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MEMBER DAY

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

MAY 18, 2021

Serial No. 117–6

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CONTENTS

	Page
Scott, Hon. David, a Representative in Congress from Georgia, opening statement	1
Prepared statement	2
Thompson, Hon. Glenn, a Representative in Congress from Pennsylvania, opening statement	2

MEMBERS

Baird, Hon. James R., a Representative in Congress from Indiana	3
Prepared statement	5
Hinson, Hon. Ashley, a Representative in Congress from Iowa	6
Prepared statement	8
González-Colón, Hon. Jenniffer, a Resident Commissioner in Congress from Puerto Rico	9
Prepared statement	10
Feenstra, Hon. Randy, a Representative in Congress from Iowa	11
Prepared statement	12
Johnson, Hon. Dusty, a Representative in Congress from South Dakota	13
Prepared statement	15
Submitted report	409
Westerman, Hon. Bruce, a Representative in Congress from Arkansas	16
Prepared statement	17
Malliotakis, Hon. Nicole, a Representative in Congress from New York	19
Prepared statement	20
Kahele, Hon. Kaiali'i, a Representative in Congress from Hawaii	21
Prepared statement	22
Lawson, Jr., Hon. Al, a Representative in Congress from Florida	23
Prepared statement	24
Submitted report	421
Jackson, Hon. Ronny, a Representative in Congress from Texas	26
Prepared statement	27
Arrington, Hon. Jodey C., a Representative in Congress from Texas, submitted letter	31
Cohen, Hon. Steve, a Representative in Congress from Tennessee, submitted letter	32
Estes, Hon. Ron, a Representative in Congress from Kansas, submitted statement	33
Good, Hon. Bob, a Representative in Congress from Virginia, submitted statement	33
Neguse, Hon. Joe, a Representative in Congress from Colorado, submitted statement	34
Pallone, Jr., Hon. Frank, a Representative in Congress from New Jersey, submitted letter	35
Perry, Hon. Scott, a Representative in Congress from Pennsylvania, submitted statement	37
Pfluger, Hon. August, a Representative in Congress from Texas, submitted letter	38
Sablan, Hon. Gregorio Kilili Camacho, a Delegate in Congress from Northern Mariana Islands, submitted statement	39
San Nicolas, Hon. Michael F. Q., a Delegate in Congress from Guam, submitted statement	40

SUBMITTED LEGISLATION

H.R. 8489, Price Reform In Cattle Economics Act (PRICE Act)	64

Page

H.R. 421, Assuring You Uniform Dietary Assistance (AYUDA) Act of 2021 (AYUDA Act) 89
H.R. 1162, 21st Century Conservation Corps Act 92
H.R. 1363, Sustainable Agriculture Research Act 165
H.R. 1692, Rehabilitating Economic Success Through Overcoming Rural Emergencies Act (RESTORE Act) 168
H.R. 2011, Wise Investment in Children Act of 2021 (WIC Act of 2021) 171
H.R. 2099, Secure Rural Schools Reauthorization Act of 2021 179
H.R. 2241, Civilian Climate Corps Act of 2021 189
H.R. 2477, Urban Forests Act of 2021 201
H.R. 2500, Forest Technology Enhancements for Conservation and Habitat Improvement Act (Forest TECH Improvement Act) 213
H.R. 2518, Producing Responsible Energy and Conservation Incentives and Solutions for the Environment Act (PRECISE Act) 216
H.R. 2562, Solving Our Shortages for Seedlings Act (SOS for Seedlings Act) ... 224
H.R. 2581, Biochar Innovations and Opportunities for Conservation, Health, and Advancements in Research Act of 2021 (BIOCHAR Act of 2021) 229
H.R. 2639, Trillion Trees Act 240
H.R. 2698, Aluminum Pricing Examination Act (APEX Act) 346
H.R. 2837, Making Essentials Available and Lawful (MEAL) Act of 2021 349
H.R. 3100, Student Food Security Act of 2021 352
H.R. 3211, Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership Act of 2021 387
H.R. 3369, Broadband for Rural America Act 394
H.R. 5680, Saving Workers by Eliminating Economic Tampering and Ensuring Reliability Act (SWEETER Act) 407

MEMBER DAY

TUESDAY, MAY 18, 2021

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Washington, D.C.

The Committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:00 a.m., via Zoom, Hon. David Scott of Georgia [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Members present: Representatives David Scott of Georgia, Adams, Hayes, Delgado, Plaskett, O'Halleran, Lawson, Craig, Harder, Axne, Thompson, Crawford, LaMalfa, Rouzer, Johnson, Baird, Mann, Feenstra, Moore, Cammack, Fischbach, and Letlow.

Staff present: Lyron Blum-Evitts, Prescott Martin III, Anne Simmons, Ashley Smith, Josh Maxwell, Patricia Straughn, Erin Wilson, John Konya, and Dana Sandman.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID SCOTT, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM GEORGIA

The CHAIRMAN. Good morning, and I want to send a big thank you out to all our Members who have joined us for today's Member Day hearing.

Folks, agriculture has a strong foundation in our nation's history. Agriculture started our nation. Eighty-five percent of our founding fathers were farmers. That is what farming means to our great nation. Agriculture has been that foundation, and our Committee has a proud history of working together across party lines to advance legislation needed to ensure that we continue to have thriving communities, but especially rural communities.

Why do I say that? Our rural communities are the heart and the soul of our great nation, and most certainly the heart and soul of our agriculture industry.

As a matter of fact, agriculture represents out of our 50 states, 44 of our 50 states, largest part of their economy is agriculture. That lets you know the significance and importance of agriculture. And it is no secret that our farmers, our ranchers, and our rural communities across this country are facing serious challenges of all kinds, and we have a wonderful roster here on our Agriculture Committee, but I recognize that there is a wide number of other Members who are not on our Committee that certainly want to be heard, and we want to hear them, to share with us what their ideas are.

Folks, we have some great challenges. Climate change, rural broadband, the concerns and issues facing our Black farmers, our disaster aid, crop insurance, our food security, all of these issues

are here, and our agriculture is grappling with each of these as we speak. But as I said, we have other Members that have issues as well, and we want to address those issues and make all of our Members, both Democrats and Republicans, who want to help us to lead this nation in maintaining agriculture, not just as a dynamic industry that it is, but we want to ensure that our United States agricultural industry is always kept as the number one agriculture industry in the world.

So, I am looking forward to the hearing, and with that.

[The prepared statement of Mr. David Scott follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID SCOTT, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM GEORGIA

Good morning, and thank you to all the Members who have joined us for today's Member Day hearing. Agriculture has a strong foundation in our nation's history, and the House Agriculture Committee has a proud history of working together to advance legislation needed to ensure we continue to have thriving rural communities and the resources necessary to feed our communities. As many of you know, agriculture is the economic engine of many of our states.

It's no secret that farmers, ranchers, and our rural communities across the country are facing serious challenges of all kinds. We have a wonderful roster here on the Agriculture Committee, but I recognize that there are a wide variety of perspectives and ideas from Members outside of our membership that can be vital to the work we do and I want to ensure that there is always room for that here, especially as we prepare for the next farm bill.

I'm looking forward to hearing from the Members today on the issues impacting their constituents and their suggestions and ideas on how we can work together to address those issues raised.

I now recognize the Ranking Member for any opening comments he'd like to make.

The CHAIRMAN. I now recognize the Ranking Member, Mr. Thompson, for any opening remarks he would like to make.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. GLENN THOMPSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. THOMPSON. All right. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to start by thanking our fellow Committee Members for joining us today. It is an important opportunity to hear from you and to hear from all of our colleagues on, as the Chairman said so well, on the very important issue of agriculture, and all the things that are within the jurisdiction of this Committee.

My gratitude to those who are non-Members of this Committee but who have made agriculture a priority for joining us today.

Mr. Chairman, I would be remiss if I didn't take this time to also reflect on the Committee's work, and in the months ahead. The only legislation advanced through our Committee so far during this Congress was a reconciliation instruction reported in February, and Members on both sides of the aisle were shut out of that process and the important timely priority for rural America were denied consideration. But the process and resulting policy product left much to be desired. Now, I think we will be hearing a similar message and testimony today, and this testimony must not only inform, but act as a guide to the future work of this Committee. Mr. Chairman, this is an opportunity to course correct the manner and process by which this Committee conducts its business to reflect all the priorities and needs of our producers and rural families, and

I am so appreciative of all the Members on both sides of the aisle who are going to give voice to those issues today.

As a start, I would like to suggest we invite Secretary Vilsack to testify before the Committee. We are long overdue on our farm bill oversight implementation and implementation duties, and we are getting closer every day to defeating a virus that has decimated our farms, our families, and our economy. And I am certain that the Secretary has very much to say on both these topics. In fact, hearing views of the Administration on so many matters is long overdue. This Committee has barely scratched the surface of COVID-related matters, let alone anything related to the 2018 Farm Bill. So, I would like to ask that we invite the various agencies within the Department, as well as the Farm Credit Administration and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to participate in similar hearings. Their expertise is imperative to this Committee's progress and success.

Mr. Chairman, your commitment to doing so would mean so much to me, as well as our Members and the communities we serve. And with that, I am very pleased to welcome all of our colleagues this morning, and I look forward to their testimony. I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, certainly. Thank you, Ranking Member Thompson, and you can rest assured I agree with you wholeheartedly. We do need to bring in Farm Credit. We need to bring in the futures industry. It is such an exciting and dynamic time for our wonderful world of agriculture, and we need the help of all these folks. So, you can certainly count on me to be supportive of you in that request and your move.

Now, I would like to welcome our colleagues who have joined us today to provide testimony on issues that are important to the nation, but specifically to their Congressional district, and we want to know how we can help you.

I believe we have Representative Baird here from Indiana, Representative Hinson from Iowa, Miss Jenniffer González-Colón from Puerto Rico, Representative Feenstra from Iowa, and Representative Dusty Johnson from South Dakota, and I believe Representative Westerman from Arkansas, and Representative Malliotakis from New York. There may be others, but we are excited to hear from you. Our staff is here taking very good notes because we have a wonderful staff. They are the ones that help us get the work done.

We are ready to begin, and there were even more than the ones I mentioned who wanted to be here with us this morning, and some are submitting their comments for the record. But each Member that comes before us will be recognized for 5 minutes, and now I recognize the gentleman from Indiana, Representative Baird. You are recognized for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES R. BAIRD, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM INDIANA

Mr. BAIRD. Thank you, Chairman Scott and Ranking Member Thompson, and my colleagues for providing this opportunity to speak today. I am excited to sit before so many passionate and tal-

ented colleagues to share my vision and concerns for the direction of our esteemed panel.

As we have seen so far in the early days of the 117th Congress, our country faces many challenges and our policy is being shaped by significant political forces on both sides of the aisle. Much as my beloved Hoosier State has long been seen as the Crossroads of America, I see plainly where our Committee stands at the crossroads of these important policy challenges.

That said, while I see great opportunity in the potential for agriculture and the broader whole of rural America to effect impactful change on these challenges, I, at the present, find myself dismayed at the direction this Committee has taken in these early months. Many times, so far this year, I have found myself fearing that the storied tradition of bipartisanship that our Committee has long been known for has been jeopardized as we hold meetings on niche, partisan issues with partisan approaches. As we move forward with the remainder of this year and this Congress, it is my sincere hope that we will correct the course of our panel away from the spotlight of mainstream partisan issues and refocus our attention on providing much needed leadership to rural America, agricultural producers, and the critical importance of our nation's food systems.

The Administration, House and Senate leadership, and even the leadership of this Committee have made clear that climate change mitigation is among the highest priorities of this Congress. This issue is a perfect example of a topic so easily corruptible by partisan and political rancor, but with so much potential for our mission if approached responsibly. As we assuredly move forward in addressing this sensitive and timely topic, we must focus our efforts on developing real, impactful, and achievable solutions that encourage growth, and steer away from some of the options that create burden and reduced efficiency.

While there is a real risk that climate change policy could create many challenges for the agricultural industry, if addressed correctly, it could instead offer tremendous opportunity with multiple beneficiaries. Our goal should be to establish turn-key solutions, incentivize participation, and unlock the potential for science to aid in increased sustainability.

We need to find and provide the tools that allow producers to work smarter, like improving rural connectivity that allows for increases in precision agriculture which leads to increased yields with reduced inputs like fertilizers, pesticides, water, and fuel. We need to evaluate and retool our regulatory pathways to allow innovative products like feed additives that can reduce methane and other greenhouse gases created by livestock. Adopt new technologies like soy-methyl-ester sealants for roads and bridges that don't require replacement and they double the life of concrete infrastructure, greatly reducing carbon emissions while providing demand for American soybeans. We need to give credit to farmers and ranchers for the good work they already do to benefit our environment through good stewardship, conservation, and the greenhouse gases they sequester through the growing cycle. We need to facilitate the adoption of tools like methane digesters like those used by Fair Oaks Farms and Biotown Ag in my district to turn animal and food waste into incredibly useful biogas that can be

used for electricity and for transportation fuels. Of course, we need to look for more opportunities, both domestically and abroad, to increase adoption of biofuels like ethanol; which a Harvard study recently reported offers a 46 percent reduction in greenhouse gases over the fuel additives they replaced, all while rebuilding our rural economies and without decimating our fossil fuel industry.

These are just a few examples of how to turn challenge into opportunity, but regardless of your pursuit of these or other solutions, it is my highest priority that whatever policies we adopt around this issue be producer-focused, accessible, and not punitive.

Other key areas of importance for me this year include unwavering support for the critical safety-net programs that keep producers in business and our nation's food supply stable. Protecting the Commodity Credit Corporation from being commandeered by the Administration. Expanding access to foreign markets for our agricultural goods. Protecting our nation's biotech and scientific capabilities by stopping intellectual property theft and forced technology transfers to gain access to foreign markets like China. And shaping new regulatory pathways, allowing innovative new products to come to market and more accurately evaluating products already there.

I only have about 30 seconds, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. All right, go right ahead. We will give you that extra.

Mr. BAIRD. As we move forward with our work in Congress, I look forward to offering my passion and expertise to help bring real solutions to the challenges facing our nation. I look forward to working closely alongside each and every one of you as we work to serve America's farmers and ranchers, and the whole of rural America.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Baird follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES R. BAIRD, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM INDIANA

Thank you, Chairman Scott, Ranking Member Thompson, and my colleagues for providing the opportunity to speak today. I am excited to sit before so many passionate and talented colleagues to share my vision and concerns for the direction of our esteemed panel.

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mission if approached responsibly. As we assuredly move forward in addressing this sensitive and timely topic, we must focus our efforts on developing real, impactful, and achievable solutions that encourage growth, and steer away from any options that create burden or reduced efficiency.

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These are just a few examples of how to turn challenge into opportunity, but regardless of our pursuit of these or other solutions, it is my highest priority that whatever policies we adopt around this issue be producer-focused, accessible, and not punitive.

Other key areas of importance for me this year include unwavering support of the critical safety-net programs that keep producers in business and our nation's food supply stable. Protecting the Commodity Credit Corporation from being commandeered by the Administration. Expanding access to foreign markets for our agricultural goods. Protecting our nation's biotech and scientific capabilities by stopping intellectual property theft and forced technology transfers to gain access to foreign markets like China. And shaping new regulatory pathways—allowing innovative new products to come to market and more accurately evaluating products already there.

As we move forward with our work this Congress, I look forward to offering my passion and expertise to help bring real solutions to the challenges facing our nation. I look forward working closely alongside each and every one of you as we work to serve America's farmers and ranchers, and the whole of rural America.

With that Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Thank you,

JAMES R. BAIRD,
Member of Congress.

The CHAIRMAN. Certainly. Thank you, Representative Baird, for that excellent testimony.

Next, we will hear from Mrs. Hinson from Iowa.

Mrs. HINSON. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. You are recognized.

STATEMENT OF HON. ASHLEY HINSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM IOWA

Mrs. HINSON. Thank you, Chairman Scott, and Ranking Member Thompson as well for having me. Members of the Committee, it is a pleasure to be with you today here on Member Day. I look forward to offering my ideas to some of the challenges faced by the agriculture sector in Iowa. I know we are well-represented on the Committee, but I know there are so many issues facing our rural

communities and I just wanted to add my voice to those issues today.

