

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2477

To provide support for urban forests, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 13, 2021

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS (for herself, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. YOUNG, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Labor, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To provide support for urban forests, and for other purposes.

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 “Urban Forests Act
5 of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY ASSISTANCE.**

7 (a) TREE CITY USA GRANT PROGRAM.—Section 9
8 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16
9 U.S.C. 2105) is amended—

1 (1) by redesignating subsections (h) and (i) as
2 subsections (j) and (k), respectively; and

3 (2) by inserting after subsection (g) the fol-
4 lowing;

5 “(h) TREE CITY USA GRANT PROGRAM.—

6 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall estab-
7 lish a grant program to be known as the ‘Tree City
8 USA Grant Program’ to provide competitive grants
9 to eligible entities to enhance and maintain urban
10 forests.

11 “(2) APPLICATION.—

12 “(A) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to be
13 awarded a grant under paragraph (1), an eligi-
14 ble entity shall submit an application to the
15 Secretary at such time, in such manner, and
16 containing such information as the Secretary
17 may require, including a proposal to enhance
18 and maintain urban forests.

19 “(B) APPLICATION ASSISTANCE.—A non-
20 profit organization that partners with an eligi-
21 ble entity may submit an application under sub-
22 paragraph (A) on behalf of such eligible entity.

23 “(3) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under
24 paragraph (1), the Secretary shall give priority to el-

1 eligible entities that submit proposals under para-
2 graph (2)(A) that—

3 “(A) enhance, maintain, or improve access
4 to urban forests in—

5 “(i) typically underserved areas; or

6 “(ii) areas with low tree or environ-
7 mental equity;

8 “(B) further a statewide assessment or
9 local government initiative to enhance and
10 maintain urban forests;

11 “(C) include a plan to mitigate risks from
12 insects, disease, and non-native invasive species;
13 and

14 “(D) include a plan to monitor and main-
15 tain new and existing trees.

16 “(4) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary
17 may provide technical assistance to local govern-
18 ments to assist such local governments with—

19 “(A) becoming eligible entities; and

20 “(B) proposals under paragraph (2)(A).

21 “(5) MATCHING FUNDS.—An eligible entity
22 that receives a grant under this subsection shall con-
23 tribute an amount of non-Federal funds (in cash or
24 in kind) that is at least equal to the amount of the
25 Federal funds received.

1 “(6) PREMIER TREE CITY.—Not later than 1
 2 year after the date of the enactment of the Urban
 3 Forests Act of 2021, and annually through 2030
 4 thereafter, the Secretary shall designate as a ‘Pre-
 5 mier Tree City’ one eligible entity awarded a grant
 6 under this subsection to recognize the superior ef-
 7 forts of such eligible entity in enhancing and main-
 8 taining urban forests.

9 “(7) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In
 10 addition to the amounts authorized under subsection
 11 (k), there are authorized to be appropriated
 12 \$1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through
 13 2030 to carry out this subsection.

14 “(8) ELIGIBLE ENTITY DEFINED.—In this sub-
 15 section, the term ‘eligible entity’ means a local gov-
 16 ernment that—

17 “(A) serves an urban and community area;
 18 and

19 “(B) a tree planting non-profit organiza-
 20 tion recognizes as having—

21 “(i) a tree board or department;

22 “(ii) a tree care ordinance;

23 “(iii) a community forestry program
 24 with an annual budget of at least \$2 per
 25 capita; and

1 “(iv) an Arbor Day observance and
2 proclamation.”.

3 (b) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR URBAN WOOD
4 UTILIZATION.—Section 9 of the Cooperative Forestry As-
5 sistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105), as amended by
6 subsection (a), is further amended by inserting after sub-
7 section (h) the following:

8 “(i) PILOT PROJECT FOR COOPERATIVE AGREE-
9 MENTS FOR URBAN WOOD UTILIZATION.—

10 “(1) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Sec-
11 retary may enter into cooperative agreements with
12 State and local governments, institutions of higher
13 education, private or non-profit organizations, and
14 other entities that support projects that create wood
15 products from dead and fallen trees in urban and
16 community areas.

17 “(2) PRIORITIZATION.—The Secretary shall
18 prioritize entering into cooperative agreements
19 that—

20 “(A) support local job creation;

21 “(B) are located in typically underserved
22 areas or areas with low tree or environmental
23 equity;

24 “(C) develop new uses for dead and fallen
25 trees; and

1 “(D) improve urban forest health and re-
2 siliency.

3 “(3) TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSIST-
4 ANCE.—The Secretary may provide technical or fi-
5 nancial assistance to entities that enter into a coop-
6 erative agreement under paragraph (1) to facili-
7 tate—

8 “(A) research on new uses for dead and
9 fallen trees in urban and community areas; and

10 “(B) market expansion opportunities for
11 products made from dead and fallen trees in
12 urban and community areas.

13 “(4) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the
14 date of the enactment of the Urban Forests Act of
15 2021, the Secretary shall provide a report to the rel-
16 evant committees on—

17 “(A) the implementation of this subsection;
18 and

19 “(B) recommendations to encourage eco-
20 nomic development and job creation by creating
21 new markets for wood products made from
22 urban timber sources.

