

HB 1634-FN-A - AS INTRODUCED

2022 SESSION

22-2090

05/10

HOUSE BILL                    ***1634-FN-A***

AN ACT                    relative to state grants for researching the effects on the human body of COVID-19 vaccines.

SPONSORS:            Rep. Greeson, Graf. 16

COMMITTEE:        Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs

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ANALYSIS

This bill establishes a COVID-19 research grant program in the department of health and human services and makes an appropriation for this purpose.

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Explanation:        Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.  
                         Matter removed from current law appears ~~in brackets and struckthrough.~~  
                         Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

*In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Two*

AN ACT                      relative to state grants for researching the effects on the human body of COVID-19 vaccines.

*Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:*

1            1 Findings and Statement of Purpose. As much as is known about the virus commonly known  
2 as COVID-19, much more remains unknown. Further, advancements in technology that produced  
3 the new mRNA vaccine occurred so rapidly that full understanding of the effects of these vaccines on  
4 human bodies is not known and may not be fully known for many years to come. Being such,  
5 knowledge comes from scientific study, and the earlier that study begins, the better everyone's  
6 understanding is. Therefore, the state shall establish a grant program for the purposes of  
7 researching the effects, if any, on the human body by vaccines administered to prevent the virus  
8 commonly known as COVID-19.

9            2 New Subdivision; Communicable Disease; COVID-19 Research Grant Program. Amend RSA  
10 141-C by inserting after section 28 the following new subdivision:

11                                      COVID-19 Research Grant Program

12            141-C:29 COVID-19 Research Grant Program. The department of health and human services  
13 shall establish and administer a research grant program, the purpose of which shall be to research  
14 the effects on the human body of vaccines intended to provide acquired immunity against severe  
15 acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), the virus that causes coronavirus disease  
16 2019 (COVID-19).

17            I. In phase I of the program, grant recipients shall investigate the presence and severity of  
18 spike proteins in organs, including reproductive organs, and the locations of highest concentrations  
19 in human bodies at time of death. Comparisons shall be made to determine if there are any  
20 differences between those who were vaccinated against COVID-19 and those unvaccinated regarding  
21 the presence and severity of spike proteins and concentrations of spike proteins plus any other  
22 notable differences.

23            (a) The maximum grant amount shall be \$250,000 per applicant for direct costs with a  
24 cap on indirect costs set at 10 percent of direct costs.

25            (b) Phase I grant recipients shall complete their research within one year of receipt of  
26 grant funds and shall make their findings available to the public at no charge. Copies of findings  
27 shall be submitted to the governor's office and both houses of the legislature.

28            II. In phase II of the program, grant recipients shall investigate whether those who had  
29 been vaccinated show any anomalies from what would otherwise be expected from the cause of death

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1 or whether vaccinated bodies demonstrate any deviations from those who died of the same cause  
2 prior to January 2020.

3 (a) The maximum grant amount shall be \$250,000 per applicant for direct costs with a  
4 cap on indirect costs set at 10 percent of direct costs.

5 (b) Phase II grant recipients shall complete their research within one year of receipt of  
6 grant funds and shall make their findings public at no charge. Copies of findings shall be submitted  
7 to the governor's office and both houses of the legislature.

8 III. Based on an evaluation of the results from phase I, the department of health and human  
9 services shall recommend to the house committee on health, human services and elderly affairs and  
10 the senate committee on health and human services whether or not a phase II of the grant program  
11 is necessary. If phase II is recommended, upon concurrence of both committees, phase II shall be  
12 conducted. If phase II is not recommended, upon concurrence of both committees, phase II will not  
13 be conducted and any funds appropriated to the department for phase II of the program shall lapse  
14 to the general fund. If either committee disagrees with the recommendation, the recommendation  
15 shall be presented to both full chambers for vote and a majority of both chambers shall determine  
16 whether or not phase II is conducted.

17 IV. The department shall adopt rules under RSA 541-A relative to administration of the  
18 research grant program, including the application procedure, eligibility criteria, grant disbursement,  
19 and reporting requirements.

20 3 Appropriation. The sum of \$2,000,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, is  
21 appropriated to the department of health and human services for the purpose of administering and  
22 funding phase I of the COVID-19 research grant program in RSA 141-C:29. The sum of \$2,000,000  
23 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, is appropriated to the department of health and human  
24 services for the purpose of administering and funding phase II of the COVID-19 research grant  
25 program established in RSA 141-C:29. The source of funds for the appropriation shall be funds  
26 allocated to the state of New Hampshire pursuant to the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Public  
27 Law 117-2, and the appropriation shall be contingent upon determination that the research grant  
28 program is a federally permitted use of such funds.

29 4 Effective Date. This act shall take effect June 30, 2022.

**HB 1634-FN-A- FISCAL NOTE  
AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT relative to state grants for researching the effects on the human body of COVID-19 vaccines.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**    ☒ State                    ☐ County                    ☐ Local                    ☐ None

STATE:	Estimated Increase / (Decrease)			
	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
<b>Appropriation</b>	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$0	\$0
<b>Revenue</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Expenditures</b>	\$0	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$0
<b>Funding Source:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> General <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Highway <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.			

**METHODOLOGY:**

This bill establishes a COVID-19 vaccine research grant program within the Department of Health and Human Services. In each of the program's two phases, grant recipients would receive up to \$250,000 apiece and be required to report on their findings within one year. The Department would administer the program, and is provided with rule making authority to establish procedures for applications, eligibility, grant disbursement, and reporting requirements. Following phase I of the program, the Department would be responsible for recommending to the House Committee on Health, Human Services, and Elderly Affairs whether the program should proceed with phase II. In the event phase II is not recommended, the bill states that the unspent phase II appropriation shall lapse to the general fund. As noted below, however, the source of the appropriation is federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, in which case unused money would not lapse to the general fund. The Department assumes its responsibilities for administering the program will include the following:

- 1) Drafting administrative rules that outline procedures related to the program;
- 2) Establishing an application process to award funding;
- 3) Soliciting applications;
- 4) Reviewing applications and awarding funding;
- 5) Entering into contracts with recipients;
- 6) Monitoring contract performance measures and vendor activities; and
- 7) Paying invoices.

The bill contains ARPA appropriations of \$2 million in each of FY22 and FY23 for the purpose of funding operations and awarding grants. The Department anticipates utilizing the entire appropriation. The Department estimates administrative costs at approximately \$269,000 per year, broken out as follows:

- Personnel – Program Specialist IV – Salary: \$52,156
- Personnel – Program Specialist IV – Benefits: \$31,097
- Current Expenses: \$1,200
- Computer Equipment and Software: \$2,000
- Allocated costs (rent, telecommunications, IT support, etc): \$182,000

The Department anticipates spending the remaining \$1,731,000 per year on grant awards. It should be noted that the bill's effective date is June 30, 2022, allowing the FY22 appropriation to take effect. Since the funding source is federal ARPA money rather than state general funds, this fiscal note assumes that the funds will not lapse but will be available for expenditure in FY23 and FY24.

**AGENCIES CONTACTED:**

Department of Health and Human Services