

111<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 6426

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to carry out programs and activities for connecting children and families with the outdoors.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 18, 2010

Mr. KIND introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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

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## A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to carry out programs and activities for connecting children and families with the outdoors.

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; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4       (a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the  
5       “Moving Outdoors in Nature Act of 2010”.

6       (b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents of  
7       this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Findings.

- Sec. 3. Grants for development or implementation of Moving Outdoors in Nature State Strategies.
- Sec. 4. National strategy for connecting children, youth, and families with the outdoors.
- Sec. 5. National evaluation of health impacts.
- Sec. 6. Technical assistance and best practices.
- Sec. 7. Definitions.
- Sec. 8. Authorization of appropriations.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Children today are spending less time out-  
4 doors than any generation in human history, as evi-  
5 denced by studies that show children enjoy half as  
6 much time outdoors today as they did just 20 years  
7 ago and children spend more than 7½ hours every  
8 day in front of electronic media.

9 (2) Experiencing our Nation's natural splendor  
10 contributes to healthier lives for all Americans and  
11 a deeper appreciation for the outdoors, and those  
12 who take advantage of the opportunities afforded  
13 them in the outdoors generally live longer, healthier,  
14 fuller lives than those who do not.

15 (3) Hunters and anglers play a critical role in  
16 reconnecting young people with nature, protecting  
17 our natural resources, and fostering a lifelong un-  
18 derstanding of the value of conserving the natural  
19 world. As children become more disconnected from  
20 the natural world, the hunting and angling conserva-  
21 tion legacy of America is at risk.

1           (4) Research demonstrates that hunters who  
2           become engaged in hunting as children are among  
3           the most active and interested hunters as adults.  
4           The vast majority of hunters report they were intro-  
5           duced to hunting between the ages of 10 and 12,  
6           and the overwhelming majority of children are intro-  
7           duced to hunting by an adult.

8           (5) The health of our children is at risk as evi-  
9           denced by the growing obesity crisis where, over the  
10          last 20 years, the childhood obesity rate has more  
11          than doubled and the adolescent obesity rate has tri-  
12          pled.

13          (6) Spending time outdoors in nature is bene-  
14          ficial to our children's physical and mental health  
15          and has been proven to decrease symptoms of atten-  
16          tion deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), im-  
17          prove motor skills, result in a better sleep, reduce  
18          stress, increase creativity, improve mood, and reduce  
19          children's risk of developing myopia.

20          (7) Kids who play outdoors are generally more  
21          physically fit than those who spend the majority of  
22          their time inside, and children who play outside in  
23          natural areas have a statistically significant improve-  
24          ment in motor fitness with better coordination, bal-  
25          ance, and agility.

1           (8) The richness and novelty of being outdoors  
2 stimulates brain development, and research indicates  
3 that direct, ongoing experience of nature in relatively  
4 familiar settings remains a vital source for children’s  
5 physical, emotional, and intellectual development.

6           (9) Research indicates that spending time out-  
7 doors reduces the severity of symptoms of children  
8 with attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, and  
9 even short walks in urban parks increase concentra-  
10 tion and lessen other attention deficit and hyper-  
11 activity disorder-related symptoms.

12           (10) Children who spend time playing outside  
13 are more likely to take risks, seek out adventure, de-  
14 velop self-confidence, and respect the value of na-  
15 ture, and green spaces outside the home can in-  
16 crease concentration, inhibition of initial impulses,  
17 and self-discipline.

18           (11) Time spent in green spaces, including  
19 parks, play areas, and gardens, has been shown to  
20 reduce stress and mental fatigue, and in one study  
21 children who were exposed to greener environments  
22 in a public housing area demonstrated less aggres-  
23 sion and violence and less mental stress.

24           (12) Simply viewing nature reduces physio-  
25 logical stress response, increases levels of interest

1 and attention, and decreases feelings of fear, anger,  
2 and aggression.

3 (13) A direct childhood experience with nature  
4 before the age of 11 promotes a long-term connec-  
5 tion to nature, a connection that is currently dwin-  
6 dling as children spend half as much time outside as  
7 they did 20 years ago.

8 (14) Resource stewardship is more challenging  
9 without a strong sense of connection to the natural  
10 world, and as visitation to public lands has declined  
11 or remained flat in recent years and children spend  
12 less time outdoors on private lands as well, that con-  
13 nection is being lost.

14 (15) It takes many dedicated men and women  
15 to work to preserve, protect, enhance, and restore  
16 America's natural resources, and with an aging  
17 workforce in the natural resource professions, it is  
18 critical for the next generation to have an apprecia-  
19 tion for nature and be ready to take over these re-  
20 sponsibilities.

