

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 3166

To make demonstration grants to eligible local educational agencies or consortia of eligible local educational agencies for the purpose of increasing the numbers of school nurses in public elementary schools and secondary schools.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 12, 2021

Ms. TITUS 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

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## A BILL

To make demonstration grants to eligible local educational agencies or consortia of eligible local educational agencies for the purpose of increasing the numbers of school nurses in public elementary schools and secondary schools.

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 “Nurses for Under-  
5 Resourced Schools Everywhere Act” or the “NURSE  
6 Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) The National Association of School Nurses  
4 identifies schools as primary locations to address  
5 student health issues, since a school nurse is the  
6 health care provider that many students see on the  
7 most regular basis.

8 (2) The American Academy of Pediatrics has  
9 recognized the crucial role that school nurses play in  
10 children's health and has called for having a full-  
11 time school nurse every day and in every school  
12 building.

13 (3) The school nurse functions as the leader  
14 and coordinator of the school health services team,  
15 including by carrying out chronic disease manage-  
16 ment and health promotion as well as facilitating ac-  
17 cess to a medical home for each child and supporting  
18 academic achievement.

19 (4) School nurses promote wellness and disease  
20 prevention to improve health outcomes for our Na-  
21 tion's children. In addition, school nurses perform  
22 early intervention services such as periodic assess-  
23 ments for vision, hearing, and dental problems, in an  
24 effort to remove barriers to learning.

25 (5) The American Federation of Teachers has  
26 called for a nurse in every school, as nurses are

1 front-line workers that address an array of health  
2 needs and their presence in a school can help to im-  
3 prove student learning.

4 (6) According to 2017 data from the National  
5 Association of School Nurses, only 39.3 percent of  
6 schools employ a full-time school nurse, while 35.5  
7 percent of schools employ a school nurse only part-  
8 time, and 25.2 percent do not have a school nurse  
9 at all.

10 (7) The National Association of School Nurses  
11 has reported that medication administration to stu-  
12 dents is one of the most common health-related ac-  
13 tivities performed in school. As more chronically ill  
14 and medically unstable children enter the school sys-  
15 tem each year, the medical factors that promote and  
16 support their academic success increase, including  
17 the need for medications that enhance overall health  
18 or stabilize chronic conditions.

19 (8) National data indicate that between 15 and  
20 20 percent of children who spend their day in school  
21 have a chronic health condition.

22 (9) According to the American Academy of Pe-  
23 diatrics, students today face increased social and  
24 emotional issues, which enhance the need for preven-  
25 tive services and interventions for acute and chronic

1 health issues. School nurses are actively engaged  
2 members of school-based mental health teams and  
3 spend nearly 32 percent of their time providing men-  
4 tal health services, including universal and targeted  
5 interventions, screenings to identify early warning  
6 signs and provide referrals to medical providers, and  
7 crisis planning.

8 (10) According to the Department of Edu-  
9 cation, during the 2013–2014 school year, 1,360,747  
10 children enrolled in public schools experienced home-  
11 lessness. Homeless children develop increased rates  
12 of acute and chronic health conditions, and the  
13 stress of their living situation can negatively affect  
14 their development and ability to learn. As a result,  
15 schools have become the primary access to health  
16 care for many children and adolescents. School  
17 nurses serve on the front lines as a safety net for  
18 the Nation’s most vulnerable children.

19 (11) Communicable and infectious diseases ac-  
20 count for millions of school days lost each year.  
21 Data illustrate that when students have access to a  
22 registered nurse in school, immunization rates in-  
23 crease.

24 (12) Throughout the COVID–19 pandemic,  
25 school nurses have played an important role helping

1 students and coordinating activities such as contact  
2 tracing and symptom screening.

3 **SEC. 3. INCREASING THE NUMBER OF SCHOOL NURSES.**

4 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

5 (1) ESEA TERMS.—The terms “elementary  
6 school”, “local educational agency”, “secondary  
7 school”, and “State educational agency” have the  
8 meanings given to the terms in section 8101 of the  
9 Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965  
10 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

11 (2) ACUITY.—The term “acuity”, when used  
12 with respect to a level, means the level of a patient’s  
13 sickness, such as a chronic condition, which influ-  
14 ences the need for nursing care.

15 (3) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-  
16 ty” means—

17 (A) a local educational agency in which not  
18 less than 20 percent of the children are eligible  
19 to participate in the school lunch program es-  
20 tablished under the Richard B. Russell National  
21 School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.);

22 (B) a consortium of local educational agen-  
23 cies described in subparagraph (A); or

1 (C) a State educational agency in consor-  
2 tium with local educational agencies described  
3 in subparagraph (A).

