

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4374

To amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to include screening for loneliness and coordination of supportive services and health care to address the negative health effects of loneliness, to require a report on loneliness, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 21, 2024

Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Ms. SMITH, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to include screening for loneliness and coordination of supportive services and health care to address the negative health effects of loneliness, to require a report on loneliness, 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,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Social Engagement
5 and Network Initiatives for Older Relief Act” or the
6 “SENIOR Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. SCREENING OLDER INDIVIDUALS FOR LONELINESS**
 2 **AND COORDINATION OF SUPPORTIVE SERV-**
 3 **ICES AND HEALTH CARE TO ADDRESS LONE-**
 4 **LINESS.**

5 Section 102(14)(N) of the Older Americans Act of
 6 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3002(14)(N)) is amended by inserting
 7 “and loneliness” after “social isolation” each place it ap-
 8 pears.

9 **SEC. 3. REPORT ON LONELINESS.**

10 (a) PREPARATION OF REPORT.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, in car-
 12 rying out activities under section 206(a) of the Older
 13 Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3017(a)), pre-
 14 pare a report—

15 (A) on programs authorized by such Act
 16 (42 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.), and supported or
 17 funded by the Administration on Aging, that in-
 18 clude a focus on addressing the negative health
 19 effects associated with loneliness through tar-
 20 geting older individuals identified as being in
 21 greatest social need, as appropriate; and

22 (B) that examines the relationship between
 23 the strength of multigenerational family units
 24 and loneliness in older individuals.

25 (2) IMPACT.—Such report shall identify—

1 (A) whether loneliness is being adequately
2 addressed under the programs described in
3 paragraph (1)(A), including, to the extent prac-
4 ticable—

5 (i) the prevalence of loneliness across
6 geographic areas;

7 (ii) the negative physical and mental
8 health effects associated with loneliness;
9 and

10 (iii) the role of preventive measures
11 and services under this Act in addressing
12 the negative health effects associated with
13 loneliness among older individuals; and

14 (B) public awareness of and efforts to ad-
15 dress the negative health effects associated with
16 loneliness.

17 (3) TYPES OF PROGRAMS.—Such report shall
18 identify whether programs described in paragraph
19 (1)(A)—

20 (A) support projects in local communities
21 and involve diverse sectors associated with such
22 communities to decrease the negative health ef-
23 fects associated with loneliness among older in-
24 dividuals and caregivers;

1 (B) support outreach activities to screen
 2 older individuals for negative health effects as-
 3 sociated with loneliness; and

4 (C) include a focus on decreasing the nega-
 5 tive health effects associated with loneliness.

6 (4) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Such report shall, as
 7 appropriate, include—

8 (A) recommendations for reducing the neg-
 9 ative health effects associated with loneliness
 10 and to address any negative health effects iden-
 11 tified under clauses (ii) and (iii) of subpara-
 12 graph (A), and subparagraph (B), of paragraph
 13 (2); and

14 (B) recommendations for policies or pro-
 15 grams that foster strong and stable connections
 16 across different generations in a family.

17 (b) SUBMISSION OF REPORT.—

18 (1) INTERIM STATUS REPORT.—Not later than
 19 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the
 20 Secretary shall submit an interim report, to the com-
 21 mittees of the Senate and of the House of Rep-
 22 resentatives with jurisdiction over the Older Ameri-
 23 cans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.), and the
 24 Special Committee on Aging of the Senate, on the

1 status of the evaluation underway to develop the
2 final report required under this section.

3 (2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 5 years
4 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Sec-
5 retary shall submit a final report that meets the re-
6 quirements of this section to the committees of the
7 Senate and of the House of Representatives with ju-
8 risdiction over the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42
9 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.) and the Special Committee on
10 Aging of the Senate.

11 (c) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section, the
12 terms “greatest social need”, “older individual”, and
13 “Secretary” have the meanings given such terms in sec-
14 tion 102 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C.
15 3002).

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