

**AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
TO H.R. 6993
OFFERED BY MR. BERGMAN OF MICHIGAN**

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

1 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

2 This Act may be cited as the “Veterans TBI Break-
3 through Exploration of Adaptive Care Opportunities Na-
4 tionwide Act of 2026” or the “BEACON Act of 2026”.

**5 SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS GRANT PRO-
6 GRAM FOR SUPPLEMENTAL
7 NEUROREHABILITATION APPROACHES TO
8 CHRONIC MILD TBI TREATMENT.**

9 (a) GRANT PROGRAM.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans
11 Affairs shall carry out a three-year program (to be
12 known as the “TBI Innovation Grant Program”)
13 under which the Secretary shall award grants to eli-
14 gible entities described in subsection (b) for the de-
15 velopment, implementation, and evaluation of ap-
16 proaches and methodologies for prospective random-
17 ized control trials for neurorehabilitation treatments
18 for the treatment of chronic mild traumatic brain in-

1 jury (in this Act referred to as “mTBI”) in vet-
2 erans.

3 (2) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER DEPARTMENT AC-
4 TIVITIES.—The grant program required under para-
5 graph (1) shall be carried out in a manner that—

6 (A) supplements, and does not supplant,
7 other clinical care and research of the Depart-
8 ment of Veterans Affairs relating to mTBI; and

9 (B) facilitates, as practicable, coordination
10 with Veterans Health Administration facilities
11 for referral, continuity of care, and dissemina-
12 tion of findings.

13 (b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES DESCRIBED.—An eligible
14 entity described in this subsection is any of the following:

15 (1) A nonprofit organization with demonstrated
16 capability to conduct clinical trials and to deliver or
17 research effective neurorehabilitation treatments for
18 mTBI, including through patient care delivery.

19 (2) An academic institution that conducts sig-
20 nificant research on mTBI and has demonstrated
21 capability to conduct clinical trials relating to
22 neurorehabilitation treatments.

23 (3) A non-Department health care provider with
24 expertise in neurorehabilitative therapies and dem-
25 onstrated capability to conduct clinical trials and to

1 evaluate mTBI treatments through patient care de-
2 livery.

3 (4) A partnership or consortium of two or more
4 entities described in paragraphs (1) through (3).

5 (c) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity in receipt of
6 a grant under this section shall use such grant to support
7 activities that include—

8 (1) designing and testing novel or integrative
9 treatments for mTBI that prioritize patient-centered
10 care, including non-pharmacological therapies;

11 (2) conducting clinical studies and assessments
12 to measure the effectiveness of funded approaches
13 to—

14 (A) improve mental health outcomes
15 among veterans;

16 (B) reduce suicidality, and common risk
17 factors for completing suicide, including depres-
18 sion and substance use disorders among vet-
19 erans; and

20 (C) mitigate long-term effects of mTBI
21 and, to the extent outcomes are collected under
22 the applicable clinical protocol, measure dura-
23 bility of outcomes at approximately six months
24 following completion of treatment;

1 (3) providing training for clinicians and out-
2 reach to veterans and their families to improve
3 awareness and accessibility of innovative mTBI
4 treatments, including information on available De-
5 partment resources and pathways to access such re-
6 sources; and

7 (4) establishing partnerships with community
8 organizations, academic institutions, and health care
9 facilities, including, as practicable, coordination with
10 Veterans Health Administration facilities to facili-
11 tate referral of eligible veterans, continuity of care,
12 and dissemination of aggregate findings.

13 (d) LIMITATION ON GRANT AMOUNT.—The Secretary
14 may not award an eligible entity a grant under this section
15 in an amount that exceeds \$5,000,000 for any fiscal year.

16 (e) PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION.—

17 (1) APPLICATIONS.—An eligible entity desiring
18 a grant under this section shall submit to the Sec-
19 retary an application in such form, at such time,
20 and containing such information and assurances as
21 the Secretary determines appropriate, including a
22 detailed description of—

23 (A) activities proposed to be conducted
24 using the grant;

25 (B) expected outcomes of such activities;

1 (C) plans for evaluating the effectiveness
2 of such activities;

3 (D) how the eligible entity will coordinate,
4 as practicable, with Veterans Health Adminis-
5 tration facilities for referral and continuity of
6 care for veterans who participate in activities
7 carried out using grant funds, and for dissemi-
8 nation of aggregate findings;

9 (E) the budget of the entity for the use of
10 the grant, including a narrative justification
11 and an identification of the estimated amount
12 of grant funds to be used for administrative or
13 overhead costs; and

14 (F) assurances of compliance with applica-
15 ble Federal laws and regulations relating to
16 human subjects protections and patient safety.

