

Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act

Introduced by Senators Tim Kaine, Todd Young, Jack Reed, and Bill Cassidy, M.D.

Health care professionals routinely experience high levels of stress and burnout. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, [45 to 55 percent](#) of health care professionals suffered from burnout. Physicians have the [highest suicide rate](#) of any profession in the U.S., with a rate of between 28 to 40 suicides per 100,000 doctors in 2018. That is [nearly double the rate](#) of the general population, with 12.3 suicides per 100,000 people.

The COVID-19 pandemic has only added to the stress health care professionals face every day. While helping their patients fight for their lives, many are coping with the trauma of losing patients and colleagues, social isolation, and fear for their own health and safety. We have seen highly accomplished and remarkable health care professionals like [Dr. Lorna Breen](#), who was serving on the frontlines of this crisis supervising an emergency department, die by suicide. The pandemic is taking an enormous toll on the heroic doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals who care for patients at their most vulnerable, and the stigma surrounding treatment for mental health conditions and substance use disorders can discourage health care professionals from seeking help.

The *Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act* aims to reduce and prevent suicide, burnout, and mental and behavioral health conditions among health care professionals. The legislation shores up training on suicide prevention, burnout, and mental and behavioral health conditions in health professional training programs, increases awareness and education on suicide and mental health concerns among health care professionals, and helps promote mental and behavioral health among those working on the frontlines of the pandemic.

Specifically, the *Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act*:

- Establishes grants for training health professions students, residents, or health care professionals in evidence-informed strategies to reduce and prevent suicide, burnout, mental health conditions and substance use disorders, and improve health care professionals' well-being and job satisfaction.
- Seeks to identify and disseminate evidence-informed best practices for reducing and preventing suicide and burnout among health care professionals, training health care professionals in appropriate strategies, and promoting their mental and behavioral health and job satisfaction.
- Establishes a national evidence-based education and awareness campaign targeting health care professionals to encourage them to seek support and treatment for mental and behavioral health concerns.
- Establishes grants for employee education, peer-support programming, and mental and behavioral health treatment; health care providers in current or former COVID-19 hotspots will be prioritized.
- Establishes a comprehensive study, with recommendations, on health care professional mental and behavioral health and burnout, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on such professionals' health.

For questions or more information, please reach out to Katie Wright (Katie_Wright@kaine.senate.gov), Jaymi Light (Jaymi_Light@young.senate.gov), Jill Boland (Jill_Boland@reed.senate.gov), or Mary Moody (Mary_Moody@cassidy.senate.gov).