

108TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 1217

AN ACT

To direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to intensify programs with respect to research and related activities concerning falls among older adults.

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 “Keeping Seniors Safe
5 From Falls Act of 2004”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Falls are the leading cause of injury deaths
4 among individuals who are over 65 years of age.

5 (2) In 2000, falls among older adults accounted
6 for 10,200 deaths and 1,600,000 emergency depart-
7 ment visits.

8 (3) Hospital admissions for hip fractures
9 among the elderly have increased from 231,000 ad-
10 missions in 1988 to 332,000 in 1999.

11 (4) Annually, more than 64,000 individuals who
12 are over 65 years of age sustain a traumatic brain
13 injury as a result of a fall.

14 (5) The total cost of all fall injuries for people
15 age 65 and older was calculated in 1994 to be
16 \$27,300,000,000 (in 2004 dollars).

17 (6) A national approach to reducing falls
18 among older adults, which focuses on the daily life
19 of senior citizens in residential, institutional, and
20 community settings, is needed.

21 **SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE**
22 **ACT.**

23 Part J of title III of the Public Health Service Act
24 (42 U.S.C. 280b et seq.) is amended—

25 (1) by redesignating section 393B (as added by
26 section 1401 of Public Law 106–386) as section

1 393C and transferring such section so that it ap-
 2 pears after section 393B (as added by section 1301
 3 of Public Law 106–310); and

4 (2) by inserting after section 393C (as redesign-
 5 nated by paragraph (1)) the following:

6 **“SEC. 393D. PREVENTION OF FALLS AMONG OLDER**
 7 **ADULTS.**

8 “(a) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this section are—

9 “(1) to develop effective public education strate-
 10 gies in a national initiative to reduce falls among
 11 older adults in order to educate older adults, family
 12 members, employers, caregivers, and others;

13 “(2) to intensify services and conduct research
 14 to determine the most effective approaches to pre-
 15 venting and treating falls among older adults; and

16 “(3) to require the Secretary to evaluate the ef-
 17 fect of falls on health care costs, the potential for re-
 18 ducing falls, and the most effective strategies for re-
 19 ducing health care costs associated with falls.

20 “(b) PUBLIC EDUCATION.—The Secretary shall—

21 “(1) oversee and support a national education
 22 campaign to be carried out by a nonprofit organiza-
 23 tion with experience in designing and implementing
 24 national injury prevention programs, that is directed
 25 principally to older adults, their families, and health

care providers, and that focuses on reducing falls among older adults and preventing repeat falls; and

“(2) award grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements to qualified organizations, institutions, or consortia of qualified organizations and institutions, for the purpose of organizing State-level coalitions of appropriate State and local agencies, safety, health, senior citizen, and other organizations to design and carry out local education campaigns, focusing on reducing falls among older adults and preventing repeat falls.

“(c) RESEARCH.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

“(A) conduct and support research to—

“(i) improve the identification of older adults who have a high risk of falling;

“(ii) improve data collection and analysis to identify fall risk and protective factors;

“(iii) design, implement, and evaluate the most effective fall prevention interventions;

“(iv) improve strategies that are proven to be effective in reducing falls by tai-

1 loring these strategies to specific popu-
2 lations of older adults;

3 “(v) conduct research in order to
4 maximize the dissemination of proven, ef-
5 fective fall prevention interventions;

6 “(vi) intensify proven interventions to
7 prevent falls among older adults;

8 “(vii) improve the diagnosis, treat-
9 ment, and rehabilitation of elderly fall vic-
10 tims; and

11 “(viii) assess the risk of falls occur-
12 ring in various settings;

13 “(B) conduct research concerning barriers
14 to the adoption of proven interventions with re-
15 spect to the prevention of falls among older
16 adults;

17 “(C) conduct research to develop, imple-
18 ment, and evaluate the most effective ap-
19 proaches to reducing falls among high-risk older
20 adults living in long-term care facilities; and

21 “(D) evaluate the effectiveness of commu-
22 nity programs to prevent assisted living and
23 nursing home falls among older adults.

24 “(2) EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT.—The Secretary,
25 either directly or through awarding grants, con-

1 tracts, or cooperative agreements to qualified organi-
 2 zations, institutions, or consortia of qualified organi-
 3 zations and institutions, shall provide professional
 4 education for physicians and allied health profes-
 5 sionals in fall prevention.

6 “(d) DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—The Secretary
 7 shall carry out the following:

8 “(1) Oversee and support demonstration and
 9 research projects to be carried out by qualified orga-
 10 nizations, institutions, or consortia of qualified orga-
 11 nizations and institutions, in the following areas:

12 “(A) A multistate demonstration project
 13 assessing the utility of targeted fall risk screen-
 14 ing and referral programs.

15 “(B) Programs designed for community-
 16 dwelling older adults that utilize multicompo-
 17 nent fall intervention approaches, including
 18 physical activity, medication assessment and re-
 19 duction when possible, vision enhancement, and
 20 home modification strategies.

21 “(C) Programs that are targeted to newly
 22 discharged fall victims who are at a high risk
 23 for second falls and which are designed to maxi-
 24 mize independence and quality of life for older

1 adults, particularly those older adults with
2 functional limitations.

3 “(D) Private sector and public-private
4 partnerships to develop technology to prevent
5 falls among older adults and prevent or reduce
6 injuries if falls occur.

7 “(2)(A) Award grants, contracts, or cooperative
8 agreements to qualified organizations, institutions,
9 or consortia of qualified organizations and institu-
10 tions, to design, implement, and evaluate fall preven-
11 tion programs using proven intervention strategies
12 in residential and institutional settings.

13 “(B) Award 1 or more grants, contracts, or co-
14 operative agreements to 1 or more qualified organi-
15 zations, institutions, or consortia of qualified organi-
16 zations and institutions, in order to carry out a
17 multistate demonstration project to implement and
18 evaluate fall prevention programs using proven inter-
19 vention strategies designed for multifamily residen-
20 tial settings with high concentrations of older adults,
21 including—

22 “(i) identifying high-risk populations;

23 “(ii) evaluating residential facilities;

24 “(iii) conducting screening to identify high-
25 risk individuals;

1 “(iv) providing pre-fall counseling;

2 “(v) coordinating services with health care
3 and social service providers; and

4 “(vi) coordinating post-fall treatment and
5 rehabilitation.

6 “(3) Award 1 or more grants, contracts, or co-
7 operative agreements to qualified organizations, in-
8 stitutions, or consortia of qualified organizations and
9 institutions, to conduct evaluations of the effective-
10 ness of the demonstration projects described in this
11 subsection.

12 “(e) STUDY OF EFFECTS OF FALLS ON HEALTH
13 CARE COSTS.—

14 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall con-
15 duct a review of the effects of falls on health care
16 costs, the potential for reducing falls, and the most
17 effective strategies for reducing health care costs as-
18 sociated with falls.

19 “(2) REPORT.—Not later than 36 months after
20 the date of enactment of the Keeping Seniors Safe
21 From Falls Act of 2004, the Secretary shall submit
22 to Congress a report describing the findings of the

- 1 Secretary in conducting the review under paragraph
- 2 (1).”.

Passed the Senate November 18, 2004.

Attest:

Secretary.

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