21 (16) Over the past several years, urbanization,  
22 changing land use patterns, increasing road traffic,  
23 and inadequate solutions to addressing these chal-  
24 lenges in the built environment have combined to  
25 make it more difficult for many Americans to walk

1 or bike to schools, parks, and play areas or experi-  
2 ence the natural environment in general.

3 (17) Natural play areas, greenways, accessible  
4 trails, backyard wildlife habitats, and other green  
5 features of the built environment provide children  
6 the opportunity to experience nature in their com-  
7 munities and close to home.

8 (18) Conservation education and outdoor recre-  
9 ation experiences like camping, hiking, boating,  
10 hunting, fishing, archery, recreational shooting, wild-  
11 life watching, and others are critical to engaging  
12 young people in the outdoors.

13 (19) Parks and recreation, youth-serving, con-  
14 servation, health, education, and built-environment  
15 organizations, facilities, and personnel provide crit-  
16 ical resources and infrastructure for connecting chil-  
17 dren and families with nature.

18 (20) Research has shown that military children  
19 and families are facing increased stress and mental  
20 strain and challenges due to multiple, extended de-  
21 ployments. Military family service organizations have  
22 developed programs that connect military children  
23 and families with positive, meaningful outdoor expe-  
24 riences benefiting mental and physical health, but

1 they lack sufficient resources to meet increasing de-  
2 mand.

3 (21) States nationwide and their community-  
4 based partners have some notable programs that  
5 connect children and families with nature; however,  
6 most States lack sufficient resources and a com-  
7 prehensive strategy that effectively engages State  
8 agencies across multiple fields.

9 (22) States need to engage in a cross-sector  
10 agency and nonprofit approach that involves public  
11 health and wellness, parks and recreation, transpor-  
12 tation and city planning, and others focused on con-  
13 necting children and families with the outdoors to  
14 increase coordination and effective implementation  
15 of the policy tools and programs that a State can  
16 bring to bear to provide healthy outdoor opportuni-  
17 ties for children and families.

18 **SEC. 3. GRANTS FOR DEVELOPMENT OR IMPLEMENTATION**  
19 **OF MOVING OUTDOORS IN NATURE STATE**  
20 **STRATEGIES.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may award com-  
22 petitive grants or cooperative agreements to eligible enti-  
23 ties to develop and implement a 5-year State strategy, to  
24 be known as a Moving Outdoors in Nature State Strategy,  
25 for connecting children and families with the outdoors.

1 (b) SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF STRATEGIES.—

2 (1) APPLICATIONS.—An application for a grant  
3 under subsection (a) shall—

4 (A) be submitted not later than 120 days  
5 after the Secretary publishes guidelines under  
6 subsection (f)(1); and

7 (B) include a Moving Outdoors in Nature  
8 State Strategy meeting the requirements of  
9 subsection (c) or a proposal for development  
10 and submission of such a strategy.

11 (2) APPROVAL OF STRATEGY; PEER REVIEW.—

12 Not later than 90 days after submission of a Moving  
13 Outdoors in Nature State Strategy, the Secretary  
14 shall approve or recommend changes to the strategy.

15 The Secretary shall carry out the preceding sentence  
16 through a peer review process that includes partici-  
17 pation from Federal, State, and local government  
18 and from nongovernmental entities.

19 (3) STRATEGY UPDATE.—An eligible entity re-  
20 ceiving funds under this section shall update its  
21 Moving Outdoors in Nature State Strategy not less  
22 than every 5 years to reflect any changes and modi-  
23 fications.

24 (c) COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY REQUIREMENTS.—

25 The Secretary may approve a Moving Outdoors in Nature



1 State Strategy under subsection (b)(2) only if the strategy  
2 includes the following:

3 (1) A description of how the eligible entity will  
4 connect children, youth, and families to the outdoors  
5 through State and local—

6 (A) public health systems;

7 (B) public parks and recreation systems;

8 (C) public transportation and city planning  
9 systems; and

10 (D) other public systems that connect chil-  
11 dren, youth, and families to the outdoors.

12 (2) A description of how the eligible entity will  
13 connect existing governmental systems to networks  
14 of nongovernmental partner organizations serving  
15 children, youth, and families.

16 (3) A description of how State agencies, such as  
17 State departments of health, natural resources, envi-  
18 ronmental quality, fish and wildlife, national guard,  
19 and transportation, will collaborate with each other  
20 and nongovernmental organizations and local agen-  
21 cies to implement the strategy.

22 (4) A description of how funding will be spent  
23 through local planning and implementation grants  
24 under subsection (d).

1           (5) A description of how the eligible entity will  
2 evaluate the effectiveness of, and measure the im-  
3 pact of, the strategy.