17 (2) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this
18 section, the Secretary shall give priority to eligible
19 entities that have demonstrated the capacity to co-
20 ordinate with the Department to facilitate referral
21 and continuity of care for veterans who participate
22 in activities carried out using grant funds.

23 (3) PERIODIC REPORTS.—As a condition of re-
24 ceiving a grant under this section, an eligible entity
25 shall, not less frequently than annually during the

1 grant period and not later than 180 days after the
2 end of the grant period, submit to the Secretary a
3 report that includes, with respect to the period cov-
4 ered by the report—

5 (A) a description of how the eligible entity
6 used such grant;

7 (B) a summary of the progress of activities
8 funded with amounts from such grant;

9 (C) measured outcomes relating to such
10 activities;

11 (D) a detailed accounting of expenditures
12 of grant funds, including administrative or
13 overhead costs;

14 (E) to the extent collected under the appli-
15 cable clinical protocol or in the ordinary course
16 of care, a description of any adverse events and
17 serious adverse events, including self-harm or
18 suicide-related events; and

19 (F) a description of actions taken pursuant
20 to the coordination plan described in paragraph
21 (1)(D).

22 (4) OVERSIGHT; ANNUAL EVALUATIONS.—The
23 Secretary shall—

24 (A) ensure rigorous oversight of the grant
25 program under this section, including by moni-

1 toring financial compliance and timely receipt
2 of the reports required under paragraph (2);
3 and

4 (B) on an annual basis until the termi-
5 nation date specified in subsection (i)(1), evalu-
6 ate the efficacy of activities carried out using
7 grant funds based on the reports submitted
8 under paragraph (2) and other appropriate in-
9 formation.

10 (5) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this
11 section shall be construed to authorize the Secretary
12 to require prior approval of, or changes to, any clin-
13 ical protocol, study design, outcome measures, or fol-
14 low-up schedule of an eligible entity that receives a
15 grant under this section, except as necessary to en-
16 sure compliance with applicable Federal laws and
17 regulations relating to human subjects protections
18 and patient safety.

19 (6) ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY.—The Sec-
20 retary may suspend, modify, or terminate a grant
21 awarded under this section, if the Secretary deter-
22 mines that the recipient of such grant has failed to
23 comply with reporting requirements under para-
24 graph (2) or other applicable terms and conditions
25 of the grant.

1 (f) AVAILABLE AMOUNTS; AUTHORIZATION OF AP-
2 PROPRIATIONS.—

3 (1) AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—The Secretary may
4 carry out the program under this section using
5 amounts available to the Secretary for general men-
6 tal health care programs, if the use of such amounts
7 supplements, and does not supplant, amounts other-
8 wise available for Department mental health and
9 traumatic brain injury programs.

10 (2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
11 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
12 retary \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026
13 through 2028 to carry out this section.

14 (g) DURATION; ANNUAL REVIEW.—

15 (1) DURATION.—The authority of the Secretary
16 to carry out the grant program under this section
17 shall terminate on the date that is three years after
18 the date of the enactment of this Act, except that
19 the Secretary may continue to use amounts made
20 available to carry out this section after such date
21 solely for the purpose of administering activities and
22 obligations incurred before such termination date.

23 (2) ANNUAL REVIEW.—During such three-year
24 period, the Secretary shall, on an annual basis, re-
25 view the effectiveness of the grant program to deter-

1 mine the potential of such grant program for con-
2 tinuation or expansion.

3 **SEC. 3. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS GRANT PRO-**
4 **GRAM FOR INDEPENDENT THIRD-PARTY RE-**
5 **SEARCH STUDIES AND TREATMENT WITH RE-**
6 **SPECT TO SUPPLEMENTAL**
7 **NEUROREHABILITATION TREATMENTS FOR**
8 **MTBI.**

9 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Veterans
10 Affairs shall establish and carry out a research grant pro-
11 gram to award grants to eligible entities described in sub-
12 section (b) to be used to carry out studies and applied
13 programs on approaches and methodologies for the treat-
14 ment of mTBI in veterans.

