

108TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 2703

To reserve a small percentage of the amounts made available to the Secretary of Agriculture for the farmland protection program to fund challenge grants to encourage the purchase of conservation easements and other interests in land to be held by a State agency, county, or other eligible entity, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 10, 2003

Mr. GERLACH (for himself and Mr. ENGLISH) introduced the following bill;  
which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

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## A BILL

To reserve a small percentage of the amounts made available to the Secretary of Agriculture for the farmland protection program to fund challenge grants to encourage the purchase of conservation easements and other interests in land to be held by a State agency, county, or other eligible entity, 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 “Farmland Protection  
5        Program Challenge Grant Act of 2003”.

1 **SEC. 2. ADDITIONAL TITLE-HOLDING OPTION UNDER**  
2 **FARMLAND PROTECTION PROGRAM.**

3 Section 1238I of the Farm Security Act of 1985 (16  
4 U.S.C. 3838i) is amended by adding at the end the fol-  
5 lowing new subsection:

6 “(d) **OPTION FOR TITLE TO BE HELD BY ELIGIBLE**  
7 **ENTITY.—**

8 “(1) **RESERVATION OF FUNDS; PURPOSE.—**Of  
9 the funds made available under section 1241(a)(4)  
10 for fiscal year 2003 and thereafter to carry out this  
11 section, the Secretary shall use not less than 15 per-  
12 cent to make grants to support cooperative efforts  
13 by an eligible State agency, a county, and one or  
14 more other eligible entities to purchase conservation  
15 easements and other interests in eligible land under  
16 subsection (a), the title to which will be held by an  
17 eligible entity rather than the United States.

18 “(2) **COST SHARING.—**Notwithstanding sub-  
19 section (c)(1), the share of the cost of purchasing a  
20 conservation easement or other interest in eligible  
21 land borne by the United States under this sub-  
22 section shall not exceed 25 percent. The State agen-  
23 cy involved in the purchase shall contribute 25 per-  
24 cent of the purchase price, the county involved in the  
25 purchase shall contribute 25 percent of the purchase  
26 price, and the other eligible entities involved in the

1 purchase shall contribute 25 percent of the purchase  
2 price.

3 “(3) PROHIBITION ON USE OF GRANT FUNDS.—  
4 Federal funds made available under this subsection  
5 may not be used by grant recipients for administra-  
6 tive purposes.”.

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