H. R. ______

To direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a working group to formulate recommendations for standardizing the measurements of loneliness and isolation, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Flood introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on __________________

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a working group to formulate recommendations for standardizing the measurements of loneliness and isolation, and for other purposes.

1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

2 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

3 This Act may be cited as the “Improving Measurements for Loneliness and Isolation Act of 2023”.

(Original Signature of Member)
SEC. 2. WORKING GROUP ON UNIFYING LONELINESS RESEARCH.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term “isolation” means the objective lack of social relationships or limited social contact with others.

(2) The term “loneliness” means a subjective feeling of being isolated.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the “Secretary”) shall establish a national working group, to be known as the Working Group on Unifying Loneliness Research (in this section referred to as the “Working Group”), to formulate recommendations for standardizing the measurements of loneliness and isolation.

(c) GOALS.—The goals of the recommendations under subsection (b) shall be the following:

(1) Collaboration, cooperation, and consultation among Federal departments and agencies with respect to developing standardized measurements of loneliness and isolation for the purposes of—

(A) having standardized measurements for use in public and private research, including surveys across varying populations, with the ability to capture the level of granularity needed to guide strategic decisionmaking, planning,
and evaluation of strategies to combat loneliness and isolation; and

(B) providing reliable, consistent measurement tools for use across fields and industries in health care.

(2) Collaboration, cooperation, and consultation among Federal departments and agencies with respect to developing standardized definitions of loneliness, isolation, and relevant terms associated with loneliness and isolation for the purposes of education, awareness, and understanding of the terms for the general public.

(3) Assessment of the alignment of previous methods of measuring loneliness and isolation in the public and private sectors.

(d) COMPOSITION.—The Working Group shall be composed of—

(1) senior-level representatives of—

(A) the Department of Health and Human Services;

(B) the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services;

(C) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;
(D) the Administration for Community Living;

(E) the National Institutes of Health;

(F) the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration;

(G) the Health Resources and Services Administration;

(H) the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; and

(I) other agencies, groups, subject matter experts, or researchers the Secretary deems beneficial to be represented in the Working Group consistent with the goals specified in subsection (c);

(2) 1 representative of each of the three States with the highest numbers of practitioners needed to remove the designations of all mental health care health professional shortage areas in the respective State (as reflected in the report of the Health Resources and Services Administration titled “Designated Health Professional Shortage Areas Statistics” (June 30, 2023), with each such representative designated by the Governor of the respective State; and
(3) 1 representative of the each of the three States with the lowest numbers of practitioners needed to remove such designations, with each such representative designated by the Governor of the respective State.

(e) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Working Group shall—

(A) submit to the committees listed in paragraph (3) a report describing the work and recommendations of the Working Group; and

(B) make such report publicly available on the internet.

(2) MEETINGS.—The Working Group shall meet not less than 3 times in the course of developing its report.

(3) COMMITTEES.—The committees referred to in paragraph (1)(A) are the following:

(A) The Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives.

(B) The Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives.

(C) The Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives.
(D) The Committee on Finance of the Senate.


(f) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “State” means the 50 States.

(g) SUNSET.—This section shall cease to be effective at the end of calendar year 2026.