

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 645

AN ACT

To require the Attorney General to propose a program for making treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder and acute stress disorder available to public safety officers, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Fighting Post-Trau-
3 matic Stress Disorder Act of 2023”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds the following:

6 (1) Public safety officers serve their commu-
7 nities with bravery and distinction in order to keep
8 their communities safe.

9 (2) Public safety officers, including police offi-
10 cers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians,
11 and 911 dispatchers, are on the front lines of deal-
12 ing with situations that are stressful, graphic,
13 harrowing, and life-threatening.

14 (3) The work of public safety officers puts them
15 at risk for developing post-traumatic stress disorder
16 and acute stress disorder.

17 (4) It is estimated that 30 percent of public
18 safety officers develop behavioral health conditions
19 at some point in their lifetimes, including depression
20 and post-traumatic stress disorder, in comparison to
21 20 percent of the general population that develops
22 such conditions.

23 (5) Victims of post-traumatic stress disorder
24 and acute stress disorder are at a higher risk of
25 dying by suicide.

1 (6) Firefighters have been reported to have
2 higher suicide attempt and ideation rates than the
3 general population.

4 (7) It is estimated that between 125 and 300
5 police officers die by suicide every year.

6 (8) In 2019, pursuant to section 2(b) of the
7 Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act
8 of 2017 (Public Law 115–113; 131 Stat. 2276), the
9 Director of the Office of Community Oriented Policing
10 Services of the Department of Justice developed
11 a report (referred to in this section as the
12 “LEMHWA report”) that expressed that many law
13 enforcement agencies do not have the capacity or
14 local access to the mental health professionals necessary
15 for treating their law enforcement officers.

16 (9) The LEMHWA report recommended methods
17 for establishing remote access or regional mental
18 health check programs at the State or Federal level.

19 (10) Individual police and fire departments generally
20 do not have the resources to employ full-time
21 mental health experts who are able to treat public
22 safety officers with state-of-the-art techniques for
23 the purpose of treating job-related post-traumatic
24 stress disorder and acute stress disorder.

1 **SEC. 3. PROGRAMMING FOR POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DIS-**
2 **ORDER.**

3 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

4 (1) PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER.—The term “pub-
5 lic safety officer”—

6 (A) has the meaning given the term in sec-
7 tion 1204 of the Omnibus Crime Control and
8 Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10284);
9 and

10 (B) includes Tribal public safety officers.

11 (2) PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR.—
12 The term “public safety telecommunicator” means
13 an individual who—

14 (A) operates telephone, radio, or other
15 communication systems to receive and commu-
16 nicate requests for emergency assistance at 911
17 public safety answering points and emergency
18 operations centers;

19 (B) takes information from the public and
20 other sources relating to crimes, threats, dis-
21 turbances, acts of terrorism, fires, medical
22 emergencies, and other public safety matters;
23 and

24 (C) coordinates and provides information
25 to law enforcement and emergency response
26 personnel.

1 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 150 days after the date
2 of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General, acting
3 through the Director of the Office of Community Oriented
4 Policing Services of the Department of Justice, shall sub-
5 mit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and
6 the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Rep-
7 resentatives a report on—

8 (1) not fewer than 1 proposed program, if the
9 Attorney General determines it appropriate and fea-
10 sible to do so, to be administered by the Department
11 of Justice for making state-of-the-art treatments or
12 preventative care available to public safety officers
13 and public safety telecommunicators with regard to
14 job-related post-traumatic stress disorder or acute
15 stress disorder by providing public safety officers
16 and public safety telecommunicators access to evi-
17 dence-based trauma-informed care, peer support,
18 counselor services, and family supports for the pur-
19 pose of treating or preventing post-traumatic stress
20 disorder or acute stress disorder;

21 (2) a draft of any necessary grant conditions
22 required to ensure that confidentiality is afforded to
23 public safety officers on account of seeking the care
24 or services described in paragraph (1) under the pro-
25 posed program;

1 (3) how each proposed program described in
2 paragraph (1) could be most efficiently administered
3 throughout the United States at the State, Tribal,
4 territorial, and local levels, taking into account in-
5 person and telehealth capabilities;

6 (4) a draft of legislative language necessary to
7 authorize each proposed program described in para-
8 graph (1); and

9 (5) an estimate of the amount of annual appro-
10 priations necessary for administering each proposed
11 program described in paragraph (1).

12 (c) DEVELOPMENT.—In developing the report re-
13 quired under subsection (b), the Attorney General shall
14 consult relevant stakeholders, including—

15 (1) Federal, State, Tribal, territorial, and local
16 agencies employing public safety officers and public
17 safety telecommunicators; and

18 (2) non-governmental organizations, inter-
19 national organizations, academies, or other entities,
20 including organizations that support the interests of
21 public safety officers and public safety

1 telecommunicators and the interests of family mem-
2 bers of public safety officers and public safety tele-
3 communicators.

Passed the Senate March 2, 2023.

Attest:

Secretary.

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