

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1729

To amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to streamline conservation practice standards, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 13, 2025

Ms. ERNST (for herself, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. MARSHALL, and Mr. DURBIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

A BILL

To amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to streamline conservation practice standards, 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 “Streamlining Con-
5 servation Practice Standards Act of 2025”.

6 **SEC. 2. CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS AND PAY-**
7 **MENTS.**

8 Section 1240H of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
9 U.S.C. 3939aa–8) is amended—

10 (1) in subsection (a)(1)—

(A) by striking “pay the cost of” and inserting “award”;

(B) by inserting “the development and evaluation of new and” before “innovative approaches”; and

(C) by inserting “, including for the purpose of incorporating innovation and new technologies into existing conservation practice standards or establishing new conservation practice standards” before the period at the end; and

(2) in subsection (d)(2)(A)—

(A) in clause (i)—

(i) by striking “practices” and inserting “practices, including both management and structural practices,”; and

(ii) by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by redesignating clause (ii) as clause (iii);

(C) by inserting after clause (i) the following:

“(ii) evaluation data for new and emerging technology and recommendations for State and regional applications; and”; and

1 (D) in clause (iii) (as so redesignated), by
 2 striking “practices.” and inserting “practices
 3 for consideration through the process estab-
 4 lished under section 1242(h)(3).”.

5 **SEC. 3. CONSERVATION STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS.**

6 Section 1241(j)(1) of the Food Security Act of 1985
 7 (16 U.S.C. 3841(j)(1)) is amended—

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

10 (2) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period
 11 at the end and inserting “; and”; and

12 (3) by adding at the end the following:

13 “(D) a schedule for the revision of exist-
 14 ing, and establishment of new, conservation
 15 practice standards under section 1242(h).”.

16 **SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT AND REVIEW OF CONSERVATION**
 17 **PRACTICE STANDARDS.**

18 Section 1242(h) of the Food Security Act of 1985
 19 (16 U.S.C. 3842(h)) is amended—

20 (1) in the subsection heading, by inserting “ES-
 21 TABLISHMENT AND” before “REVIEW”;

22 (2) in paragraph (1)—

23 (A) in subparagraph (A)—

24 (i) by striking “not later than 1 year
 25 after the date of enactment of the Agri-

1 culture Improvement Act of 2018” and in-
2 serting “not less frequently than once
3 every 5 years”;

4 (ii) by inserting “on a rolling basis,”
5 after “standard,”; and

6 (iii) by striking “that Act” and insert-
7 ing “the Streamlining Conservation Prac-
8 tice Standards Act of 2025”;

9 (B) in subparagraph (C), by striking
10 “and” at the end;

11 (C) in subparagraph (D), by striking “en-
12 sures equivalent natural resource benefits.” and
13 inserting “integrates new and innovative tech-
14 nologies providing equivalent or improved nat-
15 ural resources benefits compared to the current
16 conservation practice standard;”; and

17 (D) by adding at the end the following:

18 “(E) provide an opportunity for public
19 input on each conservation practice standard
20 under review;

21 “(F) publicly post a summary of comments
22 received under subparagraph (E) and decisions
23 made or not made due to those comments; and

24 “(G) publish each revised conservation
25 practice standard.”;

(3) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

“(3) ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARDS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Streamlining Conservation Practice Standards Act of 2025, the Secretary shall—

“(i) develop, for the programs under this title, a streamlined, publicly accessible, administrative process for establishing, including proposing, reviewing, and adopting, interim conservation practice standards and conservation practice standards; and

“(ii) publish a detailed description of the process developed under clause (i), including—

“(I) specific thresholds appropriate for expedited review; and

“(II) an associated timeline for the implementation of the review.

“(B) REQUIREMENTS.—Under the process established under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall—

“(i) consider conservation innovations and scientific and technological advancements, including from projects developed under section 1240H;

“(ii) allow State and local flexibility in the creation of—

“(I) interim conservation practice standards and supplements to existing conservation practice standards to address the considerations described in clause (i); and

“(II) partnership-led proposals for new and innovative techniques to facilitate implementing agreements and grants under this title;

“(iii) solicit regular input from State technical committees established under section 1261(a) for recommendations that identify innovations or advancements described in clause (i); and

“(iv) allow for public submission of conservation practices for consideration as interim conservation practice standards.

“(C) INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall prioritize the re-

view of interim conservation practice standards and new conservation practice standards under the process established under subparagraph (A) for the purpose of integrating innovative technologies, including—

“(i) precision agriculture technologies;

“(ii) biological sources of fertilizer, nutrient use efficiency technologies, and other tools, as determined by the Secretary, that reduce nutrient loss;

“(iii) animal feed additives;

“(iv) perennial production systems, including agroforestry and perennial forages and grain crops; and

“(v) any other innovative technology, as determined by the Secretary.

“(D) PUBLIC INFORMATION.—Under the process established under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall make publicly available information describing—

“(i) what constitutes—

“(I) a conservation practice standard; and

“(II) an interim conservation practice standard;

1 “(ii) the process by which the public
2 can submit to the Secretary conservation
3 practices for consideration as interim con-
4 servation practice standards, including a
5 template and written instructions for how
6 to submit a conservation practice for con-
7 sideration;

8 “(iii) the data, metrics, third-party or
9 scientific information, and other relevant
10 information that the Secretary needs to
11 consider in the establishment of interim
12 conservation practice standards;

13 “(iv) the process by which an interim
14 conservation practice standard becomes a
15 conservation practice standard;

16 “(v) the means by which the public
17 can engage State technical committees es-
18 tablished under section 1261(a) to consider
19 interim conservation practice standards al-
20 ready in effect in other States; and

21 “(vi) such other information as the
22 Secretary determines to be appropriate.”;
23 and

24 (4) in paragraph (4)—

1 (A) in the matter preceding subparagraph

2 (A)—

3 (i) by striking “Agriculture Improve-
4 ment Act of 2018” and inserting “Stream-
5 lining Conservation Practice Standards Act
6 of 2025”; and

7 (ii) by striking “Congress a report
8 on—” and inserting “Congress and make
9 publicly available on a website of the De-
10 partment of Agriculture a report describ-
11 ing—”;

12 (B) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “a
13 detailed description of” before “the administra-
14 tive”;

15 (C) in subparagraph (B)—

16 (i) by striking “or revised”; and

17 (ii) by striking “and” at the end;

18 (D) in subparagraph (C), by striking the
19 period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

20 (E) by adding at the end the following:

21 “(D) such other information as the Sec-
22 retary determines to be appropriate with re-
23 spect to improving the process for reviewing

1 and establishing conservation practice stand-
2 ards.”.

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