Last month, I introduced H.R. 2518, the PRECISE Act, which is legislation that would make it easier for our farmers to access precision agriculture technology by allowing existing farm bill USDA programs like EQIP and CSP to cover precision ag tech.

The legislation presents a farmer-focused solution to the very real challenges we face, and I hope it will continue to gain additional bipartisan support.

I have heard from Iowans across the ag industry about how precision ag technology is key to increasing crop yields, while simultaneously lowering our overall inputs, front-end costs to our farmers, and also positive environmental impacts. However, it is also extremely expensive to start using this precision ag technology, making it out of reach for many of our family farmers in Iowa.

The PRECISE Act would expand access to this technology, including tools to connect rural broadband for producers using these innovative strategies. Mr. Chairman, I did appreciate your remarks about rural broadband as well. We should harness the knowledge and experience within the agriculture community to provide innovative solutions and be good stewards to our environment, and we can do that.

Farmers don't just deserve to be at the table because these policies impact them, they deserve to be at the table because they have the valuable ideas and solutions that bureaucrats who have never set foot on a farm could ever imagine.

So, I hope we can work together to advance priorities like the PRECISE Act that encourage our farmers, our producers, and our ranchers to truly innovate in what they do. Farmers in the Heartland have solutions to more problems than just feeding the world. They help fuel it, also through biofuel production. Biofuels are on hand and available right now to have a dramatic and positive impact on the nation's fuel supply, improving our energy security and minimizing environmental outputs at the same time. As we have seen over the last few weeks, our fuel supply is volatile and can be subject to national security threats. So, simple question. Why not turn to our own Iowa producers right now? They have the solution.

It is critical that this Committee hold the EPA accountable to maintain the integrity of the Renewable Fuel Standard to maximize the benefit of biofuels.

And, before I close today with my remarks, I just wanted to talk a little bit more about the lack of access and connectivity that many rural Iowans and Americans face each and every day. Rural Iowans deserve equitable access to essential services like broadband and healthcare, as well as rural community development and economic opportunity. Rural communities cannot continue to be left behind. Their voices matter. Their stories are important. We need to tell them here in Washington. And, I look forward to working with all of you to ensure that they are heard as we continue to legislate here in Congress.

Finally, I urge this Committee to take up the PRECISE Act along with other legislation that will continue to support Iowa's farmers, ranchers, and biofuels producers, and I stand ready to

work with this Committee, my colleagues from Iowa, to support our agriculture sector back home.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the time today, and I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Mrs. Hinson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. ASHLEY HINSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM IOWA

Chairman Scott, Ranking Member Thompson, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to attend Member Day and offer ideas and solutions for challenges faced by the agriculture sector in Iowa, as well as issues facing our rural communities.

Last month, I introduced the PRECISE Act, legislation that would make it easier for farmers to access precision agriculture technology by allowing existing USDA Federal programs under the farm bill to support and encourage these practices.

This legislation is part of an effort led by Leader McCarthy and House Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Thompson to promote responsible energy solutions that prioritize input from the agriculture sector. It's a farmer-focused solution to very real challenges, and I hope that it will gain bipartisan support.

I have heard from Iowans across the ag industry about how precision agriculture technology is key to increasing crop yields, while simultaneously lowering overall inputs, front-end costs to farmers, and environmental impacts.

However, it is also extremely expensive to start using this technology, making it out of reach for many family farmers.

The PRECISE Act would expand access to this technology, including tools to connect rural broadband for producers using these innovative practices.

Farmers, producers, and ranchers in Iowa care deeply about conservation. They are the best stewards of their own land. Our environmental policies should reflect that core belief.

We should harness the knowledge and experience within the agriculture community to provide innovative solutions to the climate challenge. Farmers don't just deserve to be at the table because these policies impact them—they should be central to the discussion because they have valuable ideas and solutions that bureaucrats who have never set foot on a farm could never imagine.

I hope we can work together to advance policies like the PRECISE Act that will create a healthy economy and a healthy environment.

Farmers in the Heartland have solutions to more problems than just feeding the world—they help fuel it, too. Our corn and soybean producers can assist with one of the hottest issues the Administration is trying to address: climate change. Biofuels are a low-carbon, low-octane solution that are readily available to meet an increased demand. As we've seen over the last few weeks, our fuel supply is volatile and can be subject to national security threats. Why not turn to our own Iowa producers, who are more than capable of bolstering our nation's fuel supply and reducing our nation's carbon footprint?

The ag industry is constantly working at a disadvantage because its been overlooked far too often. The lack of access that rural communities have to basic necessities is atrocious and extremely unfair. This is the backbone of our nation. Increased access to rural broadband would significantly improve the productivity and efficiency of the agriculture industry, including its ability to turn to modernized farming and conservation practices such as precision agriculture technology. Iowans in rural areas should not be expected to drive miles to find a gas station or a library in a nearby town just to connect to the internet. It's time we provide rural America the attention it deserves and connect it with the rest of the country and the world.

Rural Iowans also need access to other essential services, including rural community development and economic opportunity. Rural communities cannot continue to be left behind—their voices matter, their stories are important, and I look forward to working with you all to ensure that they are heard as we legislate here in Congress.

I urge this Committee to take up the PRECISE Act, along with other legislation that will support Iowa's farmers, ranchers, and biofuel producers, and I stand ready to work with this Committee to support our agriculture sector. I yield back.

SUBMITTED LEGISLATION

1. **H.R. 2518, Producing Responsible Energy and Conservation Incentives and Solutions for the Environment Act (PRECISE Act):** *https://*

www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr2518ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr2518ih.pdf. (***See*** **p. 216).**

The CHAIRMAN. I just want to say, Representative Hinson, that you are absolutely right, and this Committee is with you 100 percent on the precision agriculture and our needs and at the forefront, we are going to get broadband established. It is so critical, and I just wanted to give a powerful amen to that. Our staff is working on legislation to move us immediately. We had a great hearing on it. Excellent presentation, Representative Hinson.

And now, we will hear from Congresswoman Jenniffer González-Colón.

STATEMENT OF HON. JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, A RESIDENT COMMISSIONER IN CONGRESS FROM PUERTO RICO

Miss GONZALEZ-COLON. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for allowing me to participate in this Member Day. Thank you, Ranking Member Thompson, for the opportunity.

As you know, Puerto Rico does not participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, like their counterparts in the states, D.C., Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Instead, it has the Nutrition Assistance Program, or NAP, which is a capped block grant typically funded at over $1.9 billion every year and is currently serving over 1.5 million Island residents.

NAP is one of the top assistance programs for the needy constituents of the Island. Similar to SNAP, NAP provides a monthly allotment meant to support a healthy and balanced diet. However, due to limited funding, NAP cannot automatically adjust to fluctuations in demand, including those related to emergencies, and provides less benefits to eligible participants.

I can tell you that because after Hurricane Maria in 2017, the demand for NAP participation increased significantly. We noticed a similar pattern with the earthquakes that began in late 2018, and now with the ongoing COVID–19 pandemic. It has become clear that NAP is one of the first programs my constituents turn to during the aftermath of an emergency or a crisis. Still, the program cannot automatically accommodate sudden increases in demand and, as a result, we have to turn to Congress on multiple occasions to secure emergency NAP funds.

Additionally, the base block grant leaves my constituents with less benefits each month. For example, a household of one enrolled in NAP receives a maximum of $112, compared to a maximum monthly allotment of $234 in SNAP. Similarly, a household of two in NAP receives $216, compared to a maximum monthly allotment of $430 under SNAP.

While I appreciate the support of my colleagues with ensuring Puerto Rico has enough NAP funds to cover benefits during emergency periods, true relief and proper assistance can only be achieved with a transition to SNAP. This is my goal, and my office is working closely with the Government of Puerto Rico and USDA to understand the implications of this transition and devise an appropriate plan for Puerto Rico to successfully operate SNAP. As such, I respectfully request you continue working alongside my office as we develop a path towards a viable transition to SNAP.

Last, I would like to convey my full support for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, or WIC, which supports nearly 100,000 constituents in Puerto Rico. I am an original cosponsor of H.R. 2011, known as the WIC Act of 2021, which would expand eligibility and address specific gaps in nutritional assistance for *postpartum* women and young children.

Thank you and I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Miss González-Colón follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, A RESIDENT COMMISSIONER IN CONGRESS FROM PUERTO RICO

Thank you, Chairman Scott and [Ranking Member] Thompson for the opportunity to participate in today' Member Day Hearing.

As you know, Puerto Rico does not participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) like their counterparts in the states, D.C., Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Instead, it has the Nutrition Assistance Program, or NAP, which is a capped block grant typically funded at over $1.9 billion every year and is currently serving over 1.5 million Island residents.

NAP is one of the top assistance programs for needy constituents on the Island. Similar to SNAP, NAP provides a monthly allotment meant to support a healthy and balanced diet. However, due to limited funding, NAP cannot automatically adjust to fluctuations in demand—including those related to emergencies—and provides less benefits to eligible participants.

After Hurricane Maria in 2017, demand for NAP participation increased significantly. We noticed a similar pattern with the earthquakes that began in late 2018, and now with the ongoing COVID–19 pandemic. It has become clear that NAP is one of the first programs my constituents turn to during the aftermath of an emergency or crisis. Still, the program cannot automatically accommodate sudden increases in demand and, as a result, we have had to turn to Congress on multiple occasions to secure emergency NAP funds.

Additonally, the base block grant leaves my constituents with less benefits each month. For example, a household of one enrolled in NAP receives a maximum of $112, compared to a maximum monthly allotment of $234 in SNAP. Similarly, a household of two in NAP receives $216, compared to a maximum monthly allotment of $430 under SNAP.

While I appreciate the support of my colleagues with ensuring Puerto Rico has enough NAP funds to cover benefits during emergency periods, true relief and proper assistance can only be achieved with a transition to SNAP. This is my goal, and my office is working closely with the Government of Puerto Rico and USDA to understand the implications of this transition and devise an appropriate plan for Puerto Rico to successfully operate SNAP. As such, I respectfully request you continue working alongside my office as we develop a path towards a viable transition to SNAP.

Last, I would like to convey my full support for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, or WIC, which supports nearly 100,000 constituents in Puerto Rico. I am an original cosponsor of H.R. 2011, known as the WIC Act, which would expand eligibility and address specific gaps in nutrition assistance for postpartum women and young children.

Thank you and I [yield] back.

SUBMITTED LEGISLATION

1. **H.R. 2011, Wise Investment in Children Act of 2021 (WIC Act of 2021):** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr2011ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr2011ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 171).**

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much for your excellent testimony, and we hear your concerns about NAP and the fact that sometimes that money runs out. We are going to be working with you on that. Excellent testimony there, Miss González-Colón.

And now, we will hear from Representative Feenstra from Iowa.

STATEMENT OF HON. RANDY FEENSTRA, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM IOWA

Mr. FEENSTRA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Thompson. Thank you for providing the opportunity for me to testify today.

I want to call the Committee's attention to the current market conditions facing cattle producers in Iowa and across the United States.

Since August of 2019, there have been multiple extreme market disruptions to the cattle industry. The cattle processing facility fire in Holcomb, Kansas and supply chain disruptions caused by COVID–19 have had serious impacts on the cattle market to the detriment of many of our cattle producers. As a result, we saw boxed beef prices dramatically increase while live cattle prices have decreased over the last year. In some cases, cattle producers were left without a market to sell their cattle and were responsible for higher costs to feed and care for the cattle until a market could be found.

Over the past several weeks, we have again seen the price of boxed beef continue to increase while cattle prices remain stagnant. The gross packer margin on cattle has grown, but I continue to hear the cattle producers are struggling to even break even, to a point of losing approximately $100 to $120 a head for every one sold.

There are a lot of factors contributing to the current market situation. We know that the four meatpacking companies control over 80 percent of the cattle processing industry. This simple fact leaves the cattle industry particularly vulnerable to market disruptions. It also can leave cattle producers with few options to market their cattle if a packing facility has to reduce their processing capacity, which we saw with COVID and now we hear a lot of packers saying they don't have workers, which is causing a slowdown.

In Iowa, I have heard from the producers concerned about the packers having a captive supply. Packers have purchased all the cattle they need through formula contracts, whose details are not known to the public, and then those packers are not active in the market for a week. As a result, some cattle producers are left without a place to sell their cattle, and must continue to cover the cost of feeding and caring for them, as the commodity prices continue to soar.

This issue highlights a growing discussion if there is enough cash negotiation taking place in the marketplace to ensure true price discovery and to allow cattle producers sufficient leverage in the cash negotiations. There are several legislative proposals that are being discussed about how to tackle this issue and I believe it is a discussion that must take place prior to reauthorization of Livestock Mandatory Reporting.

We have also heard that labor shortages of COVID–19 precautions have impacted processors' ability to operate at full capacity. Again, this is a very serious problem as the cattle continue to back up. We should also take time to examine how we can assist small- and medium-sized processors to create additional markets.

These are just a few of the issues that I am hearing contributing to the current situation facing our cattle producers. While there are

several intertwined issues taking place, I believe it is our responsibility on this Committee to examine what is going on and put forth solutions that will help remedy the state of the market to ensure family cattle producers can make a living through their hard work. The time to act is now and I hope Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Thompson, that you will commit to working with me toward a hearing on examining the state of the market and putting forth solutions in the near future.

I cannot tell you how crucial this is. We have current independent cattle producers that will probably not be in business in the next 6 months if we do not get this rectified. It seems that there is a captive market through the packers, and if you are not part of the packers, you are out in the cold. These are things that need to be looked at. Thank you, Ranking Member and Mr. Chairman, for considering these options.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Feenstra follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. RANDY FEENSTRA A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM IOWA

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Thompson:

Thank you for providing the opportunity to testify today. I want to call the Committee's attention to the current market conditions facing cattle producers in Iowa and across the United States.

Since August of 2019, there have been multiple extreme market disruptions to the cattle industry. A cattle processing facility fire in Holcomb, Kansas and supply chain disruptions caused by COVID–19 had serious impacts on the cattle producers. As a result, we saw boxed beef prices increase while live cattle prices decreased. In some cases, cattle producers were left without a market to sell their cattle and were responsible for higher costs to feed and care for the cattle until a market could be found.

While these black-swan events had negative impacts on cattle producers, the current market situation remains of serious concern to cattle producers. As of May 10, 2021 the choice boxed beef cutout was valued at more than $309/cwt. At the same time, cattle producers received average bids of approximately $118/cwt. Further the gross packer margin, on an average steer weighing approximately 1,450 lbs., with a 63 percent dressing percentage, exceeds $1,000/head. This comes as I continue to hear from cattle producers struggling to break-even.

There are a lot of factors contributing to the current market situation. We know that four meatpacking companies control over 80 percent of the cattle processing industry. This simple fact does leave the cattle industry particularly vulnerable to market disruptions. It also can leave cattle producers with few options if a packing facility has to reduce their processing capacity. In Iowa, I have heard from producers concerned about packers having a captive supply. Packers have purchased all the cattle they need through formula contracts, whose details are not known to the public, and are not active in the market for a week. As a result, some cattle producers are left without a place to sell their cattle, and must continue to cover the cost of care, feed and yardage—all at a time when we see crop commodity prices soaring.

This issue highlights a growing discussion about if there is enough cash negotiation taking place in the marketplace to ensure true price discovery and to allow cattle producers sufficient leverage in the cash negotiations. There are several legislative proposals that being discussed about how to tackle this issue and I believe it is a discussion that must take place prior to the reauthorization of Livestock Mandatory Reporting.

We have also heard that labor shortages and COVID–19 precautions have impacted processor's ability to operate at full capacity. This is a serious concern and should be examined to ensure that our cattle producers have markets to sell their cattle. We should also take time to examine how we can assist small- and medium-sized processors to create additional markets.

