



ADAM SMITH

WASHINGTON'S 9TH DISTRICT

Grant Assistance and Technical Education Act Rep. Adam Smith (WA-09)

Background: The COVID-19 pandemic revealed deep inequities in our public health system. With inadequate resources to carry out messaging and outreach initiatives on their own, state and local public health entities turned to community-based organizations (CBOs) with established reputations in their communities and deep connections to marginalized populations. These vital service providers helped to close health equity gaps that arose during consequential periods in the pandemic from the roll out of testing to the education on and distribution of COVID-19 vaccinations.

However, where so many CBOs excel at providing services and making lasting connections with their local communities, many lack the capacity to apply and obtain funding, including from the federal government. At a time when the federal government should be investing in public health initiatives that have proven to work, it is important to create the infrastructure and assistance to help CBOs build their own capacity and minimize unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles to obtaining funding.

The grant application process and the requirements upon receiving a grant are notoriously difficult for CBOs with little to no experience in applying for this funding.

The **Grant Assistance and Technical Education (GATE) Act** would:

- Create the position of Outreach Coordinator in the Office of Minority Health of the Department of Health and Human Services to focus on assisting community-based organizations navigating the federal grantmaking process; and
- Provide grants to state and local public health entities for the specific purpose of directing those funds to build capacity in local community-based organizations focused on addressing health inequities. Funneling funding through state and local public health entities will help reduce the burden on community-based organizations of applying for funding directly to the federal government.

Community based organizations have done the work to provide services and connect marginalized communities to local public health when resources were limited. Now is the time to invest in these invaluable partners. The work that they do can be highly efficient and tailored to the populations they serve. Working in conjunction with their state and local public health partners, these organizations can grow and flourish in service of all our communities.

Please reach out to Victoria Bautista at Victoria.Bautista@mail.house.gov for more information.