15 (b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES DESCRIBED.—An eligible
16 entity described in this subsection is any of the following:

17 (1) A nonprofit organization that has dem-
18 onstrated the capability to conduct clinical trials and
19 to evaluate traumatic brain injury treatments
20 through patient care delivery.

21 (2) An academic institution that conducts sig-
22 nificant research on traumatic brain injury and has
23 demonstrated the capability to conduct clinical trials
24 relating to neurorehabilitation treatments

1 (3) A partnership or consortium of two or more
2 entities described in paragraphs (1) and (2).

3 (c) APPLICATIONS.—An eligible entity desiring a
4 grant under this section shall submit to the Secretary an
5 application in such form, at such time, and containing
6 such information and assurances as the Secretary deter-
7 mines appropriate, including a summary of—

8 (1) the research and treatment activities pro-
9 posed to be carried out using grant funds;

10 (2) the methodology to be used for such activi-
11 ties;

12 (3) the expected outcomes of such activities;

13 (4) how the eligible entity will coordinate, as
14 practicable, with Veterans Health Administration fa-
15 cilities for referral and continuity of care for vet-
16 erans who participate in activities carried out using
17 grant funds, and for dissemination of aggregate
18 findings;

19 (5) the budget of the entity for the use of the
20 grant, including a narrative justification and an
21 identification of the estimated amount of grant
22 funds to be used for administrative or overhead
23 costs; and

1 (6) assurances of compliance with applicable
2 Federal laws and regulations relating to human sub-
3 jects protections and patient safety.

4 (d) ADMINISTRATION.—

5 (1) GRANT CATEGORIES.—In carrying out the
6 grant program under this section, each fiscal year
7 the Secretary shall—

8 (A) subject to the requirement under para-
9 graph (2), award four grants for exploratory or
10 pilot research and treatment projects, each of
11 which shall be in an amount of not more than
12 \$625,000; and

13 (B) award five grants for collaborative or
14 multidisciplinary research and treatment initia-
15 tives, each of which shall be in an amount of
16 not more than \$1,500,000.

17 (2) PRIORITY.—Of the grants awarded under
18 paragraph (1)(A), the Secretary shall award not
19 fewer than three to nonprofit organizations.

20 (3) ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY.—The Sec-
21 retary may suspend, modify, or terminate a grant
22 awarded under this section, if the Secretary deter-
23 mines that the recipient of such grant has failed to
24 comply with the applicable terms and conditions of
25 the grant.

1 (e) AGREEMENT WITH INDEPENDENT ORGANIZA-
2 TION.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall seek to
4 enter into an agreement with an independent organi-
5 zation that is not a component of the Department
6 and that has demonstrated expertise in randomized
7 controlled trials, neurorehabilitation outcomes eval-
8 uation, and research integrity, under which the orga-
9 nization agrees to—

10 (A) administer the research grant program
11 under this section;

12 (B) carry out studies and implement ef-
13 forts that include—

14 (i) analyzing data from mTBI treat-
15 ment methodologies developed pursuant to
16 the research grant program to assess the
17 effect, among veterans, of such methodolo-
18 gies on enhanced brain health outcomes,
19 mental health, and long-term recovery, in-
20 cluding, to the extent outcomes are col-
21 lected under the applicable clinical pro-
22 tocol, durability of outcomes at approxi-
23 mately six months following completion of
24 treatment;

1 (ii) identifying data-driven best prac-
2 tices and providing recommendations for
3 further research or clinical application, in-
4 cluding recommendations for dissemination
5 to Veterans Health Administration clini-
6 cians and facilities (as appropriate); and

7 (iii) randomized, controlled clinical
8 trials to—

9 (I) validate and deliver treat-
10 ments;

11 (II) establish a standard of care;
12 and

13 (III) improve access to such
14 treatments for veterans;

15 (C) submit to the Secretary not less fre-
16 quently than annually a report describing activi-
17 ties carried out under this section, including
18 outcome data and methodology; and

19 (D) make available to the Secretary all
20 data and findings from the grants made under
21 this section, consistent with applicable Federal
22 law, regulation, and Department policies relat-
23 ing to patient protections, data security, and
24 privacy.

