

104TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 3175

To amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for an increase in the amount of Federal funds expended to conduct research on alcohol abuse and alcoholism among women.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 27, 1996

Mrs. MORELLA introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce

A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for an increase in the amount of Federal funds expended to conduct research on alcohol abuse and alcoholism among women.

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 “Women and Alcohol
5 Research Equity Act of 1996”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds as follows with respect to the
8 United States:

1 (1) One of every 4 alcoholics receiving treat-
2 ment is a woman.

3 (2) In fiscal year 1995, the National Institute
4 on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism had a total re-
5 search budget of \$191,186,000, and \$43,997,080 of
6 the budget (approximately 23 percent) was available
7 for research on alcohol abuse and alcoholism among
8 women. There are selected areas where alcohol con-
9 tributes to a more rapid and severe development of
10 disease in women than in men, and research on
11 women exclusively in these areas is important.

12 (3) According to data collected during the years
13 1980 through 1993 (in the survey known as the Na-
14 tional Drug and Alcoholism Treatment Unit Sur-
15 vey), women represent approximately 30 percent of
16 the clients presenting for alcohol problems in tradi-
17 tional public treatment facilities. A recent study has
18 shown that women are more likely than men to use
19 nontraditional health care systems for alcohol-related
20 problems. No data exists to count women in non-
21 traditional treatment settings; therefore, it is not
22 possible to know whether women are overrepresented
23 or underrepresented in all treatment settings in pro-
24 portion to their numbers (30 percent).

1 (4) Alcohol use by pregnant women is the lead-
2 ing known cause of mental retardation in newborns.
3 Fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS), which is marked by
4 dysfunction of the central nervous system and by
5 prenatal and postnatal growth deficiency and facial
6 malformations, strikes 1 to 3 out of every 1,000
7 newborns, or 3,600 to 10,000 babies a year, depend-
8 ing upon the national birth-rate. The incidence of
9 less severe fetal alcohol effects (FAE) is at least 3
10 times that of fetal alcohol syndrome. For Black
11 Americans, the risk of FAS remains about sevenfold
12 higher than for whites, even after adjustment for the
13 frequency of maternal alcohol intake, occurrence of
14 chronic alcohol problems, and parity. Among Native
15 Americans, the incidence of FAS varies among dif-
16 ferent cultures; some are similar to the overall U.S.
17 population, while a much higher prevalence is re-
18 ported for others. Research is also needed on the
19 male contribution to birth abnormalities related to
20 alcohol.

21 (5) Most treatment programs do not provide
22 child care or adequate alternatives for women enter-
23 ing treatment.

24 (6) The death rate of female alcoholics is 50 to
25 100 percent higher than for male alcoholics. Propor-

1 tionately more alcoholic women die of cirrhosis of
2 the liver than do alcoholic men. Additionally, the
3 combined effects of estrogen and alcohol may impact
4 not only liver damage but osteoporosis as well.

5 (7) The interval between onset of drinking-re-
6 lated problems and entry into treatment appears to
7 be shorter for women than for men. Further, studies
8 of women alcoholics in treatment suggest that they
9 often experience greater physiological impairment
10 earlier in their drinking careers, despite having
11 consumed less alcohol than men. These findings sug-
12 gest that the development of consequences associated
13 with heavy drinking may be accelerated or “tele-
14 scoped” in women.

15 (8) Women become intoxicated faster than men.
16 This may be due to a different enzyme and hor-
17 monal activity in women than in women.

18 (9) Chronic, heavy drinking contributes to men-
19 strual disorders, fertility problems, and premature
20 menopause.

21 (10) Alcohol use may be associated with an in-
22 creased risk of breast cancer. Research indicates
23 that the incidence of breast cancer increases when a
24 woman consumes 1 ounce or more of absolute alco-
25 hol daily.

1 (11) The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse
2 and Alcoholism has identified areas for future re-
3 search on alcohol abuse and alcoholism among
4 women. As a result of stimulating research applica-
5 tions during the years 1993 through 1995, such In-
6 stitute's portfolio on women and children has in-
7 creased by \$17,997,000, or more than 69 percent,
8 over the fiscal year 1992 base of \$26,000,000.

9 **SEC. 3. PROVISIONS REGARDING INCREASE IN AMOUNT OF**
10 **FUNDS EXPENDED FOR RESEARCH ON ALCO-**
11 **HOL ABUSE AND ALCOHOLISM AMONG**
12 **WOMEN.**

13 Section 464H(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42
14 U.S.C. 285n(d)) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
15 lowing paragraph:

16 “(3) WOMEN’S HEALTH.—

17 “(A) For fiscal year 1997, of the first
18 \$191,186,000 appropriated under paragraph
19 (1), the Director of the Institute shall obligate
20 not less than \$43,997,080 for the purpose of
21 carrying out under this subpart projects of re-
22 search on alcohol abuse and alcoholism among
23 women.

24 “(B) In addition to the authorization of
25 appropriations established in paragraph (1),

1 there are authorized to be appropriated for car-
2 rying out the purpose specified in subparagraph
3 (A) \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 1997, and such
4 sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal
5 years 1998 and 1999.”.

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