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114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3120

To amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a Great Lakes basin initiative for agricultural nonpoint source pollution prevention.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 21, 2015

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan (for herself and Mr. WALBERG) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

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A BILL

To amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a Great Lakes basin initiative for agricultural nonpoint source pollution prevention.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Great Lakes Assurance Program Verification Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. GREAT LAKES BASIN INITIATIVE FOR AGRICULTURAL NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION PREVENTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Food Security Act of 1985 is amended by inserting after section 1240H the following new section:

"SEC. 1240I. GREAT LAKES BASIN INITIATIVE FOR AGRICULTURAL NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION PREVENTION.

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Great Lakes States, shall establish a Great Lakes basin initiative for agricultural nonpoint source pollution prevention in accordance with this section.

"(b) INITIATIVE ELEMENTS.—

"(1) GRANTS TO STATES.—In implementing the initiative, the Secretary shall provide grants to Great Lakes States to fund the following:

"(A) Education and outreach, for producers in the Great Lakes basin, regarding—

"(i) nonpoint pollution of ground and surface water from agricultural activities;

"(ii) State verification programs; and

"(iii) the initiative.

"(B) Technical assistance, including training, to producers in the Great Lakes basin for the implementation of activities that reduce or

prevent nonpoint pollution of ground and surface water from agricultural activities.

"(C) Development and implementation of voluntary State verification programs, with a funding priority for voluntary State verification programs that incorporate Department of Agriculture conservation planning and practice standards.

"(2) FUNDING PRIORITY FOR CERTAIN PRODUCERS.—In implementing the initiative, the Secretary shall establish a funding priority within the Great Lakes basin for payments to producers under this chapter for producers that participate in the initiative with the purpose of achieving verification through a State verification program.

"(c) USE OF EXISTING DATA.—In establishing the initiative, the Secretary shall, where available, use existing plans, models, and assessments.

"(d) COLLABORATION.—In carrying out activities under the initiative, a State may collaborate with entities that have agricultural or environmental expertise, including academic or nonprofit organizations.

"(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) GREAT LAKES STATE.—The term 'Great Lakes State' means any one of the States of Illinois,

Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, or Wisconsin.

"(2) INITIATIVE.—The term 'initiative' means the Great Lakes basin initiative for agricultural nonpoint source pollution prevention established under subsection (a).

"(3) NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION.—The term 'nonpoint source pollution' is used within the meaning of that term under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.).

"(4) STATE VERIFICATION PROGRAM.—The term 'State verification program' means a program established by a Great Lakes State to verify producer implementation of practices approved by the State to reduce nonpoint pollution of ground and surface water from agricultural activities, which may include verification by a third party approved by the State or the Secretary.

"(f) FUNDING.—Of the funds made available to carry out this chapter, the Secretary shall carry out this section using—

"(1) $5,000,000 for fiscal year 2017;

"(2) $8,000,000 for fiscal year 2018;

"(3) $10,000,000 for fiscal year 2019; and

"(4) $7,000,000 for fiscal year 2020.".

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1240C of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–3) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(d) SPECIAL RULE FOR GREAT LAKES BASIN.—In evaluating applications of producers in the Great Lakes basin under this chapter, the Secretary shall prioritize applications in accordance with section 1240I(b)(2).".

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