT.—The term “covered  
24          grant” means a grant awarded under section 5(a).

1           (2) COVERED INDIVIDUAL.—The term “covered  
2 individual” means—

3                   (A) an older individual; or

4                   (B) an individual with a disability.

5           (3) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-  
6 ty” means a nonprofit disability organization that  
7 has formed a partnership with a law enforcement  
8 agency or a consortium of law enforcement agencies  
9 to administer enhanced training programs to law en-  
10 forcement officers of the agency or agencies on how  
11 to interact with covered individuals.

12           (4) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe”  
13 has the meaning given the term “Indian tribe” in  
14 section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-  
15 cation Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

16           (5) INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY.—The term  
17 “individual with a disability” means any individual  
18 who has a disability, as defined in section 3 of the  
19 Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.  
20 12102).

21           (6) INITIAL TRAINING PROGRAM.—The term  
22 “initial training program” means a mandatory train-  
23 ing program offered to new law enforcement officers  
24 during their orientation under section 5(d)(1)(A).

1           (7) LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER.—The term  
2           “law enforcement officer” means any officer, agent,  
3           or employee of a State, political subdivision of a  
4           State, or Indian Tribe—

5                   (A) authorized by law or by a government  
6                   agency to engage in or supervise the prevention,  
7                   detection, or investigation of any violation of  
8                   criminal law; or

9                   (B) authorized by law to supervise sen-  
10                  tenced criminal offenders.

11           (8) NONPROFIT DISABILITY ORGANIZATION.—  
12           The term “nonprofit disability organization” means  
13           a nonprofit organization—

14                   (A) that serves covered individuals; and

15                   (B)(i) that is operated by a board of which  
16                   the majority of members are covered individ-  
17                   uals;

18                   (ii) that has an advisory panel of which the  
19                   majority of members are covered individuals; or

20                   (iii) the majority of the employees of which  
21                   are covered individuals.

22           (9) OLDER INDIVIDUAL.—The term “older indi-  
23           vidual” has the meaning given the term in section  
24           102 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C.  
25           3002).

1           (10) PARTNER ACADEMY.—The term “partner  
2       academy”, with respect to an eligible entity that re-  
3       ceives a covered grant, means a law enforcement  
4       training academy with which the eligible entity part-  
5       ners to administer an initial training program, as  
6       described in section 5(b)(1).

7           (11) PARTNER AGENCY.—The term “partner  
8       agency”, with respect to an eligible entity that re-  
9       ceives a covered grant, means the law enforcement  
10      agency with which the eligible entity partners, or  
11      that is a member of a consortium with which the eli-  
12      gible entity partners, to administer enhanced train-  
13      ing programs to law enforcement officers of the  
14      agency on how to interact with covered individuals.

15          (12) REFRESHER TRAINING PROGRAM.—The  
16      term “refresher training program” means a training  
17      program offered to existing law enforcement officers  
18      under section 5(d)(1)(B).

19          (13) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary”  
20      means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

21 **SEC. 5. GRANT PROGRAM.**

22      (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award com-  
23      petitive grants to nonprofit disability organizations to ad-  
24      minister enhanced training programs to law enforcement

1 officers who may encounter or provide services to covered  
2 individuals.

3 (b) APPLICATION.—An eligible entity seeking a cov-  
4 ered grant shall submit to the Secretary an application  
5 that—

6 (1)(A) identifies a law enforcement training  
7 academy with which the eligible entity will partner  
8 to administer an initial training program; and

9 (B) includes a memorandum of understanding  
10 entered into between the eligible entity and the law  
11 enforcement training academy;

12 (2) describes the training program curriculum,  
13 which shall include training on how to interact with,  
14 identify, approach, and communicate with covered  
15 individuals that is provided, as of the date of sub-  
16 mission of the application—

17 (A) by the partner academy to new law en-  
18 forcement officers; or

19 (B) by any partner agency to existing law  
20 enforcement officers;

21 (3) describes the learning objectives of the  
22 training programs that the eligible entity will admin-  
23 ister using the grant;

24 (4) describes the activities that will be carried  
25 out under the grant;

1           (5) includes a timeline of the activities de-  
2       scribed in paragraph (4); and

3           (6) demonstrates expertise in training related to  
4       covered individuals.

