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(Original Signature of Member)

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R.

To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make grants to State and local entities to carry out peer-to-peer mental health programs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. ZELDIN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make grants to State and local entities to carry out peer-to-peer mental health 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 “PFC Joseph P. Dwyer
5 Peer Support Program Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. P.F.C. JOSEPH P. DWYER PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
8 shall establish a grant program to be known as the

1 “P.F.C. Joseph P. Dwyer Peer Support Program” under
2 which the Secretary shall make grants to eligible entities
3 for the purpose of establishing peer-to-peer mental health
4 programs for veterans.

5 (b) ELIGIBLE ENTITY DEFINED.—In this section,
6 the term “eligible entity” means any of the following enti-
7 ties that submit to the Secretary an application containing
8 such information and assurances as the Secretary may re-
9 quire:

10 (1) A nonprofit organization having historically
11 served veterans mental health needs.

12 (2) A congressionally chartered veteran service
13 organization.

14 (3) A State, local, or Tribal veteran service
15 agency, director, or commissioner.

16 (c) AMOUNT OF GRANT.—The recipient of a grant
17 under this section shall receive a grant in an amount that
18 does not exceed \$250,000.

19 (d) USE OF FUNDS.—The recipient of a grant under
20 this section shall use the grant funds to—

21 (1) carry out a program that meets the stand-
22 ards developed under subsection (e);

23 (2) hire veterans to serve as peer specialists to
24 host group and individual meetings with veterans
25 seeking nonclinical support;

1 (3) provide mental health support to veterans
2 24 hours each day, seven days each week; and

3 (4) hire staff to support the program.

4 (e) PROGRAM STANDARDS.—

5 (1) ADVISORY COMMISSION.—The Secretary
6 shall establish an advisory committee for the pur-
7 pose of creating appropriate standards applicable to
8 programs established using grants under this sec-
9 tion.

10 (2) STANDARDS.—The standards developed
11 under paragraph (1) shall include initial and contin-
12 ued training for veteran peer volunteers, administra-
13 tive staffing needs, and best practices for addressing
14 the needs of each veteran served.

15 (f) NONRETENTION OF RECORDS.—The Secretary
16 may not require the recipient of a grant under this section
17 to maintain records on veterans seeking support or to re-
18 port any personally identifying information directly or in-
19 directly to the Secretary about such veterans.

20 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
21 authorized to be appropriated \$25,000,000 to carry out
22 this section during the 3-year period beginning on the date
23 of the enactment of this Act.