4           (6) A description of how the eligible entity will  
5 provide opportunities for public involvement in devel-  
6 oping and implementing the strategy through a pub-  
7 lic comment period, public hearings, or other means.

8 (d) LOCAL PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION.—

9           (1) IN GENERAL.—A Moving Outdoors in Na-  
10 ture State Strategy shall provide for—

11                   (A) local planning; and

12                   (B) subgrants by the grant recipient under  
13 subsection (a) to local entities to implement the  
14 strategy through one or more of the activities  
15 described in paragraph (2).

16           (2) PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.—The activities de-  
17 scribed in this paragraph are the following:

18                   (A) Outdoor recreation programs and ac-  
19 tivities that engage children, youth, and families  
20 in healthy, active time outdoors through camp-  
21 ing, hiking, wildlife watching, and other rec-  
22 reational activities that teach skills for lifelong  
23 participation in outdoor activities.

24                   (B) Youth mentoring and outdoor recre-  
25 ation programs and activities that engage par-

1 participants in hunting, fishing, recreational shoot-  
2 ing, and archery.

3 (C) Public health initiatives to educate  
4 parents and caregivers about the health benefits  
5 of active time outdoors to fight obesity and in-  
6 crease the quality of life for children, youth,  
7 and families.

8 (D) Creation of natural play areas within  
9 communities, as defined by nationally recog-  
10 nized guidelines, to provide opportunities for  
11 safe outdoor play in natural environments at  
12 daycare and afterschool childcare sites, schools,  
13 parks, recreation centers, camps, libraries, mili-  
14 tary installations, and other areas.

15 (E) Development of trails and greenways  
16 to safely connect parks and outdoor recreation  
17 areas with military installations, daycare and  
18 afterschool childcare sites, schools, and commu-  
19 nities through trail systems that encourage  
20 walking, biking, and increased time outdoors by  
21 children, youth, and families.

22 (F) Creation of outdoor learning environ-  
23 ments such as schoolyard, community, or back-  
24 yard wildlife habitats or gardens.

1           (G) Environmental sustainability and con-  
2           servation education and interpretation pro-  
3           grams and activities that engage children,  
4           youth, and families in learning and physical ac-  
5           tivity in the outdoors.

6           (H) Service learning and volunteer oppor-  
7           tunities to help restore natural areas, maintain  
8           recreational assets, and engage children, youth,  
9           and families in the outdoors.

10          (I) Promotional activities that promote the  
11          benefits of time spent outdoors and invite chil-  
12          dren, youth, and families to enjoy the outdoors  
13          by visiting nearby public and private lands.

14          (J) Initiatives that engage health profes-  
15          sionals, pediatricians, educators, daycare in-  
16          structors, afterschool program providers, camp  
17          directors, community planners, local planning  
18          commissions, homeowners associations, environ-  
19          mental professionals, military, law enforcement,  
20          and business leaders in identifying innovative  
21          solutions to connecting children, youth, and  
22          families with nature.

23          (e) PRIORITY.—In making grants under subsection  
24          (a) and subgrants under subsection (d)(1)(B), the Sec-  
25          retary and the recipient of a grant under this section shall

1 give preference to entities that serve individuals who have  
2 limited opportunities to experience nature, including those  
3 who are socioeconomically disadvantaged or have a dis-  
4 ability.

5 (f) GUIDELINES.—Not later than 180 days after the  
6 date of the enactment of this Act, and after notice and  
7 opportunity for public comment, the Secretary shall pub-  
8 lish in the Federal Register guidelines on the implementa-  
9 tion of this Act, including guidelines for—

10 (1) developing and submitting strategies under  
11 subsection (b); and

12 (2) technical assistance and dissemination of  
13 best practices under section 6.

14 (g) REPORTING.—Not later than 2 years after the  
15 Secretary approves the Moving Outdoors in Nature State  
16 Strategy of an eligible entity receiving funds under this  
17 section, and every year thereafter, the entity shall submit  
18 to the Secretary a report on the implementation of the  
19 strategy based on the entity’s evaluation and assessment  
20 of meeting the goals specified in the strategy.

21 (h) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity re-  
22 ceiving a grant under subsection (a) for a fiscal year—

23 (1) may use not more than 5 percent of the  
24 grant funds for administrative expenses; and

1           (2) shall use at least 95 percent of the grant  
2 funds for local planning and subgrants to local enti-  
3 ties under subsection (d).