5       (c) PREFERENCES.—In awarding covered grants, the  
6       Secretary shall ensure—

7           (1) geographic diversity of grant recipients, in-  
8       cluding grant recipients that serve rural localities;  
9       and

10          (2) that the training funded by the grant is  
11       provided to multiple levels of law enforcement agen-  
12       cies, including local, county, State, and Tribal agen-  
13       cies.

14       (d) USE OF FUNDS.—

15          (1) MANDATORY USES.—An eligible entity that  
16       receives a covered grant shall use the grant funds  
17       to—

18               (A) modify the training provided by the  
19       partner academy to new law enforcement offi-  
20       cers of each partner agency so that the acad-  
21       emy provides not fewer than 8 hours of training  
22       on topics such as how to interact with, identify,  
23       approach, and communicate with covered indi-  
24       viduals and applicable Federal civil rights laws,



1 including not fewer than 4 hours of interactive  
2 learning taught by covered individuals; and

3 (B) develop and implement an enhanced  
4 training program for existing law enforcement  
5 officers of each partner agency on safe, effective,  
6 and respectful interactions with covered in-  
7 dividuals—

8 (i) that includes—

9 (I) awareness of and education  
10 about covered individuals, including—

11 (aa) individuals with mental  
12 health disabilities, including  
13 schizophrenia;

14 (bb) individuals who are  
15 deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing,  
16 or blind, are autistic, or have  
17 other intellectual or develop-  
18 mental disabilities;

19 (cc) older individuals with  
20 dementia or other cognitive im-  
21 pairments; and

22 (dd) individuals with any  
23 other disabilities or chronic  
24 health condition;

1 (II) escalation avoidance and de-  
2 escalation techniques to be used when  
3 interacting with covered individuals,  
4 including procedures a law enforce-  
5 ment officer should follow to ensure  
6 the health and safety of a covered in-  
7 dividual; and

8 (III) communication strategies to  
9 be used when interacting with covered  
10 individuals, including individuals who  
11 do not use speech to communicate;

12 (ii) that utilizes—

13 (I) instructors who are covered  
14 individuals; or

15 (II) guest instructors or speakers  
16 who are covered individuals; and

17 (iii) in which each law enforcement of-  
18 ficer participates not less frequently than 4  
19 hours every year.

20 (2) OPTIONAL USES.—An eligible entity that re-  
21 ceives a covered grant may use the grant funds to—

22 (A) expand an existing training program  
23 regarding topics such as interacting with, iden-  
24 tifying, approaching, and communicating with  
25 covered individuals that was provided to law en-

1           enforcement officers by a nonprofit disability or-  
2           ganization in conjunction with the partner  
3           academy or a partner agency before the eligible  
4           entity received the grant;

5           (B) reimburse staff members of the eligible  
6           entity for mileage and travel time expended to  
7           attend an initial training program or refresher  
8           training program occurring in person or online;

9           (C) develop a model of training that uti-  
10          lizes volunteer instructors, except that the eligi-  
11          ble entity shall pay any instructor, including a  
12          guest instructor, who is a covered individual;

13          (D) acquire a computer system or software  
14          needed for the training programs; or

15          (E) support the paid participation of indi-  
16          viduals with disabilities and their family mem-  
17          bers as advisors.

18          (e) SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.—An eligible enti-  
19          ty that receives a covered grant shall use the grant funds  
20          to supplement, and not supplant, any funds that would,  
21          in the absence of the grant funds, be made available from  
22          a State, political subdivision of a State, or Indian Tribe  
23          for the activities described in subsection (d).

24          (f) ADVISORY COUNCIL.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity that re-  
2           ceives a covered grant shall establish an advisory  
3           council composed of 15 members to advise the eligi-  
4           ble entity on activities carried out using the grant.