1 (2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this
2 section shall be construed to authorize the Secretary,
3 or an independent organization that enters into an
4 agreement with the Secretary under paragraph (1),
5 to require prior approval of, or changes to, any clin-
6 ical protocol, study design, outcome measures, or fol-
7 low-up schedule established by an eligible entity that
8 receives a grant under this section, except as nec-
9 essary to ensure compliance with applicable Federal
10 laws and regulations relating to human subjects pro-
11 tections and patient safety.

12 (3) REPORT.—An agreement under paragraph
13 (1) shall include a requirement that the independent
14 organization submits to Congress and the Secretary
15 a comprehensive report that includes—

16 (A) the findings of the studies required
17 under such agreement;

18 (B) recommendations with respect to the
19 expansion of successful TBI treatment meth-
20 odologies and standard of care recommenda-
21 tions, if any, developed pursuant to the research
22 grant program; and

23 (C) to the extent available from the reports
24 and study materials of grant recipients, a sum-
25 mary of—

1 (i) the durability of outcomes at ap-
2 proximately six months following comple-
3 tion of treatment, if collected under the ap-
4 plicable clinical protocol;

5 (ii) adverse events and serious adverse
6 events, including self-harm or suicide-re-
7 lated events, if collected under the applica-
8 ble clinical protocol or in the ordinary
9 course of care; and

10 (iii) aggregate expenditures of grant
11 funds, including administrative or overhead
12 costs.

13 (4) SURVEYS.—The Secretary may conduct sur-
14 veys of any independent organization that enters
15 into an agreement with the Secretary under para-
16 graph (1) in order to assess the effectiveness of such
17 organization in administering the research grant
18 program under this section.

19 (f) AVAILABLE AMOUNTS; AUTHORIZATION OF AP-
20 PROPRIATIONS.—

21 (1) AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—The Secretary may
22 use amounts available to the Secretary for the oper-
23 ating budget of the National Center for
24 Posttraumatic Stress Disorder to carry out the re-
25 search grant program under this section, if the use

1 of such amounts supplements, and does not sup-
2 plant, amounts otherwise available for Department
3 programs and services.

4 (2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

5 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
6 retary \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026
7 through 2028 to carry out this section.

8 (g) TERMINATION DATE.—The authority of the Sec-
9 retary to carry out the research grant program under this
10 section shall terminate on the date that is three years after
11 the date of the enactment of this Act.

12 **SEC. 4. REPORTS TO CONGRESS.**

13 Not later than two years after the date on which the
14 Secretary commences the research grant program under
15 tsection 2, and on an annual basis thereafter until the ter-
16 mination date specified in subsection (h) of such section,
17 the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the
18 grant programs under sections 2 and 3. Each such report
19 shall include—

20 (1) the findings of the studies under section
21 2(f)(2);

22 (2) a description of any agreement entered into
23 by the Secretary under section 3(e)(1);

24 (3) recommendations of the Secretary with re-
25 spect to policy and programmatic improvements to

1 services of the Department to treat mTBI among
2 veterans;

3 (4) any findings derived from surveys conducted
4 under section 3(e)(4), including any recommenda-
5 tions of the Secretary for improvements to the struc-
6 ture, oversight, administration, or performance of
7 the independent organization that enters into an
8 agreement with the Secretary under section 3(e)(1);
9 and

10 (5) such other matters as the Secretary deter-
11 mines appropriate.

12 **SEC. 5. MODIFICATION OF CERTAIN HOUSING LOAN FEES.**

13 The loan fee table in section 3729(b)(2) of title 38,
14 18 United States Code, is amended by striking “June 9,
15 2034” each place it appears and inserting “July 14,
16 2034”.

17 **SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.**

18 In this Act:

19 (1) The terms “chronic mild traumatic brain in-
20 jury” and “mTBI” mean a mild traumatic brain in-
21 jury with symptoms that persist for not fewer than
22 six months after the inciting injury, as determined
23 using validated clinical criteria.

24 (2) The term “nonprofit organization”—

1 (A) means an organization described in
2 section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code
3 of 1986 and exempt from taxation under sec-
4 tion 501(a) of such Code; and

5 (B) includes such an organization that is a
6 hospital, nonprofit health system, academic
7 medical center, or clinic that delivers
8 neurorehabilitation care or conducts clinical re-
9 search relating to mTBI.

10 (3) The term “veteran” has the meaning given
11 such term in section 101 of title 38, United States
12 Code.

