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(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To amend the Public Health Service Act to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a program for the conduct and support of research, training, and health information dissemination with respect to environmental risk factors of neurodegenerative diseases, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. WEXTON introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a program for the conduct and support of research, training, and health information dissemination with respect to environmental risk factors of neurodegenerative diseases, 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 “Harmonizing Environ-
3 mental Analyses and Launching Therapeutic Hubs to
4 Yield Bolstered Research And Innovation in Neurological
5 Science Act of 2024” or the “HEALTHY BRAINS Act
6 of 2024”.

7 **SEC. 2. RESEARCH INTO ENVIRONMENTAL RISK FACTORS**
8 **THAT MAY CONTRIBUTE TO**
9 **NEURODEGENERATIVE DISEASE.**

10 Part B of title IV of the Public Health Service Act
11 (42 U.S.C. 284 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
12 the following:

13 **“SEC. 409K. NEURODEGENERATIVE DISEASE ENVIRON-**
14 **MENTAL RESEARCH.**

15 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through
16 the Director of NIH, shall establish a program for the con-
17 duct and support of research, training, and health infor-
18 mation dissemination with respect to environmental risk
19 factors (including environmental toxicant exposures) of
20 neurodegenerative diseases.

21 “(b) SCOPE OF RESEARCH.—Research conducted or
22 supported under this section shall—

23 “(1) be focused on—

24 “(A) potential environmental toxicants, in-
25 cluding environmental stressors such as volatile
26 organic compounds, particulate matter, per-

1 and polyfluorinated substances, and heavy met-
2 als in environmental media such as air, water,
3 food, and soil;

4 “(B) the mechanistic interactions of such
5 toxicants with neurodegenerative disease out-
6 comes;

7 “(C) the presymptomatic markers of
8 neurodegenerative disease; and

9 “(D) advancing development of environ-
10 mental health strategies to prevent, manage,
11 treat, or slow the progression of
12 neurodegenerative disease; and

13 “(2) may include research—

14 “(A) examining environmental exposures,
15 including occupational risk factors,
16 sociobehavioral factors, and social determinants
17 of health;

18 “(B) using fundamental approaches to
19 identify historical, existing, and emerging envi-
20 ronmental risks and factors that affect disease
21 progression;

22 “(C) examining multifactorial causation
23 from chemical and nonchemical exposures;

1 “(D) examining prevalence of the disease
2 in relation to the distribution of exposures
3 across communities and populations;

4 “(E) examining the expression of disease
5 traits that result from the interplay of genes
6 and environment; and

7 “(F) exploring physiological mechanisms
8 driving neurodegeneration from toxicant expo-
9 sures.

10 “(c) COORDINATION WITHIN NIH.—

11 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the pro-
12 gram under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

13 “(A) provide for coordination across the
14 programs and activities of the National Insti-
15 tutes of Health to avoid duplication; and

16 “(B) expand the funding of environmental
17 health research by leading an ongoing, coordi-
18 nated, and focused effort to fund new and exist-
19 ing centers for the study and evaluation of envi-
20 ronmental risk factors (including environmental
21 toxicants) of neurodegenerative diseases.

22 “(2) BIENNIAL REPORT.—In carrying out para-
23 graph (1), the Secretary shall—

1 “(A) submit a biennial report detailing the
2 findings and conclusions of research under this
3 section to—

4 “(i) the Committees on Appropria-
5 tions of the House of Representatives and
6 the Senate;

7 “(ii) the Committee on Energy and
8 Commerce of the House of Representa-
9 tives; and

10 “(iii) the Committee on Health, Edu-
11 cation, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate;

12 “(B) post each report under subparagraph
13 (A) on the public website of the National Insti-
14 tutes of Health; and

15 “(C) include the information reported pur-
16 suant to subparagraph (A) in the triennial re-
17 port under section 403.

18 “(d) COLLABORATIVE CENTERS FOR
19 NEURODEGENERATIVE DISEASE ENVIRONMENTAL RE-
20 SEARCH.—

21 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the pro-
22 gram under subsection (a), the Secretary shall pro-
23 vide for the establishment of research centers, to be
24 known as Collaborative Centers for
25 Neurodegenerative Disease Environmental Research

1 (in this section each referred to as a ‘CCNDER’) at
2 institutions of higher education, medical centers, and
3 other appropriate entities.

4 “(2) REQUIREMENTS.—With respect to
5 neurodegenerative disease, each CCNDER shall—

6 “(A) conduct and support basic, applied,
7 and clinical research on the effects of environ-
8 mental risk factors (including environmental
9 toxicants), including with respect to disease
10 progression;

11 “(B) use the facilities of a single institu-
12 tion or a consortium of cooperating institutions
13 to administer the CCNDER and meet such
14 qualifications as may be prescribed by the Sec-
15 retary;

16 “(C) focus on population-based, environ-
17 mental health research;

18 “(D) ensure that the research conducted
19 and supported pursuant to this section is inter-
20 disciplinary and collaborative;

21 “(E) coordinate with existing intramural
22 and extramural efforts of the National Insti-
23 tutes of Health; and

24 “(F) collaborate with relevant partners and
25 stakeholders, including researchers, health pro-

1 professionals, nonprofit organizations, patients,
2 and caregivers, to understand the effects of en-
3 vironmental risk factors (including environ-
4 mental toxicants) of neurodegenerative disease
5 and progression thereof.

6 “(3) DISCRETIONARY ACTIVITIES.—With re-
7 spect to neurodegenerative diseases, each CCNDER
8 may—

9 “(A) provide career enhancement and
10 training opportunities for scientists, research-
11 ers, environmental professionals, and health
12 professionals, including through the provision of
13 stipends;

14 “(B) conduct programs to provide informa-
15 tion and continuing education to health profes-
16 sionals, including through the provision of sti-
17 pends;

18 “(C) conduct programs for the dissemina-
19 tion of information to the public regarding re-
20 search findings and proposed prevention strate-
21 gies when appropriate;

22 “(D) separately or in collaboration with
23 other CCNDERS or governmental agencies, es-
24 tablish a nationwide data system that—

1 “(i) includes data derived from com-
2 prehensive and representative patient pop-
3 ulations with neurodegenerative diseases;
4 and

5 “(ii) where possible, compares rel-
6 evant data involving general populations;

7 “(E) separately or in collaboration with
8 other CCNDERS, establish a clearinghouse, to
9 be known as the Environmental Contributions
10 to Neurodegenerative Disease Information
11 Clearinghouse, to facilitate and enhance knowl-
12 edge and understanding of environmental risk
13 factors of neurodegenerative diseases; and

14 “(F) separately or in collaboration with
15 other CCNDERS, establish a national education
16 program that fosters a national focus on envi-
17 ronmental risk factors of neurodegenerative dis-
18 eases.

19 “(4) DURATION OF SUPPORT.—The period of
20 support for a CCNDER under this section shall not
21 exceed 5 years, except that such period may be ex-
22 tended by the Secretary for one or more additional
23 periods of not more than 5 years if—

24 “(A) the operations of such CCNDER
25 have been reviewed by an appropriate technical

1 and scientific peer review group established by
2 the Secretary; and

3 “(B) such group has recommended to the
4 Secretary that such period should be extended.

5 “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To
6 carry out this section, there is authorized to be appro-
7 priated \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through
8 2030.”.