These are just a few of the issues that I am hearing contributing to the current situation facing our cattle producers. While there are several, intertwined issues taking place, I believe it is the responsibly of this Committee to examine what is

going on and to put forth solutions that will help remedy the state of the market to ensure the family cattle producer can make a living from their hard work. The time to act is now and I hope Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Thompson, that you will commit to working with me towards a hearing to examine the state of the market and putting forth solutions in the near future.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you, Representative Feenstra, and you have raised some very important issues that are of concern to me as well. Quite honestly, I have talked with several in the cattle industry about getting help to the small- and medium-sized producers, but it is very interesting that you pointed out that some of our cattle producers are now losing up to $120 per head. That is something that we look forward to helping and making sure our cattle industry is thriving. All right. Thank you very much.

Now, we will go to Mr. Dusty Johnson of Iowa. Mr. Johnson?

STATEMENT OF HON. DUSTY JOHNSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM SOUTH DAKOTA

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member.

As we talk about the priorities we want this Committee to deal with in this Congress, I do appreciate the opportunity to be heard.

I am going to talk about two things today: the reopening of FSA offices, and the cattle markets. Now, many of my colleagues have heard me talk about these things before, but they are really critically important.

Now, the pandemic has put a ton of strain on these local FSA offices. It is not just the typical programs of the ARCs and the PLCs and the CRPs, but we have obviously a disaster program, CFAP, which was new to producers, new to FSA offices, put just an unprecedented amount of work onto those offices, and the offices have been closed.

Now, almost a year ago, the Trump Administration laid out a data-driven reopening process that would use COVID metrics from that localized area to decide when offices could reopen. So, we had a pathway to reopening. Many of these offices were moving in the right direction, and then we had the new Administration reverse that, closing all of these offices, telling them that they could no longer take appointments. And given the workload that is out there, we have to get these offices opened back up. This Committee has a constitutional duty to do oversight. This is the kind of meat and potatoes, blocking and tackling oversight that we should be conducting. We haven't had a hearing yet with Administration officials to talk about operational issues related to producers, and we really should. So, that is number one.

Number two, I want to talk about the cattle markets. You know, most commodities have really rebounded pretty substantially since the earliest days of the pandemic, but cattle producers have been left behind in that rally.

Now, for a lot of the commodities, it is substantial increase in export demand, in some cases really incredible increase in export demand that has driven that. But again, the cattle guys have been left behind, and there is a tremendous amount of concern, uncertainty, and pain out in cattle country. I just want to make sure that we understand this has got to be something we address at the Committee level.

Now, there are a few reasons for this. Number one, we do have serious labor shortages. That is a national problem across all industries, but when you don't have the workers able to show up at these packing plants, it substantially reduces the capacity. That has huge ripple impacts.

Now, there are also some structural deficiencies, especially a lack of processing capacity. Even during the best of times, we don't have enough shackle space. And right now, what compounds this problem, and which has a factor that has so many people in cattle country nervous, is we have a developing drought which is at really the worst time going to send a message to the market to draw down herd size, and it is going to cut into the growing season for grass, and that is going to be a real problem.

So, the USDA did an analysis. They did an investigation. They released—I guess you would call it an interim report that analyzed the growing gap between boxed beef prices and what producers were getting on the hoof. And I thought it had some valuable insight. It showed that because of the pandemic, we had a 40 percent reduction in the processing capacity at the plants. And that that choke point created very negative impacts on both ends, to both consumers and producers. Producers, your cow/calf folks, were getting—or your feeders were getting 18 percent less than they were before on already lousy prices, and then you had consumers who were paying, in some cases, 80 percent more for boxed beef. That choke point, that structural deficiency, is a serious problem.

So, what do we do about it? Well, I introduced H.R. 8489, the PRICE Act (Price Reform In Cattle Economics Act), which has a number of things related to transparency, new risk management tools, the ability for small producers—not producers, sorry—processors to grow their market share, which would help. This Committee deserves some praise in working some of those ideas already through this Committee this year. We have leveled the playing field for small processors as they work to increase overtime inspection. I think that was a great success, but we need to build on that.

I want to call out the fact that a recent meeting organized by the Livestock Marketing Association brought together leaders from American Farm Bureau, American Farmers Union, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, R–CALF USA, and the U.S. Cattlemen. Now, these guys did something extraordinary. They agreed on three prongs that they could work together on. I am supportive of all those prongs, and I want to share them with my colleagues here.

Number one, let's reauthorize Livestock Mandatory Reporting, and let's do that in a way that includes formula-based prices under the same reporting requirements, and also, let's get a contract library established. Number two, let's have the DOJ deliver a final report on all these market disruptions. And number three, let's encourage the investment of and the development of new, independent local and regional packers. My PRICE Act deals with issues one and three, and then earlier this week, we released a letter that deals with issue two.

I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member. This is an incredibly important issue that I am looking forward to addressing with the Committee.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Johnson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. DUSTY JOHNSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM SOUTH DAKOTA

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Thompson, thank you for holding this Member Day hearing to highlight priorities important to our constituents back home. As a Member of this Committee I often get the opportunity to address policy concerns at a national level, but today I would like to highlight some issues that are especially impacting citizens in South Dakota.

Farm Service Agency (FSA) Offices

The pandemic has put enormous strain on our local FSA offices. Between disaster programs such as the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP), signup for standing programs like the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage (ARC/PLC[)], and the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), there is an unprecedented amount of work that needs to be done.

In May 2020 the Trump Administration detailed a pandemic reopening plan for FSA offices that was based on science and dictated the ability of offices to reopen depending on conditions in their respective counties.

While more restrictive than some may have liked, this was at least dependent on a metric that made some sort of sense.

This is why it is so confusing to me that after many county offices were on a path to reopen in areas where the pandemic was under control, Secretary Vilsack dictated that **all** offices should shut back down and quit taking appointments.

Mr. Chairman, this is just one of the numerous issues that this Committee has a responsibility to conduct thorough oversight. However to date we have not had a single hearing with Administration officials to discuss important issues like these. I hope that changes soon and the Agriculture Committee gets back to focusing on issues that matter to farmers, ranchers, and rural America.

Cattle Markets

While many commodities have rebounded since the beginning of the pandemic, driven by increased export demand, cattlemen in South Dakota have been left out as processing capacity and labor to run at full force remain an issue.

Compounding these struggles are a developing drought that will likely cut into growing season and push cow herd liquidations.

These black swan events have taken their toll on ranchers and feeders. USDA's *Boxed Beef & Fed Cattle Price Spread Investigation Report** from last summer showed that in the aftermath of the pandemic fed cattle prices declined 18% and beef processing capacity utilization by roughly 40%. At the same time, boxed beef prices rose almost 80%.

That's why I urge this Committee to continue to examine these important issues and not leave cattlemen behind in discussions. That's why last Congress I introduced H.R. 8489, the PRICE Act that would focus on greater transparency, increased risk management solutions, and open up opportunities for new and expanding meat processors.

Last Congress, this Committee was successful in passing several things that moved us forward, including my bill to provide a level playing field for small processors seeking overtime inspection.

I look forward to working with the Committee and this Congress to address these important issues to South Dakota.

SUBMITTED LEGISLATION

1. **H.R. 8489, Price Reform In Cattle Economics Act (PRICE Act):** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-116hr8489ih/pdf/BILLS-116hr8489ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 64).**

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you for that, Representative Johnson, and let me apologize to you. I have recognized you as being from Iowa, when in fact, you represent the wonderful people of South Dakota. I am sorry about that.

Mr. JOHNSON. They get a lot better corn yields in Iowa, so if we could get that, that would be just fine.

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* **Editor's note:** the report is located on p. 409.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. There you go. Thank you. An excellent presentation, and we look forward to working with you to address those concerns.

Now, we will hear from Representative Westerman from Arkansas.

STATEMENT OF HON. BRUCE WESTERMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM ARKANSAS

Mr. WESTERMAN. Thank you, Chairman Scott, and Ranking Member Thompson for the opportunity to testify today. As Ranking Member of the House Natural Resources Committee, I enjoy working closely with both of you on our mutual goals of conserving the environment and ensuring the prosperity of rural America.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, our nation is blessed with an abundance of natural resources. We have the responsibility to manage and utilize these resources in ways that allow them to flourish for future generations, and I firmly believe that the healthiest, most resilient environment and economy are ones that scientifically balance both the needs of the land with the needs of the people living connected to the land.

True conservation utilizes innovative new approaches to maximize utility and access to our lands, while ensuring their long-term health. One piece of bipartisan legislation that exemplifies these principles of conservation and innovation is H.R. 2639, the Trillion Trees Act. It is a bill that I re-introduced this past April. The bill is endorsed by over 50 stakeholder organizations and has currently 96 bipartisan cosponsors. My bill would improve our nation's forestlands and establish the U.S. as a leader in the global One Trillion Trees Initiative by incentivizing improved regeneration, management, and utilization of our forests.

Studies show planting and restoring one trillion trees globally would sequester 205 gigatons of carbon. That is an amount equivalent to ⅔ of the carbon released since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. We currently have over 400 parts per million of carbon in the atmosphere, and the American people are demanding that Congress take practical action to address this issue. Natural climate solutions like the Trillion Trees Act are key to our future as we seek commonsense, innovative ways to address atmospheric carbon.

House Natural Resources Republicans held a forum on the bill in celebration of Arbor Day, where representatives from Walmart, the National Wildlife Federation, the National Alliance of Forest Owners, and University of Idaho testified in strong support of the bill. During this forum, witnesses highlighted both the economic and carbon-storing benefits of sustainable forest products and global reforestation initiatives. As this Committee works to identify practical, pro-growth carbon solutions, I hope that the House Agriculture Committee will hold an official hearing on the Trillion Trees Act.

Additionally, I would like to highlight several bills which were included in the Trillion Trees Act, but were also introduced as standalone pieces of legislation referred to this Committee.

The first is H.R. 2477, the Urban Forests Act of 2021, a bipartisan bill introduced by Representative Malliotakis from New York.

Urban forests are important sources of carbon sequestration and sequestered nearly 130 million tons of carbon in 2018. The Urban Forests Act of 2021 would enhance and maintain these forests while helping create new jobs focused on new wood products and forest management.

Next, H.R. 2500, the Forest TECH Improvement Act, introduced by Representative Moore of Utah, aims to improve the pace and scale of reforestation efforts via new technologies like drones and advanced GIS mapping technologies.

Third, H.R. 2562, the SOS for Seedlings Act, introduced by Representative Bentz, addresses the significant U.S. seedling shortage by providing critical direction to the U.S. Forest Service to develop a comprehensive seedling strategy and increasing resources for Federal, state, Tribal, local, and private nurseries. If the United States is to both become a global leader in reforestation and address the reforestation needs driven by catastrophic wildfire, we must dramatically scale up our current U.S. nursery capacity.

Last, but not least, is H.R. 2581, the BIOCHAR Act, introduced by Representative Herrell. Biochar is an emerging carbon sequestration tool with exciting potential to sequester carbon from biomass for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. Biochar, which is produced by heating biomass in the absence of oxygen, also has a litany of other environmental benefits ranging from improved forest health and resiliency, agricultural productivity, environmental remediation, water quality improvement and retention, and improved soil health. This bill would create a new demonstration projects for biochar to improve its commercialization as well as new applied research and development programs to test its applicability in a variety of sectors.

To quote something Ranking Member Thompson frequently says, "The 2018 Farm Bill was the greenest farm bill in history." I believe that if we don't pass these bills as stand-alone beforehand, the inclusion of the Trillion Trees Act and the additional bills I mentioned can help make the 2023 Farm Bill even greener and provide a benefit to both the environment and the economy.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. Again, as Ranking Member of the Natural Resources Committee, I am committed to working with you to advance meaningful, bipartisan conservation and forestry legislation that will improve the lives of Americans across the nation. Thank you, and I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Westerman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. BRUCE WESTERMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM ARKANSAS

Thank you, Chairman Scott, and Ranking Member Thompson for the opportunity to testify today. As Ranking Member of the House Committee on Natural Resources, I enjoy working closely with you both on our mutual goals of conserving the environment and ensuring the prosperity of rural America.

Mr. Chairman, our nation is blessed with an abundance of natural resources. We have the responsibility to manage and utilize these resources in ways that allow them to flourish for future generations. I firmly believe that the healthiest, most resilient environment is one which scientifically balances both the needs of the land with the needs of the people living connected to the land. True conservation utilizes innovative new approaches to maximize utility and access to our lands, while ensuring their long-term health.

One piece of bipartisan legislation that exemplifies these principles of conservation and innovation is H.R. 2639, the "Trillion Trees Act," which I re-introduced this past April. The bill is endorsed by over 50 stakeholder organizations and currently has 96 bipartisan cosponsors. My bill would improve our nation's forestlands and establish the U.S. as a leader of the global One Trillion Trees Initiative by incentivizing improved regeneration, management, and utilization of our forests.

Studies show planting and restoring one trillion trees globally would sequester 205 gigatons of carbon, an amount equivalent to ⅔ of all the carbon remaining in the atmosphere. We currently have over 400 parts per million of carbon in the atmosphere, and the American people are demanding that Congress take practical action to address this issue. Natural climate solutions like the Trillion Trees Act must be our future as we seek commonsense, innovative ways to address atmospheric carbon.

House Natural Resources Republicans held [a] forum on the bill in celebration of Arbor Day, where representatives from Walmart, the National Wildlife Federation, the National Alliance of Forest Owners, and University of Idaho testified in strong support of the bill. During this Forum, witnesses highlighted the both the economic and carbon-storing benefits of sustainable forest products and global reforestation initiatives. As this Committee works to identify practical, pro-growth carbon solutions, I hope that the House Agriculture Committee will hold an official hearing on the "Trillion Trees Act."

Additionally, I would like to highlight several bills which were included in the "Trillion Trees Act," but were also introduced as standalone pieces of legislation referred to this Committee:

The first is H.R. 2477, the "Urban Forests Act of 2021," a bipartisan bill introduced by Representative Malliotakis. Urban forests are important sources of carbon sequestration and sequestered nearly 130 million metric tons of carbon in 2018. The Urban Forests Act of 2021 would enhance and maintain these forests while helping create new jobs focused on new wood products and forest management.

Next, H.R. 2500, the "Forest TECH Improvement Act," introduced by Representative Moore of Utah, aims to improve the pace and scale of reforestation efforts via new technologies like drones and advanced GIS mapping technologies.

Third, H.R. 25[62], the "SOS for Seedlings Act," introduced by Representative Bentz, addresses the significant U.S. seedling shortage by providing critical direction to the U.S. Forest Service to develop a comprehensive seedling strategy and increasing resources for Federal, state, Tribal, local and private nurseries. If the United States is to both become a global leader in reforestation and address the reforestation needs driven by catastrophic wildfire, we must dramatically scale up our current U.S. nursery capacity.

Last, but not least, is H.R. 2581, the "BIOCHAR Act," introduced by Representative Herrell. Biochar is an emerging carbon sequestration tool with exciting potential to sequester carbon for hundreds of years. Biochar, which is produced by burning biomass in the absence of oxygen, also has a litany of other environmental benefits ranging from improved forest health arid resiliency, agricultural productivity, environmental remediation, water quality improvement and retention, and improved soil health. This bill would create a new demonstration projects for biochar to improve its commercialization as well as new applied research and development programs to test its applicability in a variety of sectors.

To quote something Ranking Member Thompson frequently says, "The 2018 Farm Bill was the greenest farm bill in history." I believe that the inclusion of the Trillion Trees Act and the additional bills I mentioned can help make the 2023 Farm Bill even greener and provide a benefit to both the environment and the economy.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. As Ranking Member of the Natural Resources Committee, I am committed to working with you all to advance meaningful, bipartisan conservation and forestry legislation that will improve the lives of Americans across the nation. Thank you, and I yield back.

