

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7146

To direct the Secretary of Agriculture to provide grants to covered entities to develop, modify, or implement climate adaptation and climate mitigation proposals on agricultural land, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 30, 2024

Ms. SCHRIER (for herself, Ms. PEREZ, Ms. STRICKLAND, and Mr. NICKEL) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Agriculture to provide grants to covered entities to develop, modify, or implement climate adaptation and climate mitigation proposals on agricultural land, 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 “Partnerships for Agri-
5 cultural Climate Action Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. ASSISTANCE FOR CLIMATE MITIGATION AND ADAP-**
2 **TATION.**

3 Section 1240H of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
4 U.S.C. 3839aa–8) is amended—

5 (1) in subsection (a)(2)—

6 (A) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “,
7 Tribal,” after “provided by State”; and

8 (B) in subparagraph (C), by striking “for
9 pollution reduction” and inserting “for pollution
10 and emissions reductions”;

11 (2) by redesignating subsection (d) as sub-
12 section (e); and

13 (3) by inserting after subsection (c) the fol-
14 lowing:

15 “(d) GRANTS FOR CLIMATE MITIGATION AND CLI-
16 MATE ADAPTATION.—

17 “(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

18 “(A) CLIMATE ADAPTATION.—The term
19 ‘climate adaptation’ means, with respect to an
20 agricultural management system, management
21 changes to such agricultural management sys-
22 tem to reduce vulnerability to and recover from
23 climate and other related disturbances, such
24 that the system thrives in the face of severe
25 weather impacts and other associated chal-
26 lenges, including management changes that

1 builds agricultural resilience through actions
2 such as improved nutrient management and en-
3 hancing soil health.

4 “(B) CLIMATE MITIGATION.—The term
5 ‘climate mitigation’ means, with respect to an
6 agricultural management system, management
7 changes to such agricultural management sys-
8 tem to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and se-
9 quester carbon in soil and plant biomass on ag-
10 ricultural land.

11 “(C) COVERED ENTITY.—The term ‘cov-
12 ered entity’ means—

13 “(i) the department of agriculture of
14 a State;

15 “(ii) an applicable Tribal Government
16 authority;

17 “(iii) an agricultural or silvicultural
18 producer association or other group of pro-
19 ducers;

20 “(iv) a farmer cooperative;

21 “(v) an institution of higher edu-
22 cation;

23 “(vi) a conservation commission or
24 district; or

1 “(vii) an organization or entity with
2 an established history of working coopera-
3 tively with producers on agricultural land,
4 as determined by the Secretary, to address
5 local conservation priorities related to agri-
6 cultural production or nonindustrial pri-
7 vate forestland management in connection
8 to climate mitigation or adaptation.

9 “(D) ELIGIBLE PROPOSAL.—The term ‘eli-
10 gible proposal’ means a proposal for climate
11 mitigation and climate adaptation activities on
12 agricultural land, which—

13 “(i) is broadly consistent with part III
14 of the Action Plan for Climate Adaptation
15 and Resilience, titled ‘USDA’s Adaptation
16 Actions’, published by the Department of
17 Agriculture (August 2021);

18 “(ii) is broadly consistent with con-
19 servation practices identified by the Nat-
20 ural Resources Conservation Service to re-
21 duce greenhouse gas emissions or to se-
22 quester carbon;

23 “(iii) is broadly consistent with the
24 latest available scientific research on re-
25 gionally-relevant climate mitigation and

1 adaptation strategies for agricultural land;
2 and

3 “(iv) identifies effective strategies, in-
4 cluding strategies developed from tradi-
5 tional ecological knowledge such as indige-
6 nous agricultural knowledge practices, for
7 increasing adoption of regionally appro-
8 priate management practices and systems
9 implemented on privately owned agricul-
10 tural land under the jurisdiction of the ap-
11 plicable State government or Tribal Gov-
12 ernment that achieve at least two of the
13 following outcomes:

14 “(I) Increase in carbon seques-
15 tration.

16 “(II) Reduction of greenhouse
17 gas emissions.

