

116TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 8542

To prohibit the use of Federal funds by the Department of Health and Human Services, before November 3, 2020, on a public service announcement and advertising campaign intended to positively influence public perception, misrepresent facts, or encourage risky behavior, regarding the COVID–19 pandemic.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 6, 2020

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (for himself, Ms. DELAURO, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. CLYBURN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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## A BILL

To prohibit the use of Federal funds by the Department of Health and Human Services, before November 3, 2020, on a public service announcement and advertising campaign intended to positively influence public perception, misrepresent facts, or encourage risky behavior, regarding the COVID–19 pandemic.

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 “Defeat Pandemic  
5 Propaganda Act of 2020”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds that—

3 (1) over 200,000 Americans have died of  
4 COVID–19;

5 (2) there is no vaccine for COVID–19 approved  
6 by the Food and Drug Administration;

7 (3) on August 31, 2020, the Department of  
8 Health and Human Services signed an approxi-  
9 mately \$250,000,000 contract for a public service  
10 announcement and advertising campaign to, in part,  
11 “defeat despair and inspire hope, sharing best prac-  
12 tices for businesses to operate in the new normal  
13 and instill confidence to return to work and restart  
14 the economy” amidst the COVID–19 pandemic; and

15 (4) a presidential election is to be held on No-  
16 vember 3, 2020, approximately 2 months from the  
17 date the contract was signed.

18 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

19 It is the sense of the Congress that—

20 (1) a public service announcement and adver-  
21 tising campaign to promote a return to previous ac-  
22 tivities amidst the COVID–19 pandemic could en-  
23 courage Americans to defy recommendations by Fed-  
24 eral, State, and local public health authorities; and

25 (2) a public service announcement and adver-  
26 tising campaign promoting a positive outlook on a

1 pandemic that has resulted in the deaths of over  
2 200,000 Americans, to air in the weeks preceding a  
3 presidential election, would be an unethical use of  
4 Federal funds.

5 **SEC. 4. NO FEDERAL FUNDS FOR PUBLIC SERVICE AN-**  
6 **NOUNCEMENT AND ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN.**

7 No Federal funds may be obligated or expended by  
8 the Department of Health and Human Services, before  
9 November 3, 2020, on a public service announcement and  
10 advertising campaign intended—

11 (1) to positively influence public perception re-  
12 garding the COVID–19 pandemic;

13 (2) to misrepresent facts regarding the  
14 COVID–19 pandemic; or

15 (3) to encourage engagement in activities that  
16 carry an undue risk of contracting COVID–19.

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