

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3354

To award grants for the establishment of demonstration programs to enable States to develop volunteer healthcare programs.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 29 (legislative day, JULY 28), 2008

Mr. ENZI introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To award grants for the establishment of demonstration programs to enable States to develop volunteer healthcare programs.

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 “Volunteer Healthcare
5 Program Act of 2008”.

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSES.**

7 It is the purpose of this Act to provide grants to
8 States to—

1 (1) promote access to quality health and dental
2 care for the medically underserved and uninsured
3 through the commitment of volunteers; and

4 (2) encourage and enable healthcare providers
5 to provide health services to eligible individuals by
6 providing sovereign immunity protection for the pro-
7 vision of uncompensated services.

8 **SEC. 3. GRANTS TO STATES TO ESTABLISH AND EVALUATE**
9 **HEALTHCARE VOLUNTEER INDEMNITY PRO-**
10 **GRAMS.**

11 Part P of title III of the Public Health Service Act
12 (42 U.S.C. 280g et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
13 the following:

14 **“SEC. 399R. GRANTS TO STATES TO ESTABLISH AND EVALU-**
15 **ATE HEALTHCARE VOLUNTEER INDEMNITY**
16 **PROGRAMS.**

17 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award a
18 grant to an eligible State to enable such State to establish
19 a demonstration program to—

20 “(1) promote access to quality health and den-
21 tal care for the medically underserved and uninsured
22 through the commitment of volunteer healthcare
23 providers; and

24 “(2) encourage and enable healthcare providers
25 to provide health services to eligible individuals, and

1 ensure that eligible individuals have the right to re-
2 cover damages for medical malpractice (in accord-
3 ance with State law) by providing sovereign immu-
4 nity protection for the provision of uncompensated
5 services.

6 “(b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a grant
7 under subsection (a), a State shall—

8 “(1) submit to the Secretary an application at
9 such time, in such manner, and containing such in-
10 formation as the Secretary may require;

11 “(2) provide assurances that the State will not
12 permit hospitals to enroll individuals seeking care in
13 emergency departments into the State program; and

14 “(3) provide assurances that the State will pro-
15 vide matching funds in accordance with subsection
16 (e).

17 “(c) USE OF FUNDS.—

18 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A State shall use amounts
19 received under a grant under this section to estab-
20 lish a demonstration program under which—

21 “(A) the State will arrange for the provi-
22 sion of health and dental care to eligible indi-
23 viduals (as determined under subsection (d))
24 participating in the State program;

1 “(B) ensure that the health and dental
2 care under paragraph (1) is provided by quali-
3 fied healthcare providers that do not receive
4 any form of compensation or reimbursement for
5 the provision of such care;

6 “(C) sovereign immunity is extended to
7 qualified healthcare providers (as defined in
8 paragraph (2)) for the provision of care to eligi-
9 ble individuals under the State program under
10 this section;

11 “(D) the State will agree not to impose
12 any additional limitations or restrictions on the
13 recovery of damages for negligent acts, other
14 than those in effect on date of the establish-
15 ment of the demonstration program;

16 “(E) the State will use more than 5 per-
17 cent of amounts received under the grant to
18 conduct an annual evaluation, and submit to
19 the Secretary a report concerning such evalua-
20 tion, of the State program and the activities
21 carried out under the State program.

22 “(2) QUALIFIED HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS.—

23 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘qualified
24 healthcare provider’ means a healthcare pro-
25 vider described in subparagraph (B) that—

1 “(i) is licensed by the State to provide
2 the care involved and is providing such
3 care in good faith while acting within the
4 scope of the provider’s training and prac-
5 tice;

6 “(ii) is in good standing with respect
7 to such license and not on probation;

8 “(iii) is not, or has not been, subject
9 to Medicare or Medicaid sanctions under
10 title XVIII or XIX of the Social Security
11 Act; and

12 “(iv) is authorized by the State to
13 provide health or dental care services
14 under the State program under this sec-
15 tion.