18 “(III) Increased resilience
19 against extreme weather.

20 “(E) INDIGENOUS AGRICULTURAL KNOWL-
21 EDGE.—The term ‘indigenous agricultural
22 knowledge’ means the applied knowledge for
23 raising or producing food and other agricultural
24 products grounded in indigenous belief systems

1 and practices that have been time-tested over
2 millennia.

3 “(F) TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWL-
4 EDGE.—The term ‘traditional ecological knowl-
5 edge’ means a cumulative body of knowledge,
6 practice, and belief, developed by Native Amer-
7 ican, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and
8 other Indigenous communities, evolving by
9 adaptive processes and handed down through
10 generations by cultural transmissions, about the
11 relationship of living beings (including humans)
12 with one another and their environments, in-
13 cluding indigenous agricultural knowledge.

14 “(G) TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term
15 ‘Tribal Government’ means—

16 “(i) the governing body of an Indian
17 tribe;

18 “(ii) the governing body of a State-
19 recognized Tribal organization; and

20 “(iii) the governing body of a Native
21 Hawaiian community or organization.

22 “(2) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide
23 grants to covered entities to—

24 “(A) develop or modify an eligible pro-
25 posal; or

1 “(B) implement an eligible proposal.

2 “(3) APPLICATION.—

3 “(A) IN GENERAL.—A covered entity ap-
4 plying for a grant under this subsection shall
5 prepare and submit an application at such time,
6 in such a manner, and containing such informa-
7 tion as the Secretary shall require, including an
8 assurance that grant funds received under this
9 subsection shall supplement, not supplant, the
10 expenditure of funds of such covered entity in
11 developing, modifying, or implementing eligible
12 proposals.

13 “(B) OPTION FOR TRIBAL GOVERN-
14 MENTS.—At the sole discretion of a Tribal Gov-
15 ernment, such Tribal Government may, in lieu
16 of submitting an applications under subpara-
17 graph (A), opt to join an application submitted
18 by any other covered entity for an eligible pro-
19 posal relating to agricultural lands under the
20 jurisdiction of such Tribal Government and that
21 are located within, at least in part, the geo-
22 graphic boundary of such covered entity.

23 “(C) SOLICITATION OF APPLICATIONS.—

24 “(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than
25 180 days after the date of enactment of

1 the Partnerships for Agricultural Climate
2 Action Act, the Secretary shall solicit ap-
3 plications for grants under this subsection.

4 “(ii) ADDITIONAL SOLICITATIONS.—

5 The Secretary shall solicit applications for
6 funding for eligible proposals on a recur-
7 ring basis after the first round of applica-
8 tions until all amounts appropriated to
9 carry out this subsection are expended.

10 “(D) PERFORMANCE MEASURES.—Each

11 application submitted under this paragraph
12 shall include performance measures to be used
13 to evaluate an eligible proposal that was devel-
14 oped, modified, or implemented using a grant
15 received under this subsection.

16 “(4) SELECTION.—

17 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two
18 years after the date of enactment of the Part-
19 nerships for Agricultural Climate Action Act,
20 the Secretary shall select applications submitted
21 under paragraph (3) to receive a grant under
22 this subsection in accordance with this para-
23 graph.

24 “(B) CRITERIA.—In selecting applications
25 to receive a grant under this subsection—

1 “(i) in the case of an application for
2 developing or modifying an eligible pro-
3 posal, the Secretary shall select applica-
4 tions for eligible proposals that will, if im-
5 plemented—

6 “(I) have a high potential for
7 carbon sequestration and greenhouse
8 gas emissions reductions; and

9 “(II) increase the resilience of
10 agricultural management systems to
11 extreme weather and climate condi-
12 tions;

13 “(ii) in the case of an application for
14 implementing an eligible proposal, the Sec-
15 retary shall select applications for eligible
16 proposals that—

17 “(I) have a high potential for
18 carbon sequestration or greenhouse
19 gas emissions reductions;

20 “(II) increase the resilience of
21 agricultural management systems to
22 extreme weather and climate condi-
23 tions; and

24 “(iii) the Secretary shall select appli-
25 cations for eligible proposals that are based

1 on any other criteria that the Secretary de-
2 termines necessary or appropriate to carry
3 out this subsection.