SUBMITTED LEGISLATION

1. **H.R. 2639, Trillion Trees Act:** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr2639ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr2639ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 240).**
2. **H.R. 2477, Urban Forests Act of 2021:** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr2477ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr2477ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 201).**
3. **H.R. 2500, Forest Technology Enhancements for Conservation and Habitat Improvement Act (Forest TECH Improvement Act):** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr2500ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr2500ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 213).**

4. **H.R. 2562, Solving Our Shortages for Seedlings Act (SOS for Seedlings Act):** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr2562ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr2562ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 224).**
5. **H.R. 2581, Biochar Innovations and Opportunities for Conservation, Health, and Advancements in Research Act of 2021 (BIOCHAR Act of 2021):** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr2581ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr2581ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 229).**

The CHAIRMAN. Yes. Well, thank you very much, Representative Westerman, and your comments are quite timely. As you know, dealing with climate change is one of this Committee's foremost issues, and the foresters play a very important role in that. Many people may not know that Georgia is the number one state for privately owned forestlands, and so I am very much aware of the vital role that our forestry friends have played over the years, but none more than right now as we are grappling with carbon sequestration and dealing with how we make sure that we are able to deal adequately with agriculture at the forefront of this nation's policies dealing with climate change.

Next, we will hear from Ms. Malliotakis—I hope I got that right—from New York.

STATEMENT OF HON. NICOLE MALLIOTAKIS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM NEW YORK

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, thank you, Ranking Member Thompson, and also thank you to Congressman Westerman who really set up my opportunity to speak perfectly by also plugging my bill, the Urban Forest Act.

I would like to take this opportunity to come before you today and present my testimony regarding a bipartisan piece of legislation that I introduced, H.R. 2477, the Urban Forests Act. Urban forests are important sources of carbon sequestration, as was just mentioned by you, Mr. Chairman, and have already sequestered nearly 130 million metric tons of carbon in 2018.

In addition to carbon sequestration, urban forests also provide numerous other benefits to communities including job creation, reduction in air pollution and stormwater runoff, mitigation of the heat island effect, and reductions in home energy costs for consumers. This multitude of benefits means that for every $1 invested in urban forestry, it can provide $2 to $4 in return.

So, how can we take advantage of these benefits? Well, my bill creates a competitive matching grant program based on the Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA Program to enhance and maintain urban forests, particularly for communities with low tree and environmental equity; supports local job creation through Job Corps by establishing Civilian Conservation Centers in urban areas to teach important technical skills related to urban forestry. It creates a new pilot project that incentivizes innovative products made from urban wood sources. It adds carbon sequestration as a goal of the Forest Service's Urban and Community Forestry Program and to the Ten-Year Urban Forestry Action Plan. This bill also reauthorizes the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council, increases the authorization of appropriations for the Urban and Community Forestry Program to $50 million for 5 years. It also improves data collected on urban forests through the Forest Inventory and Analysis Program, and coordinates existing

urban forestry programs and research areas between different departments and agencies.

At a time when we are really seeking to work in a bipartisan fashion on this issue of climate change, this is one particular bill which I am very proud to have the cosponsors from east to west of our country, from Alaska to Hawaii. It is cosponsored by Reps. Sanford Bishop of Georgia, Bruce Westerman of Arkansas, Don Young of Alaska, Kurt Schrader of Oregon, Joe Morelle of New York, and Ed Case of Hawaii. We have four Democrats and two Republicans currently cosponsoring this bill with me, and I welcome all the Members on the Committee to please add their names. I would really strongly urge and appreciate if you could help, Mr. Chairman, to move this through the Committee process.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Malliotakis follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. NICOLE MALLIOTAKIS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM NEW YORK

Chairman Scott, Ranking Member Thompson:

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to come before you today and present my testimony regarding a bipartisan piece of legislation I introduced—H.R. 2477 the Urban Forests Act. Urban forests are important sources of carbon sequestration and have already sequestered nearly 130 million metric tons of carbon in 2018. In addition to carbon sequestration, urban forests also provide numerous other benefits to communities including job creation, reduction in air pollution and stormwater runoff, mitigation of the heat island effect, and reductions in home energy costs for consumers. This multitude of benefits means that for every $1 invested in urban forestry, it can provide $2–$4 in returns.

The Urban Forests Act of 2021:

- Creates a competitive matching grant program based on the Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA Program to enhance and maintain urban forests, particularly for communities with low tree or environmental equity.
- Supports local job creation through Job Corps by establishing Civilian Conservation Centers in urban areas to teach important technical skills related to urban forestry.
- Creates a new pilot project that incentivizes innovative products made from urban wood sources.
- Adds carbon sequestration as a goal of the Forest Service's Urban and Community Forestry Program and to the Ten-Year Urban Forestry Action Plan.
- Reauthorizes the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council[.] Increases the authorization of appropriations for the Urban and Community Forestry Program to $50 million for 5 years.
- Improves data collected on urban forests through the Forest Inventory and Analysis Program[.] Coordinates existing urban forestry programs and research areas between different departments and agencies.

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, our constituents are asking for solutions. The Urban Forests Act may not fix the issue of climate change, but it most certainly a bipartisan step in the right direction and should be part of the larger global conversation. This legislation has received support from the National Association of State Foresters and the Arbor Day Foundation.

I look forward to working with you and thank you for your time.

I yield back.

SUBMITTED LEGISLATION

1. **H.R. 2477, Urban Forests Act of 2021:** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr2477ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr2477ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 201).**

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much, Congresslady, and you are very right. I think your bill is getting good traction. I am well

aware of it, and we look forward to working with you on the Urban Forest Act, House Bill 2471——

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. 77.

The CHAIRMAN.—and if—pardon me?

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. H.R. 2477, and Mr. Chairman, I would love if you would consider sponsoring it yourself as well. Thank you so much for your time.

The CHAIRMAN. H.R. 2477. Thank you for that. I really appreciate it.

And that goes with our no-till farming, our cover crops. These are things that we in agriculture can do and take the lead in bringing down so much carbon in the air and getting it back in the ground where we need it. So, thank you for that, and I look forward to seeing this bill move.

Next, we have, I believe, Representative Kahele from Hawaii.

STATEMENT OF HON. KAIALI'I KAHELE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM HAWAII

Mr. KAHELE. *Aloha* Chairman Scott, *aloha* Members, Ranking Member Thompson, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture. *Mahalo* for hosting today's bipartisan Member Day hearing.

Mr. Chairman, agriculture in Hawaii is its third-largest industry consisting of predominantly small, family-owned operations that generate more than $1 billion in revenue annually. These operations create businesses and job opportunities and help keep our rural communities vibrant. Hawaii leads the nation in the production of Kona coffee, macadamia, ginger root, pineapples, bananas, taro, passion fruit, and our floriculture industry generates more than $85 million in revenue each year.

Island geography, both within and between the Islands, restricts businesses in various ways related to the economics of operations. Fixed costs as a percentage of revenue are higher for transportation, labor, energy, land, input, and other operating expenses. Tropical and subtropical agriculture and year-round growing seasons make it very challenging to control insects, weeds, funguses, and plant diseases. And while many farmers embrace integrated pest management techniques, some are compelled to purchase expensive synthetic controls to limit crop losses from noxious species. Separation from land-grant universities and Federal research and development laboratories further inhibits acquiring new and innovative technologies in a timely manner. Additionally, Federal food programs such as the Women, Infant, and Children Farmers' Market Nutrition Program and the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program have been invaluable. Still, much can be done to address the concerns and needs of Hawaii's and our nation's agricultural, rural communities.

To address Hawaii's pressing agriculture needs, I first ask the Committee to modernize Federal agriculture research facilities and commit to a business plan to address land-grant university research infrastructures. Our Hawaii research facilities at the Daniel K. Inouye Pacific Basin Agriculture Research Center in my hometown of Hilo, and the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, otherwise known as CTAHR, are crucial to controlling tropical agricultural insects, weeds, funguses,

and plant diseases. Second, I ask the Committee to examine ways to simplify the application process for small producers under the Micro-Grants for Food Security Program and increase the authorization level for the MGFSP to $20 million. Third, I ask the Committee to expand food hubs, food banks, community supported agriculture, and food pantries in the wake of the COVID–19 pandemic. In Hawaii, these programs provided fresh fruits, vegetables, and protein to consumers in need, but they also helped stabilize local farms by creating a demand for produce. Given Hawaii's small-scale farm operations, food hubs, CSAs, and other outlets which are very critical for food producers to sell their crops at a fair market price.

Last, as Congress works to reauthorize the Farm Bill in 2023, I ask the Committee to establish in the 2023 Farm Bill a program dedicated to area-wide integrated pest management. AIPM techniques are the basis of the successful coffee berry borer program. I will continue communicating Hawaii's priorities with the Committee as you work on the 2023 Farm Bill.

I look forward to working with all of you. I wish I was on the Agriculture Committee, Mr. Chairman. Hopefully, if I get to come back, I get another chance. But I look forward to working with you to strengthen our nation's farm programs.

I just want to *Mahalo* all of you for your commitment to helping our farmers throughout the nation and in the Hawaiian Islands.

Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kahele follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. KAIALIʻI KAHELE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM HAWAII

Aloha Chairman Scott, Ranking Member Thompson, and Members of the Committee. *Mahalo* for hosting today's bipartisan Member Day hearing.

Agriculture is Hawai'i's third-largest industry consisting of predominantly small, family-owned operations that generate more than $1 billion in revenue annually. These operations create business and job opportunities and help keep our rural communities vibrant. Hawai'i leads the nation in the production of coffee, macadamia, ginger root, pineapples, bananas, taro, and passion fruit, and our floriculture industry generates more than $85 million in revenue each year.

Island geography, both within and between Islands, restricts businesses in various ways related to the economics of operations. Fixed costs as a percentage of revenue are higher for transportation, labor, energy, land, input, and other operating expenses. Tropical and subtropical agriculture and year-round growing seasons make it challenging to control insects, weeds, funguses, and plant diseases. While many farmers embrace integrated pest management techniques, some are compelled to purchase expensive synthetic controls to limit crop losses from noxious species. Separation from land-grant universities and Federal Research and Development Laboratories further inhibits acquiring new and innovative technologies in a timely manner. Additionally, Federal food programs such as the Women, Infant, and Children Farmers' Market Nutrition Program and the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program have been invaluable. Still, much can be done to address the concerns and needs of Hawai'i's and our nation's agricultural, rural communities.

To address Hawai'i's pressing agriculture needs, I first ask the Committee to modernize Federal agriculture research facilities and commit to a business plan to address land-grant university research infrastructures. Our Hawai'i research facilities at the Daniel K. Inouye Pacific Basin Agricultural Research Center and the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources are crucial to controlling tropical agriculture insects, weeds, funguses, and plant diseases. Second, I ask the Committee to examine ways to simplify the application process for small producers under the Micro-Grants for Food Security Program (MGFSP) and increase the authorization level for the MGFSP to $20 million. Third, I ask that the Committee expand food hubs, food banks, community support[ed] agriculture (CSA), and

food pantries in the wake of the COVID–19 pandemic. In Hawai'i, these programs provided fresh fruits, vegetables, and protein to consumers in need, but they also helped stabilize local farms by creating a demand for produce. Given Hawai'i's small-scale farm operations, food hubs, CSAs, and other outlets are critical demand-side outlets for food producers to sell their crops at a fair market price.

Last, as Congress works to reauthorize the Farm Bill in 2023, I ask the Committee to establish in the 2023 Farm Bill a program dedicated to area-wide integrated pest management (AIPM).

AIPM techniques are the basis of the successful coffee berry borer program. I will continue communicating Hawai'i's priorities with the Committee as you work on the 2023 Farm Bill.

I look forward to working closely with you to strengthen our nation's farm programs. *Mahalo* for your commitment to helping our farmers nationally and in Hawai'i.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you, Mr. Representative Kahele, for your excellent presentation, and we would certainly enjoy having you on our Agriculture Committee. I think you made some very good points there, and as you know, our 1890s, our land-grant colleges and universities are playing a vital role, and we will certainly look favorably on your efforts to be included with your land-grant universities that you mentioned in Hawaii. And the food banks, we can't say enough for how they are responding to this, as you know, we had a hearing on food security and had our food banks in, and we are going to be doing more to make sure our feeding America is very much inclusive with Hawaii.

So, next we have Representative Lawson from the great State of Florida, and a graduate of one of our land-grant schools, as I am. My friend and fellow alumni from the great Florida A&M University.

STATEMENT OF HON. AL LAWSON, JR., A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM FLORIDA

Mr. LAWSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is an honor to be with you today, and to you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Thompson, I want to thank you all for your leadership on the Agriculture Committee.

You know, today I would like to address, Mr. Chairman, two bills that I have introduced that falls under the Committee jurisdiction, and I am asking for swift passage. The first one, Mr. Chairman, is through the Food Security Act of 2021, that is H.R. 3100.

Sadly, in every corner, in almost every community around the nation, families are impacted by food insecurity. I heard you talk about it a few minutes ago. I have been diligent in finding solutions to eradicate hunger. One of the most important ways to tackle hunger in this country is by focusing on how it impacts various subpopulations of our communities, such as veterans, seniors, and college students.

This is why for the past two Congresses I have introduced the College Student Hunger Act, and why this year I am proud to be a lead cosponsor with Congresswoman Hayes and Congresswoman Norma Torres for the Student Food Security Act.

A recent Government Accountability Office report revealed that more than 30 percent of college students might face food insecurity, and I know that is for a fact. The report also found that almost two million at-risk students are potentially eligible for SNAP benefits in 2016. The nontraditional college student is now the traditional

college students that we need to have just as much concern for our community college and part-time students as we do with our large, 4 year universities.

The bill removed barriers to low-income college students in accessing SNAP benefits by expanding the eligibility criteria. The bill also enabled the Federal Government, state colleges, and universities to take a more proactive role in providing outreach and support to food-insecure students. HBCUs and other minority serving institutions would also receive priority.

I had the opportunity to visit food pantries on university campuses and see not only do they distribute food to a lot of students, but they even show a lot of them how to prepare the food, which is so critically important.

I urge the Committee to take up this bill because it would do a great deal in helping a lot of low-income students and nontraditional students that we have on campus today.

The APEX Act which is one, H.R. 2698, I have introduced, bipartisan, Aluminum Pricing Examination Act for the second time in Congress because the aluminum market has experienced unprecedented cost fluctuating that disconnected from market fundamentals since the beginning of 2018. The bill normally stems from pricing spikes and sole reference prices on users of sheet aluminum, the Midwest Premium—call it the MWP. The MWP is intended to serve as a shipping and handling cost for transporting aluminum for a producer to the end-user has more than doubled since the beginning of 2018. The unforeseeable price variation has added hundreds of millions of dollars in cost to the end-user and increased the price of soda, beer, and other household goods for our constituents.

The APEX Act grants the Commodity Futures Trading Commission proper statutory authority to conduct oversight of an investigative price setting and reporting entities in the aluminum market. APEX also provides the Department of Justice the ability to consult with the CFTC to ensure all oversight and regulatory actions are in accordance with the antitrust statute. Additionally, the legislation affords the Attorney General the opportunity to formally comment on the proposed CFTC regulation action and guideline. Nothing in this legislation—and I will repeat again, nothing in this legislation allows for price setting by the government.

Again, I thank you for the opportunity to bring this before the Committee.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Lawson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. AL LAWSON, JR., A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM FLORIDA

Student Food Security Act of 2021

- Sadly every comer and almost every community in our nation is, one way or another, impacted by food insecurity.
- I have been passionate in finding solutions to eradicate hunger not only in Florida's Fifth Congressional District, but through the Sunshine State and the nation.
- One of the most important ways to tackle hunger is by focusing on how it impacts various subpopulations of our communities such as veterans, seniors, and college students.

This is why for the past two Congresses I have introduced the College Student Hunger Act and why this year I am proud to be a lead cosponsor, with Chairwoman Hayes and Rep. Norma Torres, of the Student Food Security Act of 2021.

Facts on Food Insecurity among College Student Populations in the United States

- A recent Government Accountability Office report revealed that more than **30% of college students might face food insecurity.**
- The report also found that almost two million at-risk students who are potentially eligible for SNAP benefits in 2016.
- The nontraditional college student is now the traditional student.
- We need to have just as much concern for our community college and part-time college students as we do with our large 4 year universities.

What this bill does: remove barriers to low-income college students in accessing SNAP benefits by expanding the eligibility criteria. This bill will also enable the Federal Government, states, colleges and universities to take a more proactive role in providing outreach and support to food-insecure students.