4 **SEC. 4. NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR CONNECTING CHILDREN,**  
5 **YOUTH, AND FAMILIES WITH THE OUTDOORS.**

6           (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than September 30,  
7 2011, the President of the United States, in cooperation  
8 with Federal departments and agencies, shall develop and  
9 issue a national strategy for connecting children, youth,  
10 and families with the outdoors. Such strategy shall in-  
11 clude, but not be limited to—

12           (1) identification of barriers to children, youth,  
13 and families spending healthy time outdoors and  
14 specific policy solutions to address those barriers;

15           (2) identification of opportunities for partner-  
16 ships with States, cities, counties, municipalities, en-  
17 tities of local government, park and recreation de-  
18 partments or districts, school districts, institutions  
19 of higher education, and nonprofit organizations to  
20 connect children, youth, and families with the out-  
21 doors;

22           (3) coordination of efforts among Federal de-  
23 partments and agencies to address the impacts of  
24 children and families spending less time outdoors  
25 on—

1 (A) public health, including childhood obe-  
2 sity and attention deficit disorders;

3 (B) the future of conservation in the  
4 United States; and

5 (C) the economy;

6 (4) identification of ongoing research needs to  
7 document the health, conservation, economic, and  
8 other outcomes of implementing the national and  
9 State strategies;

10 (5) coordination with State Moving Outdoors in  
11 Nature Strategies; and

12 (6) an action plan for implementing the strat-  
13 egy at the Federal level.

14 (b) STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT.—

15 (1) PARTICIPANTS.—In developing the national  
16 strategy in subsection (a), the President shall en-  
17 gage—

18 (A) representatives of Federal, State, and  
19 local government;

20 (B) business, industry, and military lead-  
21 ers;

22 (C) representatives of nonprofit organiza-  
23 tions;

24 (D) educators;

25 (E) medical professionals;

1 (F) representatives of recipients of grants  
2 or subgrants under section 3; and

3 (G) such other persons as the President  
4 determines appropriate.

5 (2) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—Throughout the  
6 process of developing the national strategy in sub-  
7 section (a), the President shall provide for public  
8 participation that includes, but not be limited to—

9 (A) a national summit of participants as  
10 defined in subsection (b)(1) with demonstrated  
11 expertise in connecting children and families  
12 with the outdoors;

13 (B) listening sessions across the country;  
14 and

15 (C) opportunities for the public to submit  
16 ideas, recommendations, and comments through  
17 various written and electronic methods.

18 (c) UPDATING THE NATIONAL STRATEGY.—The  
19 President shall update the national strategy not less than  
20 5 years, and every 5 years thereafter, after the date the  
21 first national strategy is issued pursuant to subsection (a).  
22 In updating the strategy, the President shall, among other  
23 things, incorporate results of the evaluation under section  
24 5.



1 **SEC. 5. NATIONAL EVALUATION OF HEALTH IMPACTS.**

2 The Secretary shall enter into an agreement with the  
3 Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Director  
4 of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for—

5 (1) the development of recommendations for ap-  
6 propriate evaluation measures and criteria for devel-  
7 oping a study of national significance on the health  
8 impacts of the programs under this Act; and

9 (2) the administration of such a study.

10 **SEC. 6. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND BEST PRACTICES.**

11 The Secretary shall—

12 (1) provide technical assistance to grantees  
13 under section 3 through agreements with national  
14 organizations with a proven track record of con-  
15 necting children to the outdoors; and

16 (2) disseminate best practices that emerge from  
17 strategies funded under this Act.

18 **SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.**

19 In this Act:

20 (1) The term “eligible entity” means—

21 (A) a State; or

22 (B) a consortium of—

23 (i) a State, city, county, municipality,  
24 entity of local government, park and recre-  
25 ation department or district, school dis-

1                   trict, institution of higher education, or  
2                   nonprofit organization; and

3                   (ii) any combination of entities speci-  
4                   fied in clause (i).

5                   (2) The term “Secretary” means the Secretary  
6                   of the Interior.

7                   (3) The term “State” means any of the several  
8                   States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth  
9                   of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands,  
10                  Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the  
11                  Northern Mariana Islands, any other territory or  
12                  possession of the United States, or any Indian tribe.

13 **SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

14                  (a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appro-  
15                  priated to the Secretary to carry out this Act—

16                   (1) \$15,000,000 for fiscal year 2011;

17                   (2) \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2012;

18                   (3) \$100,000,000 for fiscal year 2013; and

19                   (4) such sums as may be necessary for subse-  
20                  quent fiscal years.

21                  (b) LIMITATION.—Of the amounts made available to  
22                  carry out this Act for a fiscal year, not more than 5 per-  
23                  cent may be made available for carrying out section 6.

24                  (c) SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.—Funds made  
25                  available under this Act shall be used to supplement, and

- 1 not supplant, any other Federal, State, or local funds
- 2 available for activities that connect children, youth, and
- 3 families to the outdoors.