4 “(C) GEOGRAPHICAL DIVERSITY.—In pro-
5 viding grants under this subsection, the Sec-
6 retary shall, to the maximum extent practicable,
7 ensure geographic diversity.

8 “(D) PRIORITY.—In providing grants
9 under this subsection, the Secretary shall give
10 priority to—

11 “(i) a covered entity for an eligible
12 proposal that—

13 “(I) includes dedicated resources
14 to historically underserved producers
15 or farming operations, including—

16 “(aa) beginning farmers or
17 ranchers;

18 “(bb) socially disadvantaged
19 farmers or ranchers;

20 “(cc) veteran farmers and
21 ranchers, as defined in section
22 2501(a) of the Food, Agriculture,
23 Conservation, and Trade Act of
24 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(a)); and

1 “(dd) small or mid-sized
2 farms that are structured as
3 family farms, as defined in sec-
4 tion 761.2 of title 7, Code of
5 Federal Regulations;

6 “(II) includes plans to transition
7 whole farm systems to ecologically
8 sound production systems that—

9 “(aa) increase carbon se-
10 questration;

11 “(bb) reduce greenhouse gas
12 emissions; or

13 “(cc) build resilience to ex-
14 treme weather; or

15 “(III) supports additional con-
16 servation goals, including—

17 “(aa) improving soil health;

18 “(bb) erosion control;

19 “(cc) improving nutrient
20 management;

21 “(dd) improving water qual-
22 ity;

23 “(ee) enhancing pollinator
24 forage; and

1 “(ff) habitat restoration;
2 and

3 “(ii) the applicable Tribal Government
4 authority for an eligible proposal that in-
5 cludes use of traditional ecological knowl-
6 edge or indigenous agricultural knowledge
7 practices.

8 “(5) PARTNERSHIPS OPTION.—A covered entity
9 may enter into partnership agreements for the devel-
10 opment, modification, or implementation of an eligi-
11 ble proposal with one or more other covered entities.

12 “(6) USE OF IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.—A
13 covered entity may use a grant provided under para-
14 graph (2)(B) for activities to implement an eligible
15 proposal, including—

16 “(A) provision of technical assistance to
17 producers;

18 “(B) provision of financial assistance to
19 producers;

20 “(C) on-farm research and demonstration;

21 “(D) extension, education, outreach, and
22 training;

23 “(E) monitoring and evaluating soil carbon
24 sequestration, greenhouse gas emissions reduc-
25 tions, and other conservation outcomes;

1 “(F) local producer-to-producer networking
2 and mentoring activities; and

3 “(G) other activities as the Secretary de-
4 termines appropriate.

5 “(7) GRANT TERM.—

6 “(A) DEVELOPMENT AND MODIFICATION
7 GRANTS.—With respect to a grant under para-
8 graph (2)(A), the Secretary—

9 “(i) shall provide such grant for a
10 term of not less than one year and not
11 more than two years; and

12 “(ii) may renew such grant once at
13 the end of a term under clause (i), under
14 which renewal the Secretary may provide
15 additional grant funds after the initial
16 grant funds have been expended.

17 “(B) IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.—With
18 respect to a grant under paragraph (2)(B), the
19 Secretary—

20 “(i) shall provide such grant for a
21 term of not less than one year and not
22 more than five years; and

23 “(ii) may renew such grant at the end
24 of a term under clause (i), under which re-
25 newal the Secretary may provide additional

1 grant funds after the initial grant funds
2 have been expended.

3 “(8) GRANT AMOUNT.—

4 “(A) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—The Secretary
5 may provide a grant to a covered entity—

6 “(i) in the case of a grant under para-
7 graph (2)(A), in an amount not to exceed
8 \$7,500,000 per fiscal year; and

9 “(ii) in the case of a grant under
10 paragraph (2)(B), in an amount not to ex-
11 ceed \$15,000,000 per fiscal year.