The Student Food Security Act

1. Increases low-income college students' eligibility for SNAP by expanding eligibility to students who are eligible for work study, have a $0 Expected Family Contribution, meet the financial eligibility criteria for a maximum Pell Grant (even if they have not filed the FAFSA), or are an independent student whose household is otherwise eligible.
2. Increases outreach to eligible students by directing the Department of Education to work with the Department of Agriculture and other relevant agencies to notify students that they may be eligible for benefits when they file their application for Federal student aid.
3. Requires the Department of Education to collect data on food and housing insecurity.
4. Creates a SNAP student hunger demonstration program that would allow students to use their SNAP benefits at on-campus dining facilities at up to ten institutions.
5. Establishes a $1 billion per year grant program to help institutions of higher education identify and meet the food and housing security of their students. Grants can be used for research, planning, and implementation of a strategy to conduct outreach to students and coordinate resources. At least 33% of grants must go to community colleges, and institutions with high percentages of Pell recipients, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and other Minority-Serving Institutions will also receive priority.

APEX ACT

The Problem:

- The aluminum market has experienced unprecedented cost fluctuations that are disconnected from market fundamentals since the beginning of 2018.
- These anomalies stem from pricing spikes in the sole reference price on end-users of sheet aluminum, the Midwest Premium (MWP).
- The MWP, which is intended to serve as a "shipping and handling" cost for transporting aluminum from a producer to end-user, has more than doubled since the beginning of 2018.
- The unforeseen price variations have added hundreds of millions of dollars in cost to end-users and increased the price of soda, beer, and other household goods for our constituents.

What This Bill Does

- The Aluminum Pricing Examination (APEX) Act grants the [Commodity] Futures Trading Commission's (CFTC) proper statutory authority to conduct oversight of and investigate price setting and reporting entities in the aluminum market.
- The APEX Act also provides the Department of Justice (DOJ) the ability to consult with the CFTC to ensure all oversight and regulatory actions are in accordance with antitrust statutes.
- Additionally, the legislation affords the Attorney General the opportunity to formally comment on any proposed CFTC regulatory action or guideline.

• Nothing in this legislation allows for price setting by the government.

SUBMITTED LEGISLATION

1. **H.R. 3100, Student Food Security Act of 2021:** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr3100ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr3100ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 352).**
2. **H.R. 2698, Aluminum Pricing Examination Act (APEX Act):** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr2698ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr2698ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 346).**

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you, Congressman Lawson. You mentioned in your presentation that 30 percent of students face food insecurity. Could you tell me what that study was again?

Mr. LAWSON. It was a recent Government Accountability Office report, and so, I would have to get information on that back to you. I had this information on hand from the last—and I thought it was very significant. I probably should write the study down, but I will get the study to you.

The CHAIRMAN. And you also mentioned——

Mr. LAWSON. Yes, it was a Government Accountability Office study.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay, that is fine. It might be helpful to us, because this supports your H.R. 3100, is that right?

Mr. LAWSON. That is correct.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay, and it impacts and deals with particularly hunger facing our veterans, our seniors, and college students.

Mr. LAWSON. That is correct.

The CHAIRMAN. All right, very good. I think that is something that we need to move swiftly on, and that study would be very helpful in boosting and making sure we get your bill moving. So, I look forward to working with you on that.

[The report referred to is located on p. 421.]

The CHAIRMAN. Now, we will hear from Representative Ronny Jackson from Texas.

STATEMENT OF HON. RONNY JACKSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM TEXAS

Mr. JACKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Ranking Member Thompson for holding this hearing today and giving Members like myself a chance to have their voices heard.

I just want to reiterate as well, I talked to Ranking Member Thompson about this before, sir, but I, too, someday want to be in the near future at the first opportunity would like to be on the Committee as well. I have made that a priority of mine during my time in Congress, however long that should be.

Anyway, as you know, sir, agriculture issues are a top priority for me and my constituents, as I represent the number one ag district in the State of Texas, and the sixth overall ag district in the United States. Texas's 13th Congressional District is a top producer of cattle, cotton, wheat, dairy, and much more, and I could not be prouder to speak on behalf of the farmers and ranchers who make that possible in my district.

Unfortunately, these hard-working Americans have battled numerous hardships over the past few years due to tariff issues, market turmoil, disruptions caused by COVID–19, and most recently, the disastrous weather events like the polar vortex that struck Texas earlier this year.

The CHAIRMAN. I think—check your mute.

Mr. JACKSON. Sorry about that, sir.

In an effort to help farmers to recover from these natural disasters, I introduced H.R. 1692, the RESTORE Act (Rehabilitating Economic Success Through Overcoming Rural Emergencies Act), with my friend and colleague, Representative Henry Cuellar. This bipartisan legislation would reauthorize the Wildfire Hurricane Indemnity Program, the WHIP Program, for 2020 and 2021, and it would expand the program to cover crop losses due to freezes and polar vortexes. This bill would also increase coverage for droughts to ensure that all droughts are covered as natural disasters under the WHIP Program, a provision that will immensely help cotton producers across the country.

Mr. Chairman, I come before the Committee today to urge consideration for the RESTORE Act, to help extend a valuable lifeline for the men and women who tirelessly work to feed our great nation. This is an excellent opportunity to foster bipartisanship and to support our farmers throughout this tumultuous time.

I want to thank you again for holding this hearing and for allowing me to present this legislation before your Committee. I look forward to working with each of you on these issues in a bipartisan and effective manner.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Jackson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. RONNY JACKSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM TEXAS

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and [Ranking Member] Thompson for holding this hearing today and giving Members like myself a chance to have their voices heard.

As you all may know, agriculture issues are a top priority for me and my constituents, as I represent the number one agriculture district in Texas, and the sixth overall agriculture district in the United States.

Texas's 13th Congressional District is a top producer of cattle, cotton, wheat, dairy, and much more, and I could not be prouder to speak to you on behalf of the farmers and ranchers who make that possible.

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This is an excellent opportunity to faster bipartisanship and to support our farmers throughout this tumultuous time.

Conclusion

Thank you again for holding this hearing and for allowing me to present this legislation before the Committee.

I look forward to working with each of you on these issues in a bipartisan and effective manner.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

SUBMITTED LEGISLATION

1. **H.R. 1692, Rehabilitating Economic Success Through Overcoming Rural Emergencies Act (RESTORE Act):** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr1692ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr1692ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 168).**

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Congressman Jackson, and your RESTORE Act, let me just tell you, this is an issue that we are grappling with on Committee as I speak. Disaster aid is so critical, and we, as everyone knows, I am trying to put together an effort to create a separate, immediate disaster aid fund so it doesn't have to go through the regular appropriation process. It just takes too long, and many of our farms are done away with because we moved too slow. And so, we are working on a bill to set up a permanent disaster aid that is already there that we can get help down to our farms in their time of need. And we saw what happened in your great State of Texas. This climate is causing us to really come up with your challenges here.

So, I look forward to it, and you too would be welcome to join our Committee, and we will speak on it. At the rate we are going, we might need to expand our numbers. But we welcome you. I often tell everybody this is our single-most important Committee. It is the food we eat, the clothes we wear, the water we drink, and our shelter. We can do without a lot of things, but we cannot do without food, water, clothing, and our shelter.

So, madam, is there anyone else? Okay. Before we adjourn, let me just ask is there anyone else that may have come in, missed, didn't hear? This has been wonderful, and we appreciate it.

But before we adjourn, I want to invite our Ranking Member to make any closing remarks that he would like to make, and look forward to hearing from our Ranking Member. Ranking Member Thompson, you are recognized.

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Chairman, thank you so much. Thank you to all the Members that testified. We heard from ten Members today with their verbal testimony, and quite frankly, they touched on a lot of important issues that are facing rural America, our farmers and ranchers, our food processors, all those within the agriculture supply chain.

Mr. Chairman, we have a lot of good information. There are some very specific bills that have been introduced that are within our jurisdiction, which is exciting as well, that tackle and takes on many of these issues. So, I just want to say thank you to you, and certainly to all of the Members who took the time to prepare and to present and to share with our Committee. I think this informs us, going forward, so that we can proceed and continue our shared passion and goal to do our very best for rural America and for the folks who provide us our food, our feed, and our fiber.

So, with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you, Ranking Member, and I agree with you 100 percent. It has been a very, very thoughtful, good presentations, and we got some great Members out there, both on the Committee and those that, as you see, Mr. Chairman, and heard, there are others that want to be on this Committee with us. And so, we certainly welcome that.

And, I just want to thank all of you for taking the time. Our staff has been here recording and making sure that your inputs have

been heard, and we certainly stand ready to help each of these Members in the forward progress of their issues and their concerns, because they are all of our concerns.

And so, with that, under the Rules of the Committee, the record of today's hearing will remain open for 10 calendar days to receive supplementary material from any Member who testified, or offered written testimony today.

So, now this hearing of the Committee on Agriculture is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:13 a.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

[Material submitted for inclusion in the record follows:]

SUBMITTED LETTER OF HON. JODEY C. ARRINGTON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM TEXAS

May 28, 2021

Chairman Scott and Ranking Member Thompson:

Thank you for providing Members the opportunity to share our priorities for the 117th Congress. As a former Member of the House Agriculture Committee, I know firsthand the important role of this Committee and the responsibility you have to support our nation's farmers and ranchers. As the Representative of a rural district, my top priority is to champion policies which protect and promote a strong, vibrant, and secure food supply chain.

No other region in the world produces more food, fuel, or fiber than west Texas. In fact, my district is home to more than 14 million acres of farmland and generates over $12 billion in agriculture related revenue. Our producers are not only the backbone of our economy, but the epicenter of America's food supply and security.

One issue of immediate importance to farmers in my district, is the need to extend the Wildfire Hurricane Indemnity Program (WHIP) to cover 2020 and 2021 losses. Congress authorized supplemental assistance to producers for 2017, 2018, and 2019 due to historic and widespread production losses experienced due to severe weather. I urge the Committee to quickly extend WHIP to cover 2020 and 2021 losses, including those due to the worsening nationwide drought.

Given the essential, yet volatile nature of the agriculture industry, it is critical Congress consistently provides our producers access to the personnel and safety nets they need. As we work to lay the groundwork for the next farm bill, it is important that future legislation defends our existing safety nets, like Price Loss Coverage (PLC) and the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), as well as develops permanent solutions to *ad hoc* programs, like WHIP, which have become vital for producers across the nation.

It must also address the Farm Service Agency (FSA) public health protocols relating to staffing levels which have kept local offices completely closed or minimally staffed for far too long. As a result, the review of applications for crucial relief programs has all but stopped in many offices and created significant backlog. These prolonged closures have limited producer's ability to apply for vital farm bill assistance programs, and therefore must be address[ed] by this Committee.

I believe one of the greatest threats facing our producers and their livelihoods are extreme and unscientific environmental policies, like the Green New Deal and *Waters of the United States* (WOTUS), which target the agriculture industry. False narratives on agriculture's role in climate change not only deceive the public, but they distort the market and disrupt our food supply chain. No one cares more about natural resource stewardship or has more motivation to achieve greater sustainability than those farmers and ranchers whose livelihoods depend on it. This Committee must promote reasonable policies and reject over-regulation of an industry which is essential to our economic and national security interests.

Unfortunately, anti-growth tax proposals have also become a formidable threat for agriculture families. President Biden's proposal to double the capital gains rate, while imposing it at death and over the appreciation of past generations is a threat to landowners and family-owned businesses across the country. For more than a century, producers have had to endure the punishing death tax, but to effectively create an additional death tax, is highly concerning and problematic. As a Member of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures, I will push back on any tax proposals that will harm American families, including family-owned farms and ranches.

As a Member of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Trade, I look forward to working with the House Agriculture Committee to advance trade policy that prioritizes American producers. Due to the previous Administration's commitment to freer and fairer trade agreements, we have made significant market improvements through the China Phase One Agreement, U.S.-Japan Trade Agreement, and U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). It is imperative we continue to ensure American agricultural exporters, and many other sectors of our economy, receive the full benefit of the improved trade deals by vigilant enforcement. Additionally, we must be in constant pursuit of new global markets, including the United Kingdom, Kenya, and Asian Pacific nations, for our farmers and ranchers. With worldwide demand for food on the rise, we must ensure there is no one better equipped to lead the charge of feeding a hungry world than American producers.

For our farmers and ranchers to access global markets, we must invest in critical infrastructure to ensure the safe and efficient transportation of products from farm to market. An imperative aspect of the ability to support the flow of goods is a

healthy workforce. To safeguard our nation's ability to feed and fuel the world, we must ensure rural Americans have access to basic and affordable healthcare. Last, despite the gains made in the 2018 Farm Bill, millions of American farmers do not have access to reliable Internet. As the agriculture industry modernizes, broadband is increasingly important in all levels of production. We must close the digital divide by providing reliable broadband to all communities, rural and urban.

For several years, our producers have experienced price declines, retaliatory tariffs, severe weather, drought, and other hardships that have been out of their control. Most recently, the COVID–19 pandemic has tested our supply chain resilience and reminded Americans that having an affordable and abundant supply of food, independent of foreign adversaries, is essential. We must support and promote American agriculture, and I look forward to working with you in these endeavors.

Sincerely,

JODEY C. ARRINGTON,
Member of Congress.

SUBMITTED LETTER OF HON. STEVE COHEN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM TENNESSEE

May 18, 2021

Chairman Scott:

Thank you for allowing other Members of Congress to discuss our priorities that come before this Committee. With President Biden and the Democratic majorities, the 117th Congress has a unique opportunity to deliver for the American people. The 2020 elections were a mandate to overcome Washington's exhausting rhetoric, address systemic inequality, and deliver essential services so that everyone can prosper and enjoy equal protections regardless of their socioeconomic status, race, faith, sexual orientation, or [ZIP C]ode. To that end, I'm sharing the following bill, which ends discriminatory food assistance restrictions that harm the formerly incarcerated after their release. Ensuring affordable access to food for all groups is a critical issue for my constituents in Memphis and the American people. I look forward to working with your leadership to reach this much-needed reform.

The [H.R. 2837,] Making Essentials Affordable and Lawful (MEAL) Act, which I introduced with Representatives Moore, Watson Coleman and Hayes, lifts food assistance restrictions for those with prior felony drug convictions. Annually, over 600,000 people are released from prisons in the United States. Current SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) policies prevent or restrict the formerly incarcerated from receiving food benefits. These policies disproportionately harm people of color and women, and especially the families and children of the formerly incarcerated. SNAP and TANF barriers also promote recidivism, impair substance use recovery efforts, and harm the long-term reentry of the formerly incarcerated. The MEAL Act eliminates these discriminatory and unfair practices. Specifically, this bill allows people with prior felony drug convictions to receive SNAP and TANF benefits without restrictions. The MEAL Act also codifies the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) waiver that allows prisoners to apply for SNAP and TANF up to 30 days before they are released, ensuring that they can meet their basic needs as soon as they reenter society.

As you know, these barriers disproportionately affect women and people of color, and families with children are especially harmed by this ban. Restoring access to these programs is critical in light of the COVID–19 pandemic and economic downturn.

This bill has been endorsed by more than 50 civil rights, reentry, public health and faith-based organizations at the national and state level including the *American Bar Association, Leadership Conference for Civil and Human Rights, NAACP, National Council of Churches and the Drug Policy Alliance.*

A portion of the bill is also included in President Biden's American Rescue Plan, which cites that "denying these individuals—many of whom are parents of young children—SNAP benefits jeopardizes nutrition security and poses a barrier to reentry into the community in a population that already faces significant hurdles to obtaining employment and stability." I believe the same rationale also holds for re-

pealing the TANF ban and demonstrates why it is so important to get the MEAL Act enacted.

Thank you, Chair[man] Scott, for the opportunity to discuss this critical matter for my district and the American people. I look forward to working with you on delivering a more just and equitable society for all.

As always I remain,

Most Sincerely,

STEVE COHEN,
Member of Congress.