4 (4) HIGH-NEED LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGEN-  
5 CY.—The term “high-need local educational agency”  
6 means a local educational agency described in para-  
7 graph (3)(A)—

8 (A) that serves not fewer than 15,000 chil-  
9 dren who are eligible to participate in the pro-  
10 gram described in such paragraph; or

11 (B) for which not less than 40 percent of  
12 the children served by the agency are eligible to  
13 participate in the program described in such  
14 paragraph.

15 (5) NURSE.—The term “nurse” means a reg-  
16 istered nurse, as defined under State law.

17 (6) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
18 the Secretary of Education.

19 (7) WORKLOAD.—The term “workload”, when  
20 used with respect to a nurse, means the amount of  
21 time the nurse takes to provide care and complete  
22 the other tasks for which the nurse is responsible.

23 (b) DEMONSTRATION GRANT PROGRAM AUTHOR-  
24 IZED.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—From amounts appropriated  
2           to carry out this section, the Secretary of Education  
3           shall award demonstration grants, on a competitive  
4           basis, to eligible entities to pay the Federal share of  
5           the costs of increasing the number of school nurses  
6           in the public elementary schools and secondary  
7           schools served by the eligible entity, which may in-  
8           clude hiring a school nurse to serve schools in mul-  
9           tiple school districts.

10          (2) SEAs.—In the case of an eligible entity de-  
11          scribed in subsection (a)(3)(C) that receives a grant  
12          under paragraph (1), such entity shall use amounts  
13          received under the grant to award subgrants to the  
14          local educational agencies that are members of the  
15          entity, and reserve not more than 10 percent of such  
16          grant funds to support statewide activities to meet  
17          a variety of health needs, which may include hiring  
18          a nurse to provide training and technical assistance  
19          to schools statewide that meet the criteria estab-  
20          lished in subsection (d)(2)(A).

21          (c) APPLICATIONS.—

22          (1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity desiring a  
23          grant under this section shall submit to the Sec-  
24          retary an application at such time, in such manner,

1 and containing such information as the Secretary  
2 may require.

3 (2) CONTENTS.—Each application submitted  
4 under paragraph (1) shall include information with  
5 respect to the current (as of the date of application)  
6 number of school nurses, student health acuity lev-  
7 els, and workload of school nurses in each of the  
8 public elementary schools and secondary schools  
9 served by the eligible entity.

10 (d) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this sec-  
11 tion, the Secretary shall give priority to each application  
12 submitted by an eligible entity that—

13 (1) is a high-need local educational agency, a  
14 consortium composed of high-need local education  
15 agencies, or a State educational agency in consor-  
16 tium with high-need local education agencies; and

17 (2) demonstrates—

18 (A) the greatest need for new or additional  
19 nursing services among students in the public  
20 elementary schools and secondary schools  
21 served by the agency or consortium; or

22 (B) that the eligible entity does not have  
23 a school nurse in any of the public elementary  
24 schools and secondary schools served by the



1 local educational agency or the consortium-  
2 member local educational agencies.

3 (e) FEDERAL SHARE; NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—

4 (1) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of a  
5 grant under this section—

6 (A) shall not exceed 75 percent for each  
7 year of the grant; and

8 (B) in the case of a multiyear grant, shall  
9 decrease for each succeeding year of the grant,  
10 in order to ensure the continuity of the in-  
11 creased hiring level of school nurses using State  
12 or local sources of funding following the conclu-  
13 sion of the grant.

14 (2) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The non-Federal  
15 share of a grant under this section may be in cash  
16 or in-kind, and may be provided from State re-  
17 sources, local resources, contributions from private  
18 organizations, or a combination thereof.

19 (3) WAIVER.—The Secretary may waive or re-  
20 duce the non-Federal share of an eligible entity re-  
21 ceiving a grant under this section if the eligible enti-  
22 ty demonstrates an economic hardship.

23 (f) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date  
24 on which a grant is first made to a local educational agen-  
25 cy under this section, the Secretary shall submit to Con-

1 gress a report on the results of the demonstration grant  
2 program carried out under this section, including an eval-  
3 uation of—

4 (1) the effectiveness of the program in increas-  
5 ing the number of school nurses; and

6 (2) the impact of any resulting enhanced health  
7 of students on learning, such as academic achieve-  
8 ment, attendance, and classroom time.

9 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
10 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section  
11 such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years  
12 2022 through 2026.

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