12 “(B) FEDERAL SHARE.—

13 “(i) GRANTS TO CERTAIN COVERED
14 ENTITIES.—The Secretary shall not pro-
15 vide a grant under this subsection to a cov-
16 ered entity that is not an applicable Tribal
17 Government authority in an amount that
18 exceeds—

19 “(I) 75 percent of the cost of de-
20 veloping or modifying an eligible pro-
21 posal under paragraph (2)(A); or

22 “(II) 50 percent of the cost of
23 implementing an eligible proposal
24 under paragraph (2)(B).

1 “(ii) GRANTS TO TRIBAL GOVERN-
2 MENTS.—The Secretary shall not provide a
3 grant under this subsection to an applica-
4 ble Tribal Government authority in an
5 amount that exceeds—

6 “(I) 100 percent of the cost of
7 developing or modifying an eligible
8 proposal under paragraph (2)(A); or

9 “(II) 85 percent of the cost of
10 implementing an eligible proposal
11 under paragraph (2)(B).

12 “(iii) RESTRICTION.—Clause (ii) does
13 not apply to Tribal Governments that opt
14 to join an application submitted by another
15 covered entity under paragraph (3)(B).

16 “(C) NON-FEDERAL FUNDS.—The Sec-
17 retary shall provide a grant under this sub-
18 section on the condition that any non-Federal
19 share of expenditures be provided from non-
20 Federal sources.

21 “(9) PERFORMANCE MEASURES REVIEW AND
22 EVALUATION.—Each covered entity that receives a
23 grant under this subsection shall submit to the Sec-
24 retary a review and evaluation of the progress of
25 such covered entity, using the performance measures

1 included in the application under paragraph (3)(D),
2 at such intervals as the Secretary shall establish.

3 “(10) EFFECT OF NONCOMPLIANCE.—If the
4 Secretary, after reasonable notice to a covered enti-
5 ty, determines that there has been a failure by such
6 covered entity to comply with the terms of a grant
7 made under this subsection, the Secretary may dis-
8 qualify, for one or more years, such covered entity
9 from receipt of future grants under this subsection.

10 “(11) AUDIT REQUIREMENT.—For each year
11 that a covered entity receives funds from a grant
12 provided under this subsection, such covered entity
13 shall—

14 “(A) conduct an audit of any expenditures
15 by such covered entity that were paid for using
16 such funds; and

17 “(B) not later than 30 days after the com-
18 pletion of the audit under subparagraph (A),
19 submit to the Secretary a copy of such audit.

20 “(12) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—

21 “(A) SECRETARY.—The Secretary may not
22 use more than 3 percent of the funds made
23 available to carry out this subsection for a fiscal
24 year for administrative expenses.

1 “(B) CERTAIN COVERED ENTITIES.—A
2 covered entity, that is not an applicable Tribal
3 Government authority, receiving a grant under
4 this section may not use more than 10 percent
5 of the granted funds for administrative ex-
6 penses.

7 “(C) TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS.—An applica-
8 ble Tribal Government authority receiving a
9 grant under this section may not use more than
10 15 percent of the granted funds for administra-
11 tive expenses.

12 “(13) FUNDING.—

13 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Of the funds made
14 available to carry out this subchapter, the Sec-
15 retary shall carry out this subsection using
16 \$150,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2023
17 through 2031.

18 “(B) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—The Sec-
19 retary shall distribute funds made available to
20 carry out this subsection as follows:

21 “(i) At least 33 percent of funds to
22 support the development and modification
23 of eligible proposals under paragraph
24 (2)(A).

1 “(ii) At least 33 percent of funds to
2 support the implementation of eligible pro-
3 posals under paragraph (2)(B).

4 “(C) RESERVATION OF FUNDS.—Of the
5 funds made available for grants under this sub-
6 section, 33 percent shall be reserved for grants
7 provided to the applicable Tribal Government
8 authorities.”.

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