SUBMITTED LEGISLATION

1. **H.R. 2837, Making Essentials Available and Lawful (MEAL) Act of 2021:** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr2837ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr2837ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 349).**

SUBMITTED STATEMENT OF HON. RON ESTES, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM KANSAS

Thank you, Chairman Scott, Ranking Member Thompson, and my colleagues for providing the opportunity to share with the House Agriculture Committee the concerns that are of utmost priority for Kansas' 4th District.

During the coronavirus pandemic, the digital divide in our country has become more apparent. Affordable, dependable broadband access is necessary for the growth and development of rural communities. To combat this issue, consumer-owned electric cooperatives use RUS Electric Loans to finance electricity distribution, transmission, and generation to provide service to roughly 42 million consumers every day. These loans are repaid with interest and have an excellent track record of repayment. In 2019, U.S. Treasury received $219 million in electric loan payments.

RUS Electric loans are used to build on infrastructure that would expand broadband for rural communities across the country. Improving rural connectivity paves a path for producers to farm smarter through precision agriculture. Precision agriculture "does more with less," aiding farmers in further conserving and becoming better stewards of their precious land. Moreover, improving broadband access results in better access to telemedicine, increased opportunity for businesses to engage with customers, and supplemental education for children in school. I am a proud supporter of the RUS Electric Loan Program.

Another topic I would like to touch upon is the importance of research and development, specifically within the agricultural community. Crop genetics research is done in Kansas to enhance yields, fight diseases and pests, adapt to changing climates, and reduce global food insecurity. Ultimately, this type of research focused on utilizing ancient crop plant ancestors will mobilize genetic diversity, meet consumer demands, and protect the global food supply.

Funding toward the Wheat Genetics Resource Center (WGRC) greatly benefits Kansas agriculture. WGRC allows Kansas to remain a top producer by providing the newest technology and knowledge available. This research, done in the heart of the Great Plains, allows Kansans to adopt sustainable practices, leaving their land in better shape than they found it.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the House Agriculture Committee. I am excited to move forward and collaborate with each of you as we stand up for our rural communities across the country.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT OF HON. BOB GOOD, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM VIRGINIA

Thank you, Chairman Scott, and Ranking Member Thompson for the opportunity to testify. As the Representative of Virginia's Fifth Congressional District, I look forward to working with you to help provide access to reliable broadband for rural communities.

We stand at a unique point in our nation's history, with a wealth of resources at our fingertips in some regions of the country, meanwhile other regions have fallen behind due to a lack of broadband connectivity. For far too long, too many Americans have lacked access to the affordable, high-speed broadband services they need to participate in today's increasingly digital world.

I agree with the Ranking Member's statement on April 20th: "As more of American life is being put online, more of it is being put out of reach of Americans without high-speed Internet access, and those without are falling further behind." By bridging the widening digital divide, rural networks play a critical role in serving key parts of our economy, including farmers, and rural landowners.

Past attempts to connect rural America have resulted in the allocation of substantial amounts of Federal funds for broadband deployment. Though these investments have been helpful contributions, we have not fully achieved the connectivity needed for success in the growing digital economy, The fundamental problem is too many government policies and burdensome regulations have stifled the ability to build-out our networks.

As Congress considers legislation affecting farmers and rural communities, I hope the Committee will work to help bridge the digital divide to the over 23 million Americans who lack access to broadband, including nearly 50% of rural Virginians. Congress should prioritize reducing burdensome regulations to the deployment process, increasing access to existing infrastructure, and narrowly targeting existing funding to avoid wasteful spending.

I thank Chairman Scott and Ranking Member Thompson again for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to working with the Committee to provide reliable access to broadband that is so desperately needed in our rural communities.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT OF HON. JOE NEGUSE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM COLORADO

Thank you Chairman Scott and Ranking Member Thompson for the opportunity to testify regarding some of my priorities within the Agriculture Committee's jurisdiction.

Civilian Climate Corps

I'd first like to highlight one of my top priorities, the establishment of the Civilian Climate Corps. In 2020, Colorado has faced our fair share of challenges: a once-in-a-century pandemic, economic hardship, and historic wildfires. To address these unprecedented challenges, to make historic investments in wildfire suppression, mitigation, resiliency, and recovery and to restore our lands and our communities, I strongly support the creation of a reimagined 21st Century Civilian Climate Corps.

That is why I introduced the *Civilian Climate Corps Act* (H.R. 2241), alongside Congresswoman Spanberger and the *21st Century Conservation Corps Act,* (H.R. 1162) with Representatives Kilmer, Lowenthal, Huffman, and Blumenauer. These bills seek to reimagine the conservation corps of the 1930's, a bold proposal that will put hundreds of thousands of Americans back to work and train the next generation of climate and resiliency workers to support our communities, by assisting our wildland firefighters with fire suppression; restoring our lands through road maintenance, trail restoration and construction; and reducing the public lands maintenance backlog. Our plan would invest in our local economies, supporting our outdoor recreation industry, expand access to the outdoors and support the lands that we love.

The Civilian Climate Corps will prioritize equity and inclusion, help us tackle the climate crisis, put people back to work, and address wildfires in Colorado by providing the needed resources to our local communities to protect our watersheds, invest in reforestation, wildfire resiliency and more. I urge the Committee to support these proposals.

Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership Act

I also urge the Committee's support for the bipartisan, bicameral *Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership Act of 2021* (H.R. 3211) to formally authorize the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership Initiative (Joint Chiefs) to better support forest and grassland restoration projects across public and private land. The unique nature of this initiative is that it supports voluntary restoration projects across ownership boundaries, so that treatments can occur across a landscape, rather than stopping at public or private land.

Since USDA launched Joint Chiefs in 2014, the initiative has supported 93 projects, including two in Colorado, and treated 300,000 acres of hazardous fuels, restored 29,000 acres in priority watersheds, and enhanced 200,000 acres of wildlife habitat. The Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership Act of 2021 would formally establish the program at USDA, double its funding to help meet demand, and improve outreach and accountability.

Sustainable Agriculture Research Act

I would also like to highlight the [H.R. 1363,] *Sustainable Agriculture Research Act,* which I have reintroduced this Congress with Congressman Rodney Davis. This bipartisan legislation would provide Federal support for sustainable agriculture and soil research through the Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority (AGARDA) program.

The Sustainable Agriculture Research Act [w]ould amend the legislation authorizing AGARDA to add goals that explicitly address carbon sequestration and reduction of emissions. I encourage the Committee to continue their important work in utilizing agriculture as a climate solution by considering this legislation.

Secure Rural Schools Reauthorization Act

Finally, I urge the Committee to support the bipartisan *Secure Rural Schools Reauthorization Act of 2021* (H.R. 2099) to provide funding to mountain communities and rural areas across the United States, through funds for rural schools, emergency response and road maintenance.

The bill provides supplemental Federal funding to counties across the United States that are home to large areas of tax-exempt National Forests and Federal Lands. The program provides payments derived in part through timber receipts and other leasing activities within National Forests back to county governments where those forests are located to support local schools, and emergency operations. This legislation is critical for supporting quality education and ensuring that all students and educators in the United States have access to the resources they need to succeed.

Closing

In closing, thank you Chairman Scott and Ranking Member Thompson for the opportunity to testify regarding some of my agriculture priorities. I look forward to working with the Committee on these issues and many more.

SUBMITTED LEGISLATION

1. **H.R. 1162, 21st Century Conservation Corps Act:** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr1162ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr1162ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 92).**
2. **H.R. 1363, Sustainable Agriculture Research Act:** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr1363ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr1363ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 165).**
3. **H.R. 2099, Secure Rural Schools Reauthorization Act of 2021:** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr2099ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr2099ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 179).**
4. **H.R. 2241, Civilian Climate Corps Act of 2021:** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr2241ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr2241ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 189).**
5. **H.R. 3211, Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership Act of 2021:** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr3211ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr3211ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 387).**

SUBMITTED LETTER OF HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR., A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM NEW JERSEY

May 28, 2021

Hon. DAVID SCOTT,
Chairman,
House Agriculture Committee,
Washington, D.C.;

Hon. GLENN THOMPSON,
Ranking Minority Member,
House Agriculture Committee,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Chairman Scott and Ranking Member Thompson,

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to submit testimony to your Committee. As co-chair of the Coastal Communities Caucus, I would like to highlight the need for a stronger and more equitable commitment to the seafood industry, which is a key sector of U.S. food production.

While the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) does share jurisdiction with the Department of Commerce in this space, USDA can do more to support the nation's seafood industry by complementing the programming of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and filling gaps where Federal assistance is needed. Though some of USDA's grant and purchasing programs are open to some seafood producers and fishermen, many medium- and small-sized operations are unaware of that fact due to sector participants historically weak relationship with the agency. USDA should work in coordination with NMFS to foster a better relationship with industry leaders and fishing communities. USDA cannot have a truly holistic approach to the U.S. food economy if the seafood sector is considered an afterthought for its mission and programming. A stronger USDA and seafood sector relationship will provide benefits to all Americans, including a stronger and more competitive U.S. food economy, jobs, supply chain resiliency, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and nutrition assistance.

I would recommend the following to improve the situation:

Seafood Processing

There is a shortage of community-driven shoreside infrastructure and seafood processing capability in the U.S. Many fishermen are forced to send their catch to foreign processing facilities in order to prepare the product for sale and consumption in our domestic market. In the interest of keeping more seafood production in the U.S. to maintain our national competitiveness, create more sector resilience during future challenges, and provide more jobs for American workers, USDA should ensure more grant funding geared toward processing equipment and cold storage be given to seafood producers and fishing communities. More domestic processing capabilities will enhance our U.S. supply chain, ensure fresh, local and affordable products reach people quickly, and curb greenhouse gas emissions.

Prior to the pandemic, the majority of New Jersey seafood was consumed in restaurants. As restaurants remained closed due to public health concerns, our fishermen have been struggling to stay afloat due to the drastic decline in restaurant consumption. This is the case for many other states as well, with an estimated 68 percent of the $102.2 billion that consumers paid for U.S. fishery products in 2017 being spent at food service establishments. Restaurants play an important role in the seafood supply chain. They serve not only as an end market, but their staffs knowledgeably process seafood into meals. During the pandemic, many fishermen have attempted to scale direct-to-consumer sales to make up for lost income due to restaurant closures. However, most U.S. consumers lack the capability to process and store seafood in a way that restaurants or industrial processing facilities are able. A significant investment in local processing capabilities by USDA, would create greater sector resilience by allowing fishermen to diversify end markets for their product and eliminate an overreliance on restaurants and foreign processing facilities.

Seafood Purchasing for Relief and Nutrition Programs

Additionally, after speaking with fishing communities, I believe that expanding seafood purchasing and the list of seafood ordered by the USDA, if done correctly to stabilize prices (and not to encourage "race to the bottom" bidding) could resecure the sector and lead to a strong recovery. The fact that the Agricultural Market Service's purchasing programs acquire 100 percent domestically produced and processed commodity food products, would help create and encourage even more resiliency in the sector.

Furthermore, these proposals would not only help to support and grow the U.S. seafood industry, but also allow more fishermen to benefit from USDA crisis programs, such as The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), which has played a central role in USDA's COVID-relief efforts for American food producers and people experiencing hunger. Though USDA has added more seafood products in its purchases since the COVID–19 crisis, fishermen and shellfish farmers have been unable to access this important relief program due to the lack of processing and packaging capability, as well as pricing disparities.

This also means many Americans that rely on food banks and prepared meal organizations are denied healthy seafood as part of their diet. USDA should give grants and technical assistance to hunger organizations so they can purchase the infrastructure and obtain the necessary certifications, if needed, to safely work with seafood purchased from local fishermen. Schools, particularly those located within fishery communities, are also an excellent potential end market for local seafood. According to USDA, children require omega-3 fatty acids, which are found in seafood, for brain, eye, and nerve development. Income should not be a barrier to receiving the nutritional benefits of seafood.

Marketing

It is concerning that the U.S. does not have a comprehensive domestic seafood marketing campaign, putting our nation at a significant disadvantage. Last year alone, Canada and Australia spent millions marketing their seafood products through national programs. In addition, the U.S. has perhaps the world's strongest environmental, labor, and human rights standards for seafood production. Yet, U.S. consumers still have significant access to seafood at restaurants and markets from trade partners which may participate in harmful illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing practices.

The USDA can play an important role in supporting domestic consumption of U.S. seafood through marketing initiatives. A national marketing program would provide significant assistance to the industry and help encourage more consumers to purchase seafood for home consumption, as opposed to only or primarily eating seafood in restaurants. A national marketing program, including television commercials or other forms of media, would enable the sector to pivot from the difficulties of the COVID–19 pandemic to a future where more Americans are consuming healthy seafood products, produced locally and processed domestically. Because seafood products are seasonal, marketing focused on promoting U.S. seafood in season would create even more resiliency for the sector and educate consumers who may have become more concerned about supply chains during COVID–19 and want to use the purchasing power to support domestic and even local fishermen.

A national marketing strategy would also help consumers understand how to cook or appreciate underutilized seafood, which may be more prevalent or inexpensive but not something that the average home cook has experience preparing. Direct-to-consumer sales have helped many seafood producers weather the pandemic and USDA could build upon those efforts through additional marketing resources.

Outreach to Stakeholders

Finally, USDA should work to do outreach with seafood stakeholder groups to ensure that there is a line of communication open with an integral part of the nation's food production. This would also help guarantee that assistance provided to food producers is structured in a way that is appropriate and beneficial for these industries as well. There has been a significant disconnect between the agency and small to medium sized seafood producers in both rural and urban areas, with many unaware that they can even apply to USDA programs.

As a Member of a coastal community with constituents involved in the seafood industry, I stand by to assist the Committee or agency leaders in facilitating conversations with stakeholders and creating legislative solutions to improve the Federal Government's commitment to this important food sector. Taking these steps will ensure that there is more equity in assistance for our seafood producers and allow us to continue to build sustainable agriculture infrastructure and a resilient U.S. food economy.

Thank you for your consideration of my requests.

Sincerely,

FRANK PALLONE, JR.,
Member of Congress.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT OF HON. SCOTT PERRY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM PENNSYLVANIA

Chairman Scott, Ranking Member Thompson, Members of the Committee: I encourage the House Agriculture Committee to join me in protecting American consumers, workers and manufacturers from further government-imposed harm. The SWEETER Act—previously known as the SWEET Act in previous Congressional iterations—would eliminate the hidden tax on consumers that props up the sugar industry through various market distortions intended to artificially inflate the domestic price of sugar. Whatever the intent of the program, it has come to represent the worst type of corporate-cronyism; using the power of the Federal Government to bestow massive financial benefits on a concentrated group of politically-connected sugar producers while exacting significant costs on consumers, the domestic food manufacturing industry, and the economy as a whole. It is past time to end corporate giveaways and bring our policies in line with the free market.

Rooted in a Depression-era emergency relief program, the current sugar program is comprised of four pillars—price support loans, domestic marketing allotments,

tariff rate quotas, and the Feedstock Flexibility Program that work in concert to limit the domestic supply of sugar to artificially inflate the domestic price. The program has been wildly successful at achieving this goal—inflating the domestic price of sugar to twice the global rate on average. However, the program imposes significant costs to the American consumer; to the tune of $2.4–$4 billion annually. Previous CBO estimates have assessed that the sugar program will impose an approximately $120 million cost over the next 10 years—a cost that will be borne by the American Taxpayer.

In Ranking Member Glenn Thompson's home state of Pennsylvania, 40,000 Pennsylvanians work in sugar-intensive industries; we cannot sit idly by and allow the program to continue its economic devastation and threaten these family-sustaining jobs. Proponents of the sugar program insist it's necessary to protect American jobs, but a 2006 Department of Commerce study found that for every sugar industry job saved by the sugar program; three jobs in the food manufacturing industry are lost. In fact, sugar-intensive manufacturers lose between 17,000 and 20,000 jobs per year as a result of the sugar program. The truth is the sugar program puts sugar-intensive manufacturers in the impossible position of choosing between offshoring jobs and going out of business; either way, the American worker loses.

I plan to introduce the SWEETER Act on **Wednesday June 16th*** and would appreciate the opportunity to work with my colleagues on the House Agriculture Committee to ensure robust support for this policy. Clearly, the costs of the sugar program far outweigh the benefits to a small group of special interests. It is time to reject corporate-cronyism and instead, support American workers, consumers, and manufacturers.

