

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9233

To amend the Public Health Service Act to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a program for the conduct and support of research, training, and health information dissemination with respect to environmental risk factors of neurodegenerative diseases, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 30, 2024

Ms. WEXTON (for herself and Mr. BILIRAKIS) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a program for the conduct and support of research, training, and health information dissemination with respect to environmental risk factors of neurodegenerative diseases, 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 “Harmonizing Environ-
5 mental Analyses and Launching Therapeutic Hubs to
6 Yield Bolstered Research And Innovation in Neurological

1 Science Act of 2024” or the “HEALTHY BRAINS Act
2 of 2024”.

3 **SEC. 2. RESEARCH INTO ENVIRONMENTAL RISK FACTORS**
4 **THAT MAY CONTRIBUTE TO**
5 **NEURODEGENERATIVE DISEASE.**

6 Part B of title IV of the Public Health Service Act
7 (42 U.S.C. 284 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
8 the following:

9 **“SEC. 409K. NEURODEGENERATIVE DISEASE ENVIRON-**
10 **MENTAL RESEARCH.**

11 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through
12 the Director of NIH, shall establish a program for the con-
13 duct and support of research, training, and health infor-
14 mation dissemination with respect to environmental risk
15 factors (including environmental toxicant exposures) of
16 neurodegenerative diseases.

17 “(b) SCOPE OF RESEARCH.—Research conducted or
18 supported under this section shall—

19 “(1) be focused on—

20 “(A) potential environmental toxicants, in-
21 cluding environmental stressors such as volatile
22 organic compounds, particulate matter, per-
23 and polyfluorinated substances, and heavy met-
24 als in environmental media such as air, water,
25 food, and soil;

1 “(B) the mechanistic interactions of such
2 toxicants with neurodegenerative disease out-
3 comes;

4 “(C) the presymptomatic markers of
5 neurodegenerative disease; and

6 “(D) advancing development of environ-
7 mental health strategies to prevent, manage,
8 treat, or slow the progression of
9 neurodegenerative disease; and

10 “(2) may include research—

11 “(A) examining environmental exposures,
12 including occupational risk factors,
13 sociobehavioral factors, and social determinants
14 of health;

15 “(B) using fundamental approaches to
16 identify historical, existing, and emerging envi-
17 ronmental risks and factors that affect disease
18 progression;

19 “(C) examining multifactorial causation
20 from chemical and nonchemical exposures;

21 “(D) examining prevalence of the disease
22 in relation to the distribution of exposures
23 across communities and populations;

1 “(E) examining the expression of disease
2 traits that result from the interplay of genes
3 and environment; and

4 “(F) exploring physiological mechanisms
5 driving neurodegeneration from toxicant expo-
6 sures.

7 “(c) COORDINATION WITHIN NIH.—

8 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the pro-
9 gram under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

10 “(A) provide for coordination across the
11 programs and activities of the National Insti-
12 tutes of Health to avoid duplication; and

13 “(B) expand the funding of environmental
14 health research by leading an ongoing, coordi-
15 nated, and focused effort to fund new and exist-
16 ing centers for the study and evaluation of envi-
17 ronmental risk factors (including environmental
18 toxicants) of neurodegenerative diseases.

19 “(2) BIENNIAL REPORT.—In carrying out para-
20 graph (1), the Secretary shall—

21 “(A) submit a biennial report detailing the
22 findings and conclusions of research under this
23 section to—

1 “(i) the Committees on Appropria-
2 tions of the House of Representatives and
3 the Senate;

4 “(ii) the Committee on Energy and
5 Commerce of the House of Representa-
6 tives; and

7 “(iii) the Committee on Health, Edu-
8 cation, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate;

9 “(B) post each report under subparagraph
10 (A) on the public website of the National Insti-
11 tutes of Health; and

12 “(C) include the information reported pur-
13 suant to subparagraph (A) in the triennial re-
14 port under section 403.

15 “(d) COLLABORATIVE CENTERS FOR
16 NEURODEGENERATIVE DISEASE ENVIRONMENTAL RE-
17 SEARCH.—

18 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the pro-
19 gram under subsection (a), the Secretary shall pro-
20 vide for the establishment of research centers, to be
21 known as Collaborative Centers for
22 Neurodegenerative Disease Environmental Research
23 (in this section each referred to as a ‘CCNDER’) at
24 institutions of higher education, medical centers, and
25 other appropriate entities.

1 “(2) REQUIREMENTS.—With respect to
2 neurodegenerative disease, each CCNDER shall—

3 “(A) conduct and support basic, applied,
4 and clinical research on the effects of environ-
5 mental risk factors (including environmental
6 toxicants), including with respect to disease
7 progression;

8 “(B) use the facilities of a single institu-
9 tion or a consortium of cooperating institutions
10 to administer the CCNDER and meet such
11 qualifications as may be prescribed by the Sec-
12 retary;

13 “(C) focus on population-based, environ-
14 mental health research;

15 “(D) ensure that the research conducted
16 and supported pursuant to this section is inter-
17 disciplinary and collaborative;

18 “(E) coordinate with existing intramural
19 and extramural efforts of the National Insti-
20 tutes of Health; and

21 “(F) collaborate with relevant partners and
22 stakeholders, including researchers, health pro-
23 fessionals, nonprofit organizations, patients,
24 and caregivers, to understand the effects of en-
25 vironmental risk factors (including environ-

1 mental toxicants) of neurodegenerative disease
2 and progression thereof.

3 “(3) DISCRETIONARY ACTIVITIES.—With re-
4 spect to neurodegenerative diseases, each CCNDER
5 may—

6 “(A) provide career enhancement and
7 training opportunities for scientists, research-
8 ers, environmental professionals, and health
9 professionals, including through the provision of
10 stipends;

11 “(B) conduct programs to provide informa-
12 tion and continuing education to health profes-
13 sionals, including through the provision of sti-
14 pends;

15 “(C) conduct programs for the dissemina-
16 tion of information to the public regarding re-
17 search findings and proposed prevention strate-
18 gies when appropriate;

19 “(D) separately or in collaboration with
20 other CCNDERS or governmental agencies, es-
21 tablish a nationwide data system that—

22 “(i) includes data derived from com-
23 prehensive and representative patient pop-
24 ulations with neurodegenerative diseases;
25 and

1 “(ii) where possible, compares rel-
2 evant data involving general populations;

3 “(E) separately or in collaboration with
4 other CCNDERS, establish a clearinghouse, to
5 be known as the Environmental Contributions
6 to Neurodegenerative Disease Information
7 Clearinghouse, to facilitate and enhance knowl-
8 edge and understanding of environmental risk
9 factors of neurodegenerative diseases; and

10 “(F) separately or in collaboration with
11 other CCNDERS, establish a national education
12 program that fosters a national focus on envi-
13 ronmental risk factors of neurodegenerative dis-
14 eases.

15 “(4) DURATION OF SUPPORT.—The period of
16 support for a CCNDER under this section shall not
17 exceed 5 years, except that such period may be ex-
18 tended by the Secretary for one or more additional
19 periods of not more than 5 years if—

20 “(A) the operations of such CCNDER
21 have been reviewed by an appropriate technical
22 and scientific peer review group established by
23 the Secretary; and

24 “(B) such group has recommended to the
25 Secretary that such period should be extended.

1 “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To
2 carry out this section, there is authorized to be appro-
3 priated \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through
4 2030.”.

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