

Union Calendar No. 53

105TH CONGRESS
1ST Session

H. R. 1342

[Report No. 105-80]

A BILL

To provide for a one-year enrollment in the conservation reserve of land covered by expiring conservation reserve program contracts.

APRIL 29, 1997

Reported with an amendment, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 16, 1997

Mr. SMITH of Oregon introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

APRIL 29, 1997

Additional sponsors: Mr. NETHERCUTT, Mr. HILL, Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska, Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. LUCAS of Oklahoma, Mr. THUNE, Mr. COMBEST, and Mrs. CHENOWETH

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[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in italic]

A BILL

To provide for a one-year enrollment in the conservation reserve of land covered by expiring conservation reserve program contracts.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. ONE-YEAR ENROLLMENT OF LAND COVERED**
2 **BY EXPIRING CONSERVATION RESERVE CON-**
3 **TRACTS.**

4 (a) **ELIGIBLE LANDS.**—This section applies with re-
5 spect to land on a farm covered by a conservation reserve
6 program contract expiring during fiscal year 1997 if—

7 (1) the farm had a crop acreage base for wheat,
8 oats, or barley at the time the conservation reserve
9 program contract was executed or had a fall-seeded
10 crop during the 1996 crop year;

11 (2) the land covered by the expiring conserva-
12 tion reserve program contract is the subject of a bid
13 to reenroll the land in the conservation reserve; and

14 (3) the land satisfies eligibility criteria in effect
15 during fiscal year 1997 for the enrollment of the
16 land in the conservation reserve.

17 (b) **ONE-YEAR ENROLLMENT AUTHORIZED.**—The
18 owner of land described in subsection (a) (or the operator
19 of a farm containing such land, with the consent of the
20 owner) may enroll the land covered by the expiring con-
21 servation reserve program contract in the conservation re-
22 serve for a one-year period beginning on October 1, 1997,
23 if—

24 (1) the Secretary of Agriculture does not notify
25 the owner or operator, not later than May 2, 1997,
26 that the Secretary accepts or rejects the bid for re-

1 enrollment of the land in the conservation reserve;
2 and

3 ~~(2) the owner or operator notifies the Secretary,~~
4 ~~not later than May 16, 1997, that the owner or op-~~
5 ~~erator desires to enroll the land in the conservation~~
6 ~~reserve for one year under this subsection.~~

7 ~~(c) RENTAL RATE.—The rental rate for a one-year~~
8 ~~conservation reserve program contract under subsection~~
9 ~~(b) shall be equal to the lesser of—~~

10 ~~(1) the maximum county rental rate established~~
11 ~~for the county in which the land covered by the con-~~
12 ~~tract is located; or~~

13 ~~(2) the amount of the bid referred to in sub-~~
14 ~~section (a)(2) that was submitted by the owner or~~
15 ~~operator to reenroll the land in the conservation re-~~
16 ~~serve.~~

17 ~~(d) EFFECT OF SUBSEQUENT LONG-TERM ENROLL-~~
18 ~~MENT.—If, before a one-year conservation reserve pro-~~
19 ~~gram contract entered into under subsection (b) takes ef-~~
20 ~~fect on October 1, 1997, the Secretary accepts the bid of~~
21 ~~the owner or operator of the land covered by the contract~~
22 ~~to enroll the land in the conservation reserve under section~~
23 ~~1231 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831),~~
24 ~~the one-year contract shall be void. The existence of the~~
25 ~~one-year contract shall not affect the duration or terms~~

1 of the new conservation reserve program contract executed
 2 by the owner or operator and the Secretary under such
 3 section.

4 (e) **LIMITATION ON EXPENDITURES.**—Notwithstand-
 5 ing the authorization of one-year conservation reserve pro-
 6 gram contracts under subsection (b), the total amount of
 7 funds expended during fiscal year 1998 for all conserva-
 8 tion reserve program contracts, including such one-year
 9 contracts, may not exceed the amount of funds that would
 10 have been expended during that fiscal year for conserva-
 11 tion reserve program contracts in the absence of this sec-
 12 tion.

13 (f) **CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM CONTRACT**
 14 **DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “conservation re-
 15 serve program contract” means a contract authorized
 16 under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII
 17 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.)
 18 for the enrollment of farm acreage in the conservation re-
 19 serve established under such subchapter.

20 **SECTION 1. ONE-YEAR ENROLLMENT OF LAND COVERED BY**
 21 **EXPIRING CONSERVATION RESERVE PRO-**
 22 **GRAM CONTRACTS.**

23 (a) **ELIGIBLE FARM LANDS.**—*This section applies*
 24 *with respect to a farm containing land covered by a con-*

1 *ervation reserve program contract expiring during fiscal*
2 *year 1997 if—*

3 *(1) the farm had a crop acreage base for wheat,*
4 *oats, or barley at the time the conservation reserve*
5 *program contract was executed;*

6 *(2) the farm is located in an area in which fall-*
7 *seeded crops are regularly planted, as determined by*
8 *the Secretary of Agriculture;*

9 *(3) the owner of the farm (or the operator with*
10 *the consent of the owner) submitted, during the enroll-*
11 *ment period that ended on March 28, 1997, an eligi-*
12 *ble bid to enroll all or part of the land covered by the*
13 *expiring contract in the conservation reserve estab-*
14 *lished under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D*
15 *of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16*
16 *U.S.C. 3831 et seq.); and*

17 *(4) the land designated in the bid satisfies the*
18 *eligibility criteria in effect for enrollment of land in*
19 *the conservation reserve.*