I am grateful for the Committee's consideration of my request and look forward to working with each of you to ensure that the American People no longer bear the burden of the anachronistic sugar program.

SUBMITTED LEGISLATION

1. **H.R. 5680, Saving Workers by Eliminating Economic Tampering and Ensuring Reliability Act (SWEETER Act):** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr5680ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr5680ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 407).**

SUBMITTED LETTER OF HON. AUGUST PFLUGER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM TEXAS

May 27, 2021

Hon. DAVID SCOTT,
Chairman,
House Committee on Agriculture,
Washington, D.C.;

Hon. GLENN THOMPSON,
Ranking Minority Member,
House Committee on Agriculture,
Washington, D.C.

Chairman Scott and Ranking Member Thompson,

Thank you for providing the opportunity to highlight the needs and priorities of farmers and ranchers in Texas' 11th District. I am proud to represent a rural district in west Texas that has over 15 million acres of farm and ranch land worked by diligent producers who not only feed and clothe the State of Texas, but the entire nation.

As you well know, farm and ranch production systems are not only critical for our local, state, and national economies, but also play a key role in strengthening our national security, A nation that can feed itself is inherently safer and more secure than one that cannot. The United States—thanks to smart policies like the 2018 Farm Bill—retains the safest, most abundant, and affordable food supply in the world. Producers in west Texas play a large part in this accomplishment, and Congress should continue to prioritize our rural communities and Texas farmers and ranchers,

The following priorities reflect feedback I hear frequently from the communities I represent:

Invest in Rural Broadband: Too many of my constituents live on the wrong side of the digital divide, and rural America needs additional investment for access to high-speed internet for work, healthcare, and educational opportunities. Increas-

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* **Editor's note:** the legislation referred to was not introduced on June 16, 2021. H.R. 5680, Saving Workers by Eliminating Economic Tampering and Ensuring Reliability Act (SWEETER Act) was introduced on October 22, 2021.

ing the availability for reliable broadband remains essential for economic prosperity in our communities. I am thankful for Ranking Member Thompson's leadership in introducing the [H.R. 3369] *Broadband for Rural America Act,* and I am proud to be a cosponsor of this important piece of legislation.

Protect the Safety Net: With the ever-increasing challenges for farm and ranch operators, a strong and durable safety net is necessary so producers can continue to provide the food and fiber we depend on. Additionally, I remain hopeful Congress can act to reauthorize the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildfire Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+) to cover disasters from 2020 and 2021.

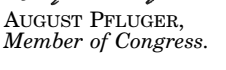
Predator Control: Last year, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimated that farmers and ranchers sustained roughly $232 million in livestock death loss due to predation. As producers continue to grapple with effects of the COVID–19 pandemic and regulatory uncertainty, we must develop more efficient methods to control invasive species and mitigate predation losses to livestock.

Promote Trade Opportunities for U.S. Agriculture: A pro-growth, America-first trade agenda that allows for more made-in-Texas goods to be shipped globally is critical for producers' economic outlook. It is imperative that Congress supports new trade agreements with strong agriculture provisions, as well as pursues vigorous enforcement of the China Phase One Agreement and the recently ratified United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

Fight Policies that Harm Rural America: I remain deeply concerned about President Biden's plan to pursue trillions in crippling tax hikes that will sabotage America's economic recovery. To that end, it is vital Congress preserve stepped-up basis so family owned agricultural operations can be passed along to the next generation and continue to grow our economy. Additionally, burdensome regulatory policies stemming from the outdated Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the Obama-era *Water[s] of the United S[t]ates* (WOTUS) can be disastrous for agricultural production throughout the country. Cutting bureaucratic red tape and rolling back unnecessary regulations remains paramount.

Thank you, again, for this opportunity. I stand ready to assist you both as we work to find solutions that benefit Texas and the entire nation.

Sincerely,



AUGUST PFLUGER,
Member of Congress.

SUBMITTED LEGISLATION

1. **H.R. 3369, Broadband for Rural America Act:** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr3369ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr3369ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 394).**

SUBMITTED STATEMENT OF HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN, A DELEGATE IN CONGRESS FROM NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Members of the Committee are tired of hearing this, I know, but the people I represent must be included in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP.

The Marianas is not currently part of SNAP, but instead receives a block grant, which has been shown over and over to be an inadequate response to combating food insecurity.

Just last October, families I am responsible for were cut from the block grant program because there was not enough fiscal 2021 money available to feed everyone in need. Families that were not cut completely from the program had their benefits cut 25 percent.

I hope we can all agree it is unacceptable to be cutting food aid in the middle of the economic crisis caused by the pandemic.

I was able to get supplemental funding for fiscal 2021 in December's appropriation and additional funding in the American Rescue Plan.

And I urged local authorities to trust I would be able to get that extra money and not to cut benefits.

But I was ignored, and families went hungry.

This story is not new. Throughout my tenure in Congress, I have had repeatedly to ask for funding to supplement the block grant—a series of stop-gap solutions.

But this hit-and-miss approach to funding is no way for the Federal Government to run a program that people's very lives depend on.

And there is a simple solution. Treat the people I represent in the Mariana Islands the same way their fellow U.S. citizens are treated in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, Guam, and the Virgin Islands: Include my people in SNAP.

SNAP is set up to respond to changing economic conditions, natural disasters, pandemics, and changes in food prices.

SNAP provides a basic level of food assistance to those in need. And by doing so SNAP benefits all of us.

Because when children have adequate access to food, they do better in school and eventually become productive members of society.

When adults are adequately fed, they can work and pull their families out of poverty and out of reliance on Federal programs like SNAP.

I have introduced legislation to add the Marianas to SNAP: H.R. 421, the AYUDA Act, which currently has 29 cosponsors.

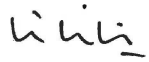
I have had encouraging discussions with Secretary Vilsack and Deputy [Under S]ecretary Dean about their existing statutory authority to extend SNAP to the Marianas with any transitional adjustments they deem necessary.

And I have raised this issue time and again with this Committee and with our staff.

I am not going to give up—or go away.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor the AYUDA Act, and I look forward to more discussions with USDA and FNS to make SNAP in the Marianas a reality.

Thank you.



GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN,
Member of Congress.

SUBMITTED LEGISLATION

1. **H.R. 421, Assuring You Uniform Dietary Assistance (AYUDA) Act of 2021 (AYUDA Act):** *https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr421ih/pdf/BILLS-117hr421ih.pdf* **(*See* p. 89).**

SUBMITTED STATEMENT OF HON. MICHAEL F. Q. SAN NICOLAS, A DELEGATE IN CONGRESS FROM GUAM

Chairman Scott, Ranking Member Thompson, and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture—

Håfa Adai and thank you for the opportunity to highlight Guam's needs to secure food safety and affordability, enhance food security, and to ensure the competitiveness of American agriculture.

Food security has and always will be one of the most important aspects of our nation's prosperity. From the first Thanksgiving to the present realities highlighted by today's global health crisis, we have recognized the importance of food for the strength and upward mobility of our communities. While we are aware that food insecurity affects neighborhoods across the country, the problem is more so exacerbated in the territories due to the considerable distance between our islands and access to adequate food sources.

To satisfy the holistic food needs of our region, the people of Guam and its neighboring territories must resort to a fixed reliance on importation and sourcing from neighboring Asian nations. In fact, approximately 90% of Guam's consumed foods are imported and within the last 10 years, total imports comprised 68.1% and 57.7% of all surface and air cargo respectively.[1] This demonstrated dependence on communities beyond our shores to feed our people leaves the health and well-being of Americans living in Guam vulnerable to circumstances beyond our control. For example, limited shipping lanes may dissolve at a moment's notice, and this pandemic has emphasized that fragility. Additionally, Guam's dependency on food availability dictated by import conditions such as policy, weather, and trade adversely impact the access to nutritious food options and contributes further to the current public health crisis.

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[1] Christie Nicoson, "Positive Peace and Food Security in Guam." Rotary Peace Center, November 2016. *http://worldwithoutgenocide.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Food-Security-in-Guam-2016.pdf*.

In an effort to resolve these resource gaps, establish food security for the island, and actively work toward Guam's goal of building regional sustainability, I humbly request the Committee prioritize fully funding programs that support the construction of a slaughterhouse and fumigator facility in rural areas and the territories. The lack of a fumigator facility to verify the safety and pest-free quality of produce hinders the importation of goods from our U.S.-allied neighbors and prevents the establishment of a circular economy partnership. Without a slaughterhouse to facilitate meeting the standard of livestock-related consumption presented by our island and region, both agricultural practitioners and consumers from Guam are denied the opportunity of participating in a system of local sourcing widely available to Americans across the continental United States. I have also requested funding for the revitalization of Guam's fishermen's co-op to the House Appropriations Committee. Without a revitalized fishermen's co-op facility, Guam is unable to comprehensively access and capitalize on the numerous ocean resources readily available to our island and throughout the Pacific.

As a body whose living mission has been directed towards keeping our country safe, secure, and moving forward through practical agricultural tools, we understand that our existing requests present key areas of interest for this Committee. Although they may be in other committees of jurisdiction, we humbly request for the support of all Members of this Committee in order to see things through in the interests of our country and the Territory of Guam.

Your work importantly highlights the fundamental relationship which exists between food and the quality of life for all Americans, and it is my hope that your advocacy assists in providing us the opportunity to meaningfully improve the lives and circumstances of the people of Guam through these projects. By supporting our efforts to secure funding for the construction of a fumigator facility, slaughterhouse, and revitalized fishermen's co-op facility, you will partake in the work of establishing systems and structures that will respond to the unique needs of our community and effectively uplift them as a whole.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present our needs before this Committee, and we look forward to working with you to enhancing the quality of life for our Americans living in the territory of Guam.

[ATTACHMENT]

Positive Peace and Food Security in Guam

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November 2016

Abstract

Worldwide, about one in nine people are undernourished. They are food-insecure, or unable to have sustained access to enough nutritious food. Food insecurity can contribute to instability or violence. Meanwhile, food security can boost a community's resilience and contribute to positive peace, or the greater well-being of society beyond an absence of violence.

The Pacific region faces particular obstacles to achieving food security, including a growing population, effects of climate change, and governance struggles. This case study explores food security in Guam and aims to contribute to a more holistic understanding of food security there. Interviews conducted with people involved in different types of local food initiatives—farmers, teachers, vendors, and activists—seek to highlight motivations for, challenges, and impact of local food on the food security situation. Concluding recommendations explore how strengthening local food initiatives can contribute to positive peace on the island, enhancing the well-being of society as a whole.

Table of Contents

Executive summary and key recommendations
Acknowledgements
1. Introduction
2. Context
- 2.1 History of Guam and globalization
- 2.2 Food security, conflict, and peace
  - 2.2.1 Food and conflict
  - 2.2.2 Food and peace
- 2.3 Food security in the Pacific
- 2.4 Food security in Guam

2.4.1 Availability and access
2.4.2 Utilization
2.4.3 Stability

3. Case study: local food initiatives in Guam

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 Definitions
3.1.2 Research design and parameters

3.2 Research findings

3.2.1 Trends across and between groups
3.2.2 Potential for positive peace
3.2.3 Further areas for exploration

4. Limitations
5. Recommendations
6. Conclusion

References

Executive summary and key recommendations

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, about 795 million people worldwide are undernourished.[1] There are significant challenges for achieving food security, which exists "when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."[2] *Availability, access, utilization,* and *stability* make up the four key pillars of food security. Food insecurity may contribute to the likelihood of instability or violence,[3] while food security can contribute to a community's resilience and to well-being at the national, community, household, and individual levels.[4] The ability of people to have sufficient food contributes to positive peace, or the greater well-being of society beyond an absence of violence.

The many islands and nations that make up the Pacific region face particular obstacles to achieving food security. Population, climate change, and strong governance have been identified as primary concerns. On the Pacific island of Guam, other challenges include high food prices, disproportionate amounts of imported food, and vulnerability to impacts of climate change and weather patterns. Food availability in Guam is largely contingent on conditions favorable to imports, including in policy, weather, and trade. Furthermore, lack of accessible nutritious food options and widespread preference for diets high in processed foods contribute to a public health crisis.

This study aims to gather anecdotal evidence about food security in Guam. It draws on existing data in order to understand a holistic view of the island's food security situation and compiles interviews with individuals involved in a number of local food initiatives, including organizations, farmers, educators, and vendors who are working to support local farmers and strengthen the presence of local food in people's shopping habits and diets. Specifically, this study examines food security in relation to Guam's prospects for positive peace. The case study is designed to highlight the goals, impacts, and challenges for local food initiatives in Guam so as to better understand food security in the context of positive peace.

Key findings from this case study show that local food initiatives are mostly focused on health, market conditions, and weather events. Goals and impacts as stated in interviews often reflect focus on improving health as well as contributing to import substitution or strengthening the local economy. Challenges include high costs for farmers, which make sales of local food less competitive with imported goods, and struggles with production due to high incidence of pests and weather events.

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[1] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Fund for Agricultural Development, and World Food Programme, "The State of Food Insecurity in the World. Meeting the 2015 International Hunger Targets: Taking Stock of Uneven Progress" (Rome, 2015), *http://www.fao.org/hunger/en/:8*.

[2] Anders Jägerskog and Ashok Swain, *Emerging Security Threats in the Middle East: The Impact of Climate Change and Globalization* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016): 39.

[3] Emmy Simmons, "Harvesting Peace: Food Security, Conflict, and Cooperation," Environmental Change and Security Program Report (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2013): 19–22.

[4] Clemens Breisinger, *et al.,* "Building Resilience for Food and Nutrition Security," in International Food Policy Research Institute, 2014: 3.

Recommendations of this study include the following actions to improve food security prospects in Guam:

1. **Enhanced understanding of the situation**—Effective action around food security requires accurate and updated information. Studies, data collection, and analysis should not only be continued, but should increasingly feature collaboration between various community stakeholders. This would contribute to the availability of practical knowledge to better meet the needs of the community.
2. **Expanded education on nutrition**—Increased public awareness and understanding around basic nutrition and the links between diet and health are crucial to improving food security. Integrating knowledge and action around health and local food through nutrition would benefit people's well-being and support local agriculture.
3. **Encouraging young farmers**—Education in schools and training programs to introduce young people to the farming industry and allow related practical experience are important steps toward increasing the number of local farmers and shifting the farmer demographic to include a younger population. This will also facilitate building continuity of skills and productivity and pass on local knowledge, both of which are increasingly important as the current farming population ages.
4. **Market expansion**—Opportunities for farmers to expand to supplying other sectors beyond grocery stores and farmers' markets should be considered and could include contracts or arrangements with the tourism and military industries. The demands generated from these industries could support farmers, boosting the local food environment and economy.
5. **Improved communication and coordination**—Stronger channels of communication that facilitate sharing of knowledge, data, and resources between academics, policy makers, nonprofits, business, farmers, and other interested groups in Guam would enhance opportunities available to individual groups and the collective of local food initiatives.
6. **Targeted food accessibility programs**—Information should be gathered to assess which individuals and groups are in more vulnerable situations regarding food security. This information could inform programming to ensure that assistance programs do not reinforce harmful power structures and that healthy food is equitably accessible.

Acknowledgements

I owe many thanks the individuals in Guam who welcomed me and made this project possible. I am indebted to those who so willingly shared their knowledge and experiences.

I owe special gratitude to those groups and individuals who supported this study and are doing tremendous work in support of local food in Guam. I would like to thank Anthony Ada, Jesse Bamba, Robert Barber, Peter Barcinas, Cassie Brady, Colleen Cabedo, Sylvia Frain, Thalia Gange, Rebekah Garrison, Stephanie Herring, Michael Limtiaco, Steve Martinez, Denise Mendiola-Hertslet, Melanie Mendiola, Tiara Na'puti, Jessica Nangauta, Sabina Perez, Gena Rojas, Jesse Rosario, Marilyn Salas, Bernard Watson, Earnie Wustig, Rotary Club of Tumon Bay, Rotary Club of Northern Guam, Sunrise Rotary Club, Rotary E-Club of Pago Bay, and the others who generously shared their time and experience with me.

