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NEWS

House bill intended to help the Bureau of Prisons prevent heat and cold stress issues



Photo: John Coletti/gettyimages

BY S+H STAFF
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Washington — A pair of House Democrats have introduced a bill aimed at protecting Bureau of Prisons staff and inmates from heat and cold stress.

“Extreme temperatures inside federal prisons can pose life-threatening risks,” a press release from the office of Rep. Alma Adams (D-NC) says. “Incarcerated individuals have limited ability to insulate themselves and staff face occupational hazards that are routinely unregulated. Many BOP facilities lack basic climate control, leaving people in cells where temperatures can reach deadly levels during record heat waves and winter freezes.”

The [Extreme Temperatures Injustice in Prisons Act](#), introduced by Adams and Rep. Lucy McBath (D-GA), would:

- Authorize funding for climate control system installation and upgrades in all federal prisons within five years, with temperature monitors in every cell and workspace.
- Set clear health and safety standards for extreme heat and cold across work, recreational activities and housing.
- Direct the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to research how extreme temperatures harm incarcerated individuals and staff as well as develop extra protections for older, pregnant and immunocompromised individuals.
- Provide free cooling and warming supplies – including cold water, fans, warm clothing and blankets – when temperatures reach “dangerous levels.”
- Implement accountability measures regarding staff training for recognizing and responding to heat and cold emergencies.
- Require regular public reports on heating, ventilation and air condition progress; temperature-related illnesses and deaths; and annual safety inspections.

“The conditions in our federal prisons are unacceptable,” Adams said in the release. “Across all 122 BOP facilities, there are more than 138,000 incarcerated people and roughly 34,000 BOP employees who live and work in these conditions every day.

“No one should be forced to endure dangerous, life-threatening temperatures because of aging infrastructure.”

[Hazards](#) [Heat](#) [Regulations/Legislation](#) [Weather](#)

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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
2ND SESSION

H. R. _____

To improve response to, and preparation for, extreme temperatures, in
Federal correctional facilities

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. ADAMS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee
on _____

A BILL

To improve response to, and preparation for, extreme
temperatures, in Federal correctional facilities

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 “Extreme Temperatures
5 Injustice in Prisons Act of 2026”.

6 **SEC. 2. IN GENERAL.**

7 Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment
8 of this Act, the Director of the Bureau of Prisons (herein-
9 after in this Act referred to as the “Director”) shall install

1 or update, as appropriate, heating, ventilation, and air
2 conditioning systems in each correctional facility operated
3 by the Director, including by installing temperature read-
4 ing devices in each space with a human occupant in such
5 a facility, including each prison cell therein, and those
6 commonly used by incarcerated individuals and staff.

7 **SEC. 3. INTERIM MONITORING.**

8 The Director shall regularly test and monitor the
9 temperature in each space referred to in section 2 during
10 the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act
11 and ending on the date that in the interim of the installa-
12 tion of temperature reading devices across the facilities.

13 **SEC. 4. TEMPERATURE STANDARDS FOR INCARCERATED**
14 **INDIVIDUALS.**

15 The Director shall develop and enforce mandatory
16 written standards for applicable to all institutions admin-
17 istered by the Director regarding heat stress and cold
18 stress, as it pertains to specific institution work oper-
19 ations, recreational activities, and all conditions of con-
20 finement related to the prevention and management of
21 heat-related and cold-related illnesses.

22 **SEC. 5. STUDY AND DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES TO**
23 **PROTECT VULNERABLE POPULATIONS.**

24 (a) STUDY.—The Director of the Centers for Disease
25 Control and Prevention shall—

1 (1) study the effect of extreme temperature
2 conditions in correctional facilities operated by the
3 Director of the Bureau of Prisons, including the ef-
4 fect on the health and safety of incarcerated individ-
5 uals and consideration of physical regional vari-
6 ations; and

7 (2) shall develop recommendations for the Bu-
8 reau of Prisons regarding safer practices.

9 (b) DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES.—In accordance
10 with the Heat and Medication Guidance for Clinicians
11 issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,
12 the Director, in consultation with the Assistant Director
13 for the Health Services Division of the Bureau of Prisons
14 and the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and
15 Prevention, and not later than 1 year after the date of
16 enactment of this Act, shall finalize rules to establish and
17 enforce mandatory standards to protect the medically vul-
18 nerable populations in facilities operated by the Director
19 of the Bureau of Prisons.

20 **SEC. 6. TEMPERATURE STANDARDS FOR BUREAU OF PRIS-**
21 **ONS STAFF.**

22 Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment
23 of this Act, the Director shall implement the use of the
24 wet-bulb globe temperature-based NIOSH Recommended
25 Exposure Limits and Recommended Alert Limits to ac-

1 count for humidity when protecting staff from the hazards
2 posed by occupational heat exposure.

3 **SEC. 7. REQUIRED AVAILABILITY OF MITIGATION OPTIONS.**

4 (a) HEAT AND SUMMER.—The Director shall ensure
5 that heat mitigation options, including cold-water bottles,
6 cooling fans, and cooling towels, are made available to in-
7 mates in all facilities operated by the Director, outside of
8 the commissary, at no cost, upon request, and in sufficient
9 supply when internal temperatures at correctional facili-
10 ties operated by the Director reach levels determined to
11 be dangerously high by the Director.

12 (b) COLD AND WINTER.—The Director shall ensure
13 that cold mitigation options, including winter clothing,
14 blankets, and other necessary thermal items are made
15 available to inmates in all facilities operated by the Direc-
16 tor, outside of prison commissary, at no cost, upon re-
17 quest, and in sufficient supply when internal temperatures
18 at correctional facilities operated by the Director reach
19 levels determined to be dangerously low by the Director.

20 **SEC. 8. ELECTRONIC RECORD KEEPING FOR SEASONAL**
21 **TRAINING REQUIREMENTS.**

22 The Director shall establish an electronic record
23 keeping system for purposes of ensuring completion of sea-
24 sonal training requirements of personnel of the Bureau of

1 Prisons on winter mitigation practices and identifying
2 heat-related illness symptoms.

3 **SEC. 9. REPORT.**

4 (a) ON COSTS.—Not later than 2 years after the date
5 of enactment of this Act, and every 2 years thereafter,
6 the Director shall submit a report to Congress that sets
7 forth the estimated cost of maintenance of the heating,
8 ventilation, and air conditioning system of each correc-
9 tional facility operated by the Director and a progress up-
10 date on the installation or updating of the heating, ventila-
11 tion, and air conditioning system of each correctional facil-
12 ity operated by the Director.

13 (b) ON ILLNESSES.—Not later than 1 year after the
14 date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter,
15 the Director shall submit a report to Congress that sets
16 forth information about temperature-related illnesses, in-
17 juries, and fatalities among vulnerable populations in fa-
18 cilities that the Director operates, including elderly people,
19 pregnant people, and those with compromised immune or
20 compromised thermoregulatory systems (including hyper-
21 thyroidism, hyperhidrosis).

22 **SEC. 10. ANNUAL OVERSIGHT.**

23 The Inspector General of the Department of Justice
24 shall, each year, conduct an oversight inspection of—

1 (1) each temperature reading device and each
2 heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems in
3 each correctional facility operated by the Director,
4 (2) the number of heat or cold-related illnesses,
5 injuries, and fatalities in each such facility, and
6 (3) the implementation of mitigating options in
7 each such facility,
8 and publish a report thereon.

9 **SEC. 11. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

10 There are authorized to be appropriated such sums
11 as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2026 through
12 2031 to the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to install
13 and update Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning
14 systems in all facilities operated by the Director.