

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 686

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

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 21, 2003

Mr. DEWINE (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. BREAUX, Mr. BINGAMAN, and Mr. INOUE) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

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 Amendments of 2003”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Section 2 of the Poison Control Enhancement and
8 Awareness Act (42 U.S.C. 14801) is amended to read as
9 follows:

1 **“SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 “Congress finds the following:

3 “(1) Poison control centers are our Nation’s
4 primary defense against injury and deaths from poi-
5 soning. Twenty-four hours a day, the general public
6 as well as health care practitioners contact their
7 local poison centers for help in diagnosing and treat-
8 ing victims of poisoning and other toxic exposures.

9 “(2) Poisoning is the third most common form
10 of unintentional death in the United States. In any
11 given year, there will be between 2,000,000 and
12 4,000,000 poison exposures. More than 50 percent
13 of these exposures will involve children under the age
14 of 6 who are exposed to toxic substances in their
15 home. Poisoning accounts for 285,000 hospitaliza-
16 tions, 1,200,000 days of acute hospital care, and
17 13,000 fatalities annually.

18 “(3) Stabilizing the funding structure and in-
19 creasing accessibility to poison control centers will
20 promote the utilization of poison control centers, and
21 reduce the inappropriate use of emergency medical
22 services and other more costly health care services.

23 “(4) The tragic events of September 11, 2001,
24 and the anthrax cases of October 2001, have dra-
25 matically changed our Nation. During this time pe-
26 riod, poison centers in many areas of the country

1 were answering thousands of additional calls from
2 concerned residents. Many poison centers were relied
3 upon as a source for accurate medical information
4 about the disease and the complications resulting
5 from prophylactic antibiotic therapy.

6 “(5) The 2001 Presidential Task Force on Cit-
7 izen Preparedness in the War on Terrorism rec-
8 ommended that the Poison Control Centers be used
9 as a source of public information and public edu-
10 cation regarding potential biological, chemical, and
11 nuclear domestic terrorism.

12 “(6) The increased demand placed upon poison
13 centers to provide emergency information in the
14 event of a terrorist event involving a biological,
15 chemical, or nuclear toxin will dramatically increase
16 call volume.”.

17 **SEC. 3. MAINTENANCE OF A NATIONAL TOLL FREE NUM-**
18 **BER.**

19 Section 4 of the Poison Control Enhancement and
20 Awareness Act (42 U.S.C. 14803) is amended—

21 (1) by striking the section heading and insert-
22 ing the following:

23 **“SEC. 4. MAINTENANCE OF A NATIONAL TOLL-FREE NUM-**
24 **BER.”;**

25 and

1 “(1) develop standardized poison prevention
2 and poison control promotion programs;

3 “(2) develop standard patient management
4 guidelines for commonly encountered toxic expo-
5 sures;

6 “(3) improve and expand the poison control
7 data collection systems;

8 “(4) improve national toxic exposure surveil-
9 lance;

10 “(5) expand the toxicologic expertise within poi-
11 son control centers; and

12 “(6) improve the capacity of poison control cen-
13 ters to answer high volumes of calls during times of
14 national crisis”;

15 (3) by striking subsection (d)(2) and inserting
16 the following:

17 “(2) RENEWAL.—The Secretary may renew a
18 waiver under paragraph (1).

19 “(3) LIMITATION.—In no instance may the sum
20 of the number of years for a waiver under paragraph
21 (1) and a renewal under paragraph (2) exceed 5
22 years. The preceding sentence shall take effect as if
23 enacted on February 25, 2000.”; and

1 (4) in subsection (h), by inserting “and
2 \$30,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2005 through
3 2009” after “2004”.

4 **SEC. 6. NATIONWIDE TOXICOSURVEILLANCE OF POISON**
5 **CENTER DATA TO PROMOTE HAZARD DETEC-**
6 **TION.**

7 The Poison Control Enhancement and Awareness Act
8 (42 U.S.C. 14801 et seq.) is amended by adding at the
9 end the following:

10 **“SEC. 7. NATIONWIDE TOXICOSURVEILLANCE OF POISON**
11 **CENTER DATA TO PROMOTE HAZARD DETEC-**
12 **TION.**

13 “(a) IN GENERAL.— The Secretary shall assist in the
14 implementation and maintenance of continuous national
15 toxicosurveillance of poison control center data to detect
16 new hazards from household products, pharmaceuticals,
17 traditionally abused drugs, and other toxic substances.

18 “(b) CONTRACT FOR SERVICES.—The Secretary may
19 enter into a contract with appropriate professional organi-
20 zations for the collection and analysis of poison center
21 data described in subsection (a) in real time.

22 “(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
23 is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section,
24 \$2,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2005 through 2009.”.

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