20 *(b) ONE-YEAR ENROLLMENT AUTHORIZED.—*

21 *(1) AUTHORITY OF OWNER OR OPERATOR.—Ex-*
22 *cept as provided in subsection (g), the owner or oper-*
23 *ator of a farm described in subsection (a) may enroll*
24 *in the conservation reserve for a one-year term to*
25 *begin on October 1, 1997, the land covered by the ex-*

1 *piring conservation reserve program contract and in-*
2 *cluded in the owner's or operator's enrollment bid (as*
3 *described in subsection (a)(3)) if—*

4 *(A) the owner or operator notifies the Sec-*
5 *retary in writing, during the special notification*
6 *period required under paragraph (2), that the*
7 *owner or operator desires to enroll the land in*
8 *the conservation reserve for one year under this*
9 *section; and*

10 *(B) the Secretary does not accept, before Oc-*
11 *tober 1, 1997, the owner's or operator's enroll-*
12 *ment bid (as described in subsection (a)(3)) to*
13 *enroll the land in a long-term conservation re-*
14 *serve program contract.*

15 *(2) SPECIAL NOTIFICATION PERIOD.—Promptly*
16 *upon the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall*
17 *provide a special period for owners and operators of*
18 *farms described in subsection (a) to permit the owners*
19 *and operators to provide the notification required*
20 *under paragraph (1)(A) to enter into one-year con-*
21 *servation reserve program contracts under this sec-*
22 *tion.*

23 *(c) RENTAL RATE.—The rental rate for a one-year*
24 *conservation reserve program contract under subsection (b)*
25 *shall be equal to the amount of the bid (as described in sub-*

1 *section (a)(3)) that the owner or operator submitted with*
2 *respect to the land to be covered by the one-year contract.*

3 *(d) EFFECT OF ONE-YEAR CONTRACT ON SUBSEQUENT*
4 *ENROLLMENT.—If an owner or operator who enrolls eligible*
5 *farm land in a one-year conservation reserve program con-*
6 *tract under subsection (b) submits a bid to enroll the same*
7 *land in the conservation reserve under a long-term con-*
8 *servation reserve program contract that would commence*
9 *on October 1, 1998, and the Secretary accepts the bid and*
10 *enters into a long-term conservation reserve program con-*
11 *tract with the owner or operator, then the one-year contract*
12 *shall be considered to be the first year of that long-term*
13 *conservation reserve program contract.*

14 *(e) MAXIMUM ENROLLMENT.—The maximum number*
15 *of acres in the conservation reserve during fiscal year 1998,*
16 *including land enrolled by the Secretary under one-year*
17 *conservation reserve program contracts under subsection*
18 *(b), may not exceed 30,000,000 acres.*

19 *(f) APPLICATION OF CONSERVATION RESERVE*
20 *LAWS.—Except as specifically provided in this section, the*
21 *terms and conditions of subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle*
22 *D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.*
23 *3831 et seq.) shall apply with respect to one-year conserva-*
24 *tion reserve program contracts authorized by this section.*

1 (g) *EFFECT OF COMPLETION OF 15TH ENROLL-*
2 *MENT.—If, as of the date of the enactment of this Act, the*
3 *Secretary has already acted on the bids submitted during*
4 *the enrollment period that ended on March 28, 1997, to en-*
5 *roll land in the conservation reserve, either by accepting*
6 *or rejecting the bids, then the authority provided by this*
7 *section for special one-year conservation reserve program*
8 *contracts shall not take effect.*

9 **SEC. 2. SPECIAL EARLY TERMINATION AUTHORITY FOR**
10 **CERTAIN CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM**
11 **CONTRACTS EXPIRING IN 1997.**

12 (a) *EARLY TERMINATION AUTHORITY.—A farm owner*
13 *or operator described in subsection (b) who is a party to*
14 *a conservation reserve program contract expiring during*
15 *fiscal year 1997 may terminate the contract at any time*
16 *after June 30, 1997. Notwithstanding section 1235(e) of the*
17 *Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3835(e)), the termi-*
18 *nation shall take effect immediately upon submission of no-*
19 *tice of the termination to the Secretary of Agriculture and*
20 *shall not result in a reduction in the amount of the rental*
21 *payment due under the conservation reserve program con-*
22 *tract for fiscal year 1997.*

23 (b) *ELIGIBLE OWNERS AND OPERATORS.—A farm*
24 *owner or operator referred to in subsection (a) is a farm*

1 *owner or operator with respect to whom one of the following*
2 *circumstances apply:*

3 (1) *Neither the owner, operator, nor any other el-*
4 *igible person submitted, during the enrollment period*
5 *that ended on March 28, 1997, an eligible bid to en-*
6 *roll all or part of the land covered by the expiring*
7 *conservation reserve program contract in the con-*
8 *servation reserve established under subchapter B of*
9 *chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Secu-*
10 *rity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.).*

11 (2) *An eligible bid was submitted during the en-*
12 *rollment period to enroll all or part of the land cov-*
13 *ered by the expiring contract in the conservation re-*
14 *serve, but the Secretary of Agriculture rejected the bid*
15 *and the owner or operator did not notify the Sec-*
16 *retary, in the manner provided in section 1(b), that*
17 *the owner or operator desired a one-year contract*
18 *under section 1.*

19 (c) *CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM CONTRACT*
20 *DEFINED.—In this section, the term “conservation reserve*
21 *program contract” means a contract entered into under*
22 *subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the*
23 *Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.) for en-*
24 *rollment of farm acreage in the conservation reserve estab-*
25 *lished under such subchapter.*