

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1221

To provide assistance for poison prevention and to stabilize the funding
of regional poison control centers.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 23, 1999

Mr. UPTON (for himself, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Ms. ESHOO, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. LEACH, Mr. STARK, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. BENTSEN, Mr. FOLEY, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. NEY, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. CAMP, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. PELOSI, Ms. BERKLEY, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, and Mr. CLAY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce

A BILL

To provide assistance for poison prevention and to stabilize
the funding of regional poison control centers.

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 “Poison Control Center
5 Enhancement and Awareness Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) Each year more than 2,000,000 poisonings
2 are reported to poison control centers throughout
3 the United States. More than 90 percent of these
4 poisonings happen in the home. 53 percent of poi-
5 soning victims are children younger than 6 years of
6 age.

7 (2) Poison control centers are a valuable na-
8 tional resource that provide life-saving and cost-ef-
9 fective public health services. For every dollar spent
10 on poison control centers, \$7 in medical costs are
11 saved. The average cost of a poisoning exposure call
12 is \$32, while the average cost if other parts of the
13 medical system are involved is \$932. Over the last
14 2 decades, the instability and lack of funding has re-
15 sulted in a steady decline in the number of poison
16 control centers in the United States. Within just the
17 last year, 2 poison control centers have been forced
18 to close because of funding problems. A third poison
19 control center is scheduled to close in April 1999.
20 Currently, there are 73 such centers.

21 (3) Stabilizing the funding structure and in-
22 creasing accessibility to poison control centers will
23 increase the number of United States residents who
24 have access to a certified poison control center, and

1 1 or more nationally recognized media firms for the devel-
2 opment and distribution of monthly television, radio, and
3 newspaper public service announcements.

4 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
5 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section,
6 \$600,000 for each of the fiscal years 2000 through 2004.

7 **SEC. 6. ESTABLISHMENT OF A GRANT PROGRAM.**

8 (a) REGIONAL POISON CONTROL CENTERS.—The
9 Secretary shall award grants to certified regional poison
10 control centers for the purposes of achieving the financial
11 stability of such centers, and for preventing and providing
12 treatment recommendations for poisonings.

13 (b) OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.—The Secretary shall
14 also use amounts received under this section to—

15 (1) develop standard education programs;

16 (2) develop standard patient management pro-
17 tocols for commonly encountered toxic exposures;

18 (3) improve and expand the poison control data
19 collection systems;

20 (4) improve national toxic exposure surveillance;

21 and

22 (5) expand the physician/medical toxicologist
23 supervision of poison control centers.

1 (c) CERTIFICATION.—Except as provided in sub-
2 section (d), the Secretary may make a grant to a center
3 under subsection (a) only if—

4 (1) the center has been certified by a profes-
5 sional organization in the field of poison control, and
6 the Secretary has approved the organization as hav-
7 ing in effect standards for certification that reason-
8 ably provide for the protection of the public health
9 with respect to poisoning; or

10 (2) the center has been certified by a State gov-
11 ernment, and the Secretary has approved the State
12 government as having in effect standards for certifi-
13 cation that reasonably provide for the protection of
14 the public health with respect to poisoning.

15 (d) WAIVER OF CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may grant a
17 waiver of the certification requirement of subsection
18 (c) with respect to a noncertified poison control cen-
19 ter or a newly established center that applies for a
20 grant under this section if such center can reason-
21 ably demonstrate that the center will obtain such a
22 certification within a reasonable period of time as
23 determined appropriate by the Secretary.

1 (2) RENEWAL.—The Secretary may only renew
2 a waiver under paragraph (1) for a period of 3
3 years.

4 (e) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—Amounts made
5 available to a poison control center under this section shall
6 be used to supplement and not supplant other Federal,
7 State, local or private funds provided for such center.

8 (f) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.—A poison control
9 center, in utilizing the proceeds of a grant under this sec-
10 tion, shall maintain the expenditures of the center for ac-
11 tivities of the center at a level that is not less than the
12 level of such expenditures maintained by the center for
13 the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the
14 grant is received.

15 (g) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary may
16 impose a matching requirement with respect to amounts
17 provided under a grant under this section if the Secretary
18 determines appropriate.

19 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
20 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section,
21 \$25,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2000 through
22 2004.

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