5           (2) MEMBERSHIP.—An advisory council estab-  
6           lished under paragraph (1) shall—

7                   (A) be composed of—

8                           (i) 1 representative of the eligible en-  
9                           tity who is a covered individual and shall  
10                          serve as chair of the advisory council;

11                          (ii) 1 representative of the State law  
12                          enforcement training academy or law en-  
13                          forcement agency for the State that the eli-  
14                          gible entity serves, who shall serve as vice  
15                          chair of the advisory council;

16                          (iii) 3 representatives of community-  
17                          based organizations that support individ-  
18                          uals with disabilities, not fewer than 2 of  
19                          whom have a disability;

20                          (iv) 2 representatives of community-  
21                          based organizations that support older  
22                          adults;

23                          (v) 2 State officials or their designees;

24                          (vi) 1 representative of an organiza-  
25                          tion providing victim services;

1 (vii) 1 representative of a State public  
2 safety agency;

3 (viii) 3 members of the public with  
4 knowledge of individuals with disabilities  
5 and older adults with cognitive impair-  
6 ment, including not fewer than 2 self-advo-  
7 cates or family members of a covered indi-  
8 vidual; and

9 (ix) 1 active local or State law en-  
10 forcement officer representing a labor or  
11 representative organization; and

12 (B) include a majority of representation  
13 from racial and ethnic minority communities.

14 (3) DUTIES.—An advisory council established  
15 under paragraph (1) shall—

16 (A) advise the eligible entity and provide  
17 general oversight of grant activities carried out  
18 by the eligible entity, including development of  
19 the training curriculum and implementation of  
20 the training programs; and

21 (B) provide the advisory council with rec-  
22 ommendations for the sustainability and expan-  
23 sion of the training programs, such as the de-  
24 velopment of a train-the-trainer model.

25 (g) ANNUAL REPORT.—

1           (1) REPORT TO SECRETARY BY ELIGIBLE ENTI-  
2           TIES.—Not later than 1 year after receiving a cov-  
3           ered grant, and each year thereafter for the duration  
4           of the grant period, an eligible entity that receives  
5           a covered grant shall submit the following informa-  
6           tion to the Secretary with respect to the preceding  
7           year:

8                   (A) The number of individuals who bene-  
9                   fitted from the training programs provided by  
10                  the eligible entity using grant funds, includ-  
11                  ing—

12                           (i) the number of individuals who  
13                           were trained through the training pro-  
14                           grams, including the total number of new  
15                           law enforcement officers who participated  
16                           in the initial training program and existing  
17                           law enforcement officers who participated  
18                           in the refresher training program; and

19                           (ii) the estimated number of individ-  
20                           uals who were impacted by the training  
21                           programs.

22                   (B) Demographic data, including age, sex,  
23                   and race, for the law enforcement officers who  
24                   received the training.

1 (C) The number of partner agencies that  
2 participated in the training programs.

3 (D) Each partner law enforcement agency,  
4 including the city and State in which the head-  
5 quarters and each local office of the agency are  
6 located, and the result of that partnership.

7 (E) Any recommendations for improving  
8 the grant program carried out under this Act.

9 (2) REPORT TO CONGRESS AND THE ATTORNEY  
10 GENERAL BY THE SECRETARY.—Not later than 2  
11 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and  
12 each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit a re-  
13 port on the grant program carried out under this  
14 Act, with respect to the preceding year, to—

15 (A) the Attorney General;

16 (B) the Committee on the Judiciary of the  
17 Senate;

18 (C) the Committee on Appropriations of  
19 the Senate;

20 (D) the Special Committee on Aging of the  
21 Senate;

22 (E) the Committee on the Judiciary of the  
23 House of Representatives; and

24 (F) the Committee on Appropriations of  
25 the House of Representatives.

1 (h) EVALUATION.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall use not  
3 more than 2 percent of the amounts made available  
4 under section 6 for administrative purposes and for  
5 an evaluation of the grant program carried out  
6 under this Act.

7 (2) INDEPENDENT EVALUATOR.—The Secretary  
8 shall enter into a contract with a third-party entity  
9 that is unrelated to any recipient of a covered grant  
10 to carry out the evaluation under paragraph (1).

11 (3) CONTENTS.—In carrying out the evaluation  
12 under paragraph (1), the third-party entity con-  
13 tracted under paragraph (2) shall report to the Sec-  
14 retary and the Attorney General on—

15 (A) the demographic characteristics of the  
16 population served by the training conducted by  
17 eligible entities using covered grants; and

18 (B) any change in the occurrence of vio-  
19 lence in the communities served by training de-  
20 scribed in subparagraph (A).

21 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

22 There is authorized to be appropriated \$100,000,000  
23 for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2025 to carry out  
24 this Act.

○