

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To establish a home-based telemental health care grant program for purposes of increasing mental health and substance use services in rural medically underserved populations and for individuals in farming, fishing, and forestry occupations.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. ROUNDS (for himself and Ms. SMITH) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To establish a home-based telemental health care grant program for purposes of increasing mental health and substance use services in rural medically underserved populations and for individuals in farming, fishing, and forestry occupations.

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 “Home-Based Tele-
5 mental Health Care Act of 2025”.

1 **SEC. 2. MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES**
2 **DELIVERED TO RURAL UNDERSERVED POPU-**
3 **LATIONS VIA TELEMENTAL HEALTH CARE.**

4 Title III of the Public Health Service Act is amended
5 by inserting after section 330K (42 U.S.C. 254c-16) the
6 following:

7 **“SEC. 330K-1. MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE SERV-**
8 **ICES DELIVERED TO RURAL UNDERSERVED**
9 **POPULATIONS VIA TELEMENTAL HEALTH**
10 **CARE.**

11 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

12 “(1) the term ‘covered populations’ means—

13 “(A) health professional shortage areas (as
14 defined in section 332(a)(1)) in rural areas; or

15 “(B) populations engaged in a farming,
16 fishing, or forestry industry;

17 “(2) the term ‘eligible entity’ means a public or
18 nonprofit private telemental health provider network
19 that offers services that include mental health and
20 substance use services provided by professionals
21 trained in mental health and substance use;

22 “(3) the term ‘farming, fishing, or forestry in-

23 dustry’ means an occupation defined as a farming,
24 fishing, or forestry occupation by the Department of
25 Labor in accordance with the Standard Occupational
26 Classification System;

1 “(4) the term ‘home-based telemental’ means
2 the use of telemental health services where the pa-
3 tient is in his or her own home or other place of
4 comfort;

5 “(5) the term ‘professional trained in mental
6 health’ means a psychiatrist, a qualified mental
7 health professional (as defined in section 330K), or
8 another mental health professional acting under the
9 direction of a psychiatrist;

10 “(6) the term ‘rural’ has the meaning given
11 such term by the Office of Rural Health Policy of
12 the Health Resources and Services Administration;
13 and

14 “(7) the term ‘telemental health’ means the use
15 of electronic information and telecommunications
16 technologies to support long distance clinical health
17 care, patient and professional health-related edu-
18 cation, public health, and health administration.

19 “(b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary, in
20 consultation with the Rural Health Liaison of the Depart-
21 ment of Agriculture, shall award grants to eligible entities
22 to expand and enhance access to mental health and sub-
23 stance use services for covered populations in their homes
24 or other places of comfort, as delivered remotely by profes-

1 sionals trained in mental health and substance use using
2 telemental health care.

3 “(c) USE OF FUNDS.—Recipients of a grant under
4 this section shall use the grant funds to—

5 “(1) deliver home-based telemental health serv-
6 ices to covered populations;

7 “(2) develop comprehensive metrics to measure
8 the quality and impact of home-based telemental
9 health services compared to traditional in-person
10 mental health and substance use care; and

11 “(3) support infrastructure that enhances the
12 capacity of health care providers to deliver tele-
13 mental health services in patients’ homes or other
14 places of comfort, including by—

15 “(A) expanding broadband access;

16 “(B) providing devices for patients to ac-
17 cess telemental health services; and

18 “(C) offsetting costs of technology nec-
19 essary for health care providers to deliver high
20 quality care.

21 “(d) REPORT.—The Secretary, in consultation with
22 the Secretary of Agriculture, not later than 3 years after
23 the date on which the program under this section com-
24 mences, and 2 years thereafter, shall submit to the appro-
25 priate congressional committees reports on the impact and

1 quality of care of home-based telemental health care serv-
2 ices for covered populations.

3 “(e) AUTHORIZED USE OF FUNDS.—Out of any
4 amounts made available to the Secretary, up to
5 \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2029
6 may be allocated to carrying out the program under this
7 section.”.