16 “(B) PROVIDER DESCRIBED.—A
17 healthcare provider described in this subpara-
18 graph includes—

19 “(i) an ambulatory surgical center;

20 “(ii) a hospital or nursing home;

21 “(iii) a physician or physician of os-
22 teopathic medicine;

23 “(iv) a physician assistant;

24 “(v) a chiropractic practitioner;

25 “(vi) a physical therapist;

1 “(vii) a registered nurse, nurse mid-
2 wife, licensed practical nurse, or advanced
3 registered nurse practitioner;

4 “(viii) a dentist or dental hygienist;

5 “(ix) a professional association, pro-
6 fessional corporation, limited liability com-
7 pany, limited liability partnership, or other
8 entity that provides, or has members that
9 provide, health or dental care services;

10 “(x) a non-profit corporation qualified
11 as exempt from Federal income taxation
12 under section 501(c) of the Internal Rev-
13 enue Code of 1986; and

14 “(xi) a federally funded community
15 health center, volunteer corporation, or vol-
16 unteer healthcare provider that provides
17 health or dental care services.

18 “(d) PRIORITY.—Priority in awarding grants under
19 this section shall be given the States that will provide
20 health or dental care under the State program under this
21 section, to individuals that—

22 “(1) have a family income that does not exceed
23 200 percent of the Federal poverty line (as defined
24 in section 673(2) of the Community Health Services
25 Block Grant Act) for a family of the size involved;

1 “(2) are not be covered under any health or
2 dental insurance policy or program (as determined
3 under applicable State law); and

4 “(3) are determined to be eligible for care, and
5 referred for such care, by the State department of
6 health or other entity authorized by the State for
7 purposes of administering the State program under
8 this section.

9 “(e) PROVISION OF INFORMATION.—A State shall en-
10 sure that prior to the enrollment under a State program
11 under this section, the individual involved shall be fully
12 informed of the limitation on liability provided for under
13 subsection (c)(1)(C) with respect to the provider involved
14 and shall sign a waiver consenting to such care.

15 “(f) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—

16 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may not
17 award a grant to a State under this section unless
18 the State agrees, with respect to the costs to be in-
19 curred by the State in carrying out activities under
20 the grant, to make available non-Federal contribu-
21 tions (in cash or in kind under paragraph (2)) to-
22 ward such costs in an amount equal to not less than
23 \$1 for each \$3 of Federal funds provided in the
24 grant. Such contributions may be made directly or
25 through donations from public or private entities.

1 “(2) DETERMINATION OF AMOUNT OF NON-
2 FEDERAL CONTRIBUTION.—

3 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Non-Federal contribu-
4 tions required in paragraph (1) may be in cash
5 or in kind, fairly evaluated, including equipment
6 or services (and excluding indirect or overhead
7 costs). Amounts provided by the Federal Gov-
8 ernment, or services assisted or subsidized to
9 any significant extent by the Federal Govern-
10 ment, may not be included in determining the
11 amount of such non-Federal contributions.

12 “(B) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.—In
13 making a determination of the amount of non-
14 Federal contributions for purposes of paragraph
15 (1), the Secretary may include only non-Federal
16 contributions in excess of the average amount
17 of non-Federal contributions made by the State
18 involved toward the purpose for which the grant
19 was made for the 2-year period preceding the
20 first fiscal year for which the State is applying
21 to receive a grant under this section.

22 “(g) ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.—

23 “(1) AMOUNT OF GRANT.—The amount of a
24 grant under this section shall not exceed \$600,000
25 per year for not more than 5 fiscal years.

1 “(2) NUMBER OF GRANTS.—The Secretary
2 shall not award more than 15 grants under this sec-
3 tion.

4 “(h) EVALUATION.—Not later than 3 years after the
5 date of enactment of this section, and annually thereafter,
6 the Secretary shall conduct an evaluation of the activities
7 carried out by States under this section, and submit to
8 the appropriate committees of Congress a report con-
9 cerning the results of such evaluation.

10 “(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

11 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be
12 appropriated such sums as may be necessary to
13 carry out this section.

14 “(2) EVALUATIONS.—The Secretary shall use 5
15 percent of the amount appropriated under para-
16 graph (1) for each fiscal year to carry out evalua-
17 tions under subsection (h).”.

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