23 “(5) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

24 “(A) DEAD AND FALLEN TREES.—The
25 term ‘dead and fallen trees’ means trees that—

1 “(i) are dying or have died;

2 “(ii) have partially or completely fall-
3 en over; or

4 “(iii) have been negatively impacted
5 by insects, disease, or weather-related dis-
6 turbances.

7 “(B) RELEVANT COMMITTEES.—The term
8 ‘relevant committees’ means—

9 “(i) the Committees on Natural Re-
10 sources and Agriculture of the House of
11 Representatives; and

12 “(ii) the Committees on Energy and
13 Natural Resources and Agriculture, Nutri-
14 tion, and Forestry of the Senate.”.

15 (c) PROGRAM OF EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL AS-
16 SISTANCE CLARIFICATION FOR CARBON STORAGE.—Sec-
17 tion 9(d)(3) of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act
18 of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105(d)(3)) is amended—

19 (1) in subparagraph (C), by striking “and”
20 after the semicolon;

21 (2) in subparagraph (D), by inserting “and”
22 after the semicolon; and

23 (3) by inserting at the end the following new
24 subparagraph:

1 “(E) identifying opportunities to increase
 2 carbon storage through afforestation and sci-
 3 entific urban and community forestry manage-
 4 ment;”.

5 (d) NATIONAL URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY
 6 ADVISORY COUNCIL.—Section 9(g) of the Cooperative
 7 Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105(g)) is
 8 amended—

9 (1) in paragraph (2), by adding at the end the
 10 following new subparagraph:

11 “(F) MEETINGS.—The Council established
 12 under this subsection shall meet not less than
 13 twice annually.”; and

14 (2) by adding at the end the following new
 15 paragraph:

16 “(7) RENEWAL OF COUNCIL.—

17 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30
 18 days after the date of the enactment of the
 19 Urban Forests Act of 2021, the Secretary shall
 20 renew the Council.

21 “(B) TERMINATION.—The Council shall
 22 not terminate except as provided by an Act of
 23 Congress.”.

24 (e) URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY ACTION
 25 PLAN CLARIFICATION FOR CARBON STORAGE.—Section

1 9(g)(3) of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of
2 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105(g)(3)) is amended by adding at the
3 end the following:

4 “(G) Recommendations for identifying op-
5 portunities to increase carbon storage through
6 afforestation and scientific urban and commu-
7 nity forestry management.”.

8 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Sub-
9 section (k) of section 9 of the Cooperative Forestry Assist-
10 ance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105), as redesignated by
11 subsection (a), is amended—

12 (1) by striking “\$30,000,000” and inserting
13 “\$50,000,000”; and

14 (2) by striking “fiscal years 1991 through
15 1995” and inserting “fiscal years 2021 through
16 2025”.

17 **SEC. 3. CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTER URBAN FOR-**
18 **ESTRY DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.**

19 Section 147(d) of the Workforce Innovation and Op-
20 portunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3197(d)) is amended by adding
21 at the end the following:

22 “(4) URBAN FORESTRY.—

23 “(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1
24 year after the date of the enactment of this
25 paragraph, the Secretary of Agriculture and the

Secretary of Labor shall jointly establish Civilian Conservation Centers in urban and community areas (as defined in subsection (j) of section 9 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105)).

“(B) FOCUS.—In addition to the training and skills required under paragraph (1), the Civilian Conservation Centers established pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall provide training on urban forestry issues, including urban forest conservation, management, maintenance, and monitoring.”.

SEC. 4. FOREST INVENTORY 5-YEAR REPORTS.

Section 3(e)(3) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1642(e)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (C)—

(A) by inserting “, including forest carbon” before “over the previous”; and

(B) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

1 “(D) demonstrates the efforts taken by the
2 Forest Service to—

3 “(i) conduct a strategic national forest
4 inventory by measuring a statistically de-
5 signed consistent historical series of field
6 plots in combination with advanced tech-
7 nology to improve data, information, and
8 estimates of precision; and

9 “(ii) use advanced geospatial tech-
10 nologies to improve the area and volume
11 estimates described in clause (i), especially
12 for sub-State regions and smaller areas.”.

13 **SEC. 5. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO COORDI-**
14 **NATE URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAMS.**

15 Not later than 120 days after the date of the enact-
16 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall enter
17 into a memorandum of understanding with the Secretaries
18 of Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban De-
19 velopment, Interior, Labor, and Transportation and the
20 Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency
21 to—

22 (1) identify strategies to increase equitable ac-
23 cess to urban forests through existing programs and
24 authorities;

1 (2) coordinate existing urban forestry pro-
2 grams;

3 (3) conduct research on the benefits of urban
4 forests for air quality, heat island mitigation, energy
5 burden reduction, and enhanced shading for heat-re-
6 silient housing and active transit; and

7 (4) conduct research on improving coordination
8 between the agencies to address insects, disease, and
9 non-native invasive species in urban and community
10 areas.

