

SEC. 9. IMPROVING THE SHARING OF DATA BETWEEN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND STATE MEDICAID PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the “Secretary”) shall establish a plan to encourage and facilitate the participation of States in the Medicare-Medicaid Data Match Program (commonly referred to as the “Medi-Medi Program”) under section 1893(g) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ddd(g)).

(b) PROGRAM REVISIONS TO IMPROVE MEDICAID DATA MATCH PROGRAM PARTICIPATION BY STATES.—Section 1893(g)(1)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ddd(g)(1)(A)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting “or otherwise” after “eligible entities”;

(2) in clause (i)—

(A) by inserting “to review claims data” after “algorithms”; and

(B) by striking “service, time, or patient” and inserting “provider, service, time, or patient”;

(3) in clause (ii)—

(A) by inserting “to investigate and recover amounts with respect to suspect claims” after “appropriate actions”; and

(B) by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(4) in clause (iii), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(5) by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(iv) furthering the Secretary’s design, development, installation, or enhancement of an automated data system architecture—

“(I) to collect, integrate, and assess data for purposes of program integrity, program oversight, and administration, including the Medi-Medi Program; and

“(II) that improves the coordination of requests for data from States.”.

(c) PROVIDING STATES WITH DATA ON IMPROPER PAYMENTS MADE FOR ITEMS OR SERVICES PROVIDED TO DUAL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop and implement a plan that allows each State agency responsible for administering a State plan for medical assistance under title XIX of the Social Security Act access to relevant data on improper or fraudulent payments made under the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.) for health care items or services provided to dual eligible individuals.

(2) DUAL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL DEFINED.—In this section, the term “dual eligible individual” means an individual who is entitled to, or enrolled for, benefits under part A of title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395c et seq.), or enrolled for benefits under part B of title XVIII of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395j et seq.), and is eligible for medical assistance under a State plan under title XIX of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) or under a waiver of such plan.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MICROBEAD-FREE WATERS ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 1321, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1321) to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to prohibit the manufacture and introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce of rinse-off cosmetics containing intentionally-added plastic microbeads.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, across the country, many State and local governments, including counties in New York, have moved to ban products that contain plastic microbeads.

Because of their leadership and because of the advocacy from scientists and others who have shown us the damage that microbeads can do, Congress came together to unanimously ban plastic microbeads from rinse-off cosmetic products.

This is a great bill, and it shows that we can pass smart environmental legislation here in Washington.

Plastic microbeads are the tiny pieces of plastic that we often see in toothpaste, hand lotion, or various other personal care products.

When we brush our teeth and wash our face, most of us don’t consider these acts to be harmful in any way.

But plastic microbeads are smaller than 5 millimeters in size, which means they are too small to be captured by the filtration systems in our water treatment centers.

So these plastic microbeads end up leaching into our lakes, our rivers, our streams, our bays, and even our drinking water supplies.

It might be surprising that a piece of plastic so small can cause such outsized damage.

But we have heard from a wide range of constituents and business groups that all recognize the damage, and all recommended that Congress act to remove plastic microbeads from the marketplace.

We have heard it from the fishing industry, from the tourism industry, from the culinary industry. Even the cosmetics industry is supportive of this ban. Many cosmetics companies have already voluntarily stopped using microbeads themselves.

When tiny plastic microbeads get into the water, they attract pollutants that are already in the water, and they concentrate these pollutants to potentially dangerous levels.

Fish don’t know what microbeads are, so they eat them and end up ingesting all of the pollutants stuck on the microbeads.

This disrupts the food chain, it contaminates huge portions of the wildlife population, and it hurts our commercial and recreational fishing industries, because they can’t sell—and we can’t eat—fish that are filled with toxic plastic.

Many of our counties, cities, and States took the lead on this issue, and they should be commended for that.

But local action isn’t enough to solve a nationwide problem like this—not when so many communities in different States are connected by the same bodies of water—because no one is immune when our waterways are contaminated.

Congress had a responsibility to act—to stop the flow of microbeads into our waterways.

And today we are doing our job in passing this Federal ban on these products.

The Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015 will prohibit the manufacture of rinse-off cosmetic products containing plastic microbeads starting in 2017 and will ensure that they are off retail shelves by 2018.

And while this bill preempts States from regulating rinse-off products containing plastic microbeads differently from the Federal ban, individual States will still have the ability to restrict microbeads in other types of products.

Additionally, the preemption language in this bill restricts their manufacture and distribution in interstate commerce and should not prevent States or local governments from regulating how microbeads are disposed of under laws such as the Clean Water Act.

States can also co-enforce the Federal ban by enacting identical laws.

This is a great bipartisan bill. And it is a smart step forward, as we look for new ways to protect our environment.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 1321) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

ELECTRIFY AFRICA ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 291, S. 2152.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2152) to establish a comprehensive United States Government policy to encourage the efforts of countries in sub-Saharan Africa to develop an appropriate mix of power solutions, including renewable energy, for more broadly distributed electricity access in order to support poverty reduction, promote development outcomes, and drive economic growth, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with amendments.

(Omit the parts in boldface brackets and insert the parts printed in italic.)

S. 2152

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