I am grateful to Rotary International and the faculty at Uppsala University for supporting my studies and encouraging me in this research. Special thanks go to Minneapolis University Rotary Club, Rotary Districts 2350 and 5950, and Uppsala University Rotary Peace Center.

The views in this report are my own and do not represent those of the aforementioned groups or individuals. Any mistakes or errors are my own.

1. Introduction

More than just providing sustenance, food brings people together, ties them to a time and place, forms culture, and shapes tradition. In modern history, humans have advanced agricultural practices, improved technology, and shaped an increasingly connected global market. Yet despite this progress, millions of people are unable to fulfill their basic food needs. Although food is recognized internationally as among the most basic rights guaranteed to all people, nearly 795 million people, one

in nine people worldwide, do not have enough food.[5] Addressing this need is a matter of addressing adequate production and distribution and ensuring food security.

Food security is defined by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations as existing "when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."[6] Food security is generally considered to have four key components: availability, access, utilization, and stability. These comprise a picture of food that not only includes food sources, but also equitable distribution of food, people's knowledge of good nutrition, and the ability to sustain these traits over time.

This research aims to highlight how food security is connected to peace. The following case study report is an analysis of the food security situation in Guam. An unincorporated territory of the United States, Guam hosts multiple U.S. military bases and the island itself has not been actively involved in war since World War II, during which time the Japanese invaded the island and the U.S. fought to regain control. Guam is currently experiencing negative peace, that is, an absence of conflict. However, simply viewing peace as a lack of violence misses key components that make up the greater well-being of a society. There is more to peace than not fighting. Moving to look beyond the absence of violence allows a more dynamic picture of the true state of well-being. "Positive peace," therefore, is a more useful term as it aims to understand the degree to which people are able to meet their needs and foster sustained peace. Positive peace is defined as "peace that exceeds the absence of violence, as characterized by the presence of justice, fairness, well-being in individual and group interactions."[7] By examining different aspects of positive peace, it is possible to understand how food security may be an important component of this sustained well-being of society.

This report will begin in Section 2 with a discussion of how food security is related to peace and situate these topics regionally in the Pacific and locally in Guam. Section 3 will explain the research methodology used, highlight the results of a multiple-case study conducted in Guam, and provide a perspective of positive peace on the island. After discussing limitations, the report concludes with recommendations and opportunities for future work.

2. Context

2.1 History of Guam and globalization

Guam, or Guåhan in Chamorro, is a unique and interesting case for food security, particularly in light of the dramatic changes of globalization and the increased role of the military against a backdrop of colonialism. The legacies of colonization and militarization continue to profoundly affect the current situation in Guam.

Guam, located in the north Pacific, is the largest and southernmost island of the Mariana Islands in Micronesia. Scholars estimate that migration to the Pacific Islands took place between 2,000 B.C. and 500 A.D. Chamorros, Guam's indigenous peoples, are thought to have first settled the island during this time.[8] Following Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan's landing in Guam in 1521, the Spanish claimed Guam in 1565 and colonized the island, spreading Christianity through Catholic missionaries and using the island to benefit Spanish commerce.[9] The Spanish occupied Guam for over 300 years, despite occasional conflicts and rebellion with Chamorros.[10]

The U.S. captured Guam during the Spanish-American War, and the Spanish granted them the island through the Treaty of Paris in 1898.[11] During World War II, the Japanese occupied Guam for 31 months. During this time, the Japanese separated indigenous Chamorro families and subjected the people to newly imposed cultural and education systems, forced labor, incarceration, torture, concentration

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[5] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Fund for Agricultural Development, and World Food Programme, "The State of Food Insecurity in the World. Meeting the 2015 International Hunger Targets: Taking Stock of Uneven Progress": 8.

[6] Jägerskog and Swain, *Emerging Security Threats in the Middle East: The Impact of Climate Change and Globalization:* 39.

[7] Johan Galtung and International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization,* vol. 14, PEACE AND CONFLICT, DEVELOPMENT AND CIVILIZATION (London: GB: SAGE Publications Ltd, 1996).

[8] Paul Carano and Pedro C. Sanchez, *A Complete History of Guam,* 9th ed. (Rutland and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1982): 16–17.

[9] *Ibid,* 39, 44; 62.

[10] *Ibid:* 61–87.

[11] Robert F. Rogers, *Destiny's Landfall: A History of Guam* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995).

camps, and execution.[12] This occupation is thought to have resulted in the killing of as much as ten percent of Guam's population.[13] The U.S. recaptured the island in 1944.[14] In 1950, the Guam Organic Act established Guam as an unincorporated organized territory of the U.S., making it one of the world's current seventeen non-self-governing territories classified by the United Nations and subject to the decolonization process.[15]

The Post-War period that followed brought many changes to the island: per capita incomes increased and modern shopping centers, churches, and infrastructure were constructed. Guam also made strides toward greater self-governance.[16] A growing population has also impacted current affairs in Guam. Population growth rates continue to increase annually. The population growth rate between 1990 and 2000 was 1.4 percent.[17] The 2010 Census counted a population of 159,358 people, a 2.9 percent growth rate from 2000.[18]

These changes have had other profound effects in Guam's development. Tourism has grown to become a major economic sector. According to Guam Visitors Bureau (GVB), tourism in Guam generates $1.4 billion annually. The sector accounts for 60 percent of Guam's business revenue each year and employs 31 percent of the island's non-Federal workers. The majority of visitors come from East Asia: 71 percent from Japan, with growing numbers from Korea and Taiwan. In 2012, there were over 1.3 million arrivals and projections for 2020 forecast two million visitors.[19]

Another major economic sector is the U.S. military, which has come to dominate the island both in physical and economic presence. The island economy is heavily dependent on the U.S. military[20] and 28 percent, or roughly ⅓, of the landmass is occupied by the military, as shown in *Figure 1.*[21] The military is a major employer, and recruitment programs start in high school. Guam's enlistment rate is among the highest in the U.S. In 2007, it reportedly ranked first among 54 states and territories in recruiting success in the Army National Guard.[22] Though there are many factors contributing to this, the heavy involvement with the military can be partly attributed to the experience of World War II that persists in living memory, as well as to economic necessity. In 2010, 25 percent of the population was considered poor.[23] Joining the military provides not only income, but also access to the military's base infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, and grocery stores with more affordable rates than most public facilities. According to a recent news article, Guam currently hosts six thousand military personnel and an expansion plan set for 2022 would bring an additional 5,000 marines and 1,300 dependents.[24]

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[12] Carano and Sanchez, *A Complete History of Guam:* 267–290.

[13] Werner Gruhl, *Imperial Japan's World War Two, 1931–1945* (Transaction Publishers, 2007).

[14] Carano and Sanchez, *A Complete History of Guam:* 293–309.

[15] United Nations General Assembly, "Information from Non-Self Governing Territories Transmitted under Article 73e of the Charter of the United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General" (United Nations, 2015), *http://www.un.org/en/events/nonselfgoverning/nonselfgoverning.shtml*.

[16] Carano and Sanchez, *A Complete History of Guam:* 396–398.

[17] Bureau of Statistics and Plans, "Guam's Facts and Figures at a Glance 2013" (Hagåtña: Office of the Governor of Guam, 2014).

[18] United States Census Bureau, "Guam Demographic Profile Summary File: 2010 Census of Population and Housing," March 2014.

[19] Guam Visitors Bureau, "Vision 2020" (Tumon: Guam Visitors Bureau, 2014).

[20] Natividad and Gwyn Kirk, "Fortress Guam: Resistance to the US Military Mega-Buildup," *The Asia-Pacific Journal,* Japan Focus, 8, no. 19 (May 2010): 4.

[21] John Letman, "Proposed US Military Buildup on Guam Angers Locals Who Liken It to Colonization," *The Guardian,* August 1, 2016.

[22] Natividad and Kirk, "Fortress Guam: Resistance to the US Military Mega-Buildup": 5.

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] Letman, "Proposed US Military Buildup on Guam Angers Locals Who Liken It to Colonization."

Figure 1: Military Presence in Guam

(Map: *The Guardian,* 2016).

Though the people in Guam are U.S. citizens, they are denied a vote in presidential elections and lack full political representation in U.S. Congress. Guam is allowed to elect a "delegate," or a nonvoting Member, to the U.S. House of Representatives.[25] The political status also affects the economy. For instance, the Merchant Marine Act of 1920 (P.L. 66–261), more commonly known as the Jones Act, regulates commerce by requiring that all goods or passengers transferred on ships between U.S. ports—like Guam—must be carried on U.S.-flag ships that are constructed in the U.S., owned by U.S. citizens, and crewed by U.S. citizens and U.S. permanent residents.[26] The Jones Act is said to be important to supporting eco-

[25] United States House of Representatives, *48 U.S.C. Ch. 16: Delegates to Congress, Title 48—Territories and Insular Possessions, Title VII, § 712, 122 Stat. 868, vol. 48 U.S.C. 1752,* 2008.
[26] United States Senate, *Merchant Marine Act, 41 Stat. 988,* 1920.

nomic interests of the U.S. shipping industry[27] and protecting national security.[28] However, the Act severely limits the goods that can be brought into the country. The constricted nature of the market imposes prices on the people of Guam that far exceed that of not only those on the continent but also neighboring islands, as explained later in this report.

2.2 Food security, conflict, and peace

2.2.1 Food and conflict

Researchers with the International Food Policy Research Institute state "most wars of the late 20th century and early 21st century are 'food wars,' meaning food is used as a weapon, food systems are destroyed in the course of conflict, and food insecurity persists as a legacy of conflict."[29] The connection between food and conflict is not surprising. Food is a basic necessity and scarcity or threats to access have serious repercussions on peoples' lives. The connection works both ways: food insecurity can be both a cause and consequence of conflict.

Conflict may cause food insecurity in a number of ways, affecting all four aspects of food security: availability, access, utilization, and stability. Fundamentality, conflict affects availability of food through:

1. Disruption of food production;
2. Interruption of food delivery in both markets and humanitarian assistance;
3. Harm to investment in food systems by diverting funds; or
4. Destruction of food and related assets, such as equipment, livestock, seeds, and food stocks, harming both immediate and future food-production capabilities.[30]

As this list demonstrates, violence or unrest can disrupt production and market flows or destroy infrastructure that is crucial to the food system. People may be prompted to take preventative action in the face of such difficulties, withholding funds or resources they might otherwise invest in food and agriculture. These diminishing investments or withdrawal from the sector can reduce household income as well as food availability and accessibility.[31] In addition to affecting availability, conflict also disrupts and impacts access, utility, and stability of food systems, thus contributing to greater food insecurity.

Food security can also play a role in triggering conflict. Food can contribute to conflict through causing or perpetuating:

1. Extreme and sudden rises in food prices, as seen in food protests, riots, and other forms of unrest;
2. Competition for scarce resources, such as water, necessary for food production;
3. Inequalities, particularly in resource-rich countries;
4. Incentives for people to join rebel groups in order to secure food or other resources for themselves or their families; or
5. Instability that sustains conflicts.[32]

Potential for conflict is higher when inequalities or environmental degradation, or a combination of the two, cause "extreme marginalization of large segments of the population."[33] Some research suggests that such a relationship between food insecurity and conflict is conditioned by socioeconomic positioning. Unrest as a response to spikes in food prices most often occurs among more affluent groups, less so among rural, poor, or marginalized populations. Notably, food-insecure communities do not always resort to violence. Such instances of conflict are more common when groups

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[27] Chris Jennewein, "Hunter Named 'Champion of Maritime' For Support of Shipbuilding," *Times of SanDiego,* September 30, 2015, *http://timesofsandiego.com/politics/2015/09/30/hunter-named-champion-of-maritime-for-support-of-shipbuilding/.*

[28] Daniel Gouré, "The Jones Act and Homeland Security in the 21st Century" (The Lexington Institute, July 2016), *http://lexingtoninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Jones-Act-and-Homeland-Security.pdf.*

[29] Ellen Messer and Marc J. Cohen, "Conflict, Food Insecurity, and Globalization," International Food Policy Research Institute, May 2006: 1–45.

[30] Simmons, "Harvesting Peace: Food Security, Conflict, and Cooperation."

[31] Barrett, "Food or Consequences: Food Security and Its Implications for Global Sociopolitical Stability": 9–11.

[32] Simmons, "Harvesting Peace: Food Security, Conflict, and Cooperation:" 19–22.

[33] Messer and Cohen, "Conflict, Food Insecurity, and Globalization": 15.

are not overly repressed and are organized sufficiently, such as through strong political leadership.[34]

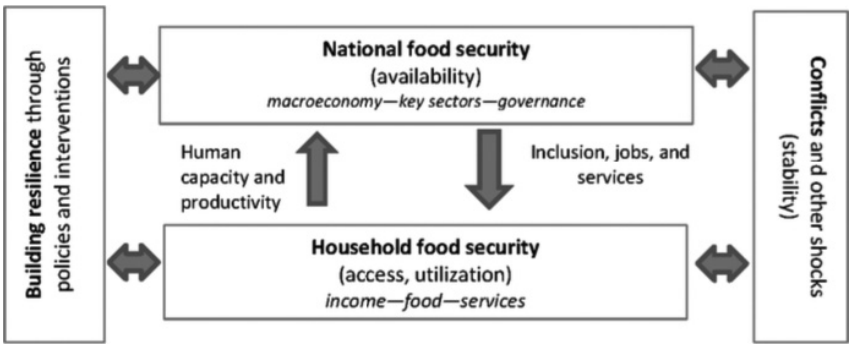
Although food is not found to be a direct cause of conflict, it is certainly an aggravating factor. Other factors, such as high unemployment, rapid urbanization, or government instability also contribute to vulnerability and could impact both food insecurity and conflict. Although a causal link is not possible to prove at this point between food and conflict, it is important to note that the relationship between the two can be observed both in research and as experienced by people in their daily lives.

2.2.2 Food and peace

Previous findings show that food, as essential to human life, is a potential contributor to conflict. Likewise, it can be a powerful means to promote peace. When food is approached with a civic perspective, it stands to be a force for fostering resiliency and sustainable positive peace.

Resilience is defined as a country or household's ability to "prevent, anticipate, prepare for, cope with, and recover from conflicts," such that they are better able to grow after a conflict, not simply survive one.[35] This enables a community to support itself in a way that will foster greater well-being and positive peace, such as through support for and promotion of adequate education, health care, and governing institutions. *Figure 2* illustrates interdependencies of food security, conflict, and resiliency. This framework takes national food security as the "availability" pillar—dependent on a country's ability to provide adequate food for all people. National-level food security depends on a country's macroeconomic stability, sector policies, and governance. This entails not only an economic equality dimension, but also the ability of citizens to actively participate in the governing process, and for people to equitably access necessary services.

Figure 2: The conflict resiliency-food security framework



(Image: Breisinger, 2014).

Household food security, meanwhile, here supports the "access" and "utilization" components of the term, in line with the FAO definition of food security that "all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."[36] Resiliency at this level can be built with this component that security at the national level, or availability, does not necessarily equate to food-secure households or individuals. That is, simply because food is available, does not necessarily mean that all people will have equitable access to it or be able to use food in the best or most appropriate way. Therefore, household and individual resiliency is just as crucial as resiliency at the national level.

2.3 Food security in the Pacific

Traditionally, Guam and other Pacific islands were self-sufficient. They achieved food security through sustainable agriculture, fishing, and harvesting local produce. Increasingly, imports have provided for the majority of food needs, though often

[34] Messer and Cohen, "Conflict, Food Insecurity, and Globalization."
[35] Breisinger, *et al.*, "Building Resilience for Food and Nutrition Security": 3.
[36] Jägerskog and Swain, *Emerging Security Threats in the Middle East: The Impact of Climate Change and Globalization:* 39.

with lower quality substitutes for locally grown and produced foods.[37] This, along with many other inter-related factors, affects the state of food security. *Figure 3* presents a model for the various components and influencing factors of food security. These sectors, groups, and circumstances represent the main impacts on food supply and demand, affecting overall food security.

Figure 3: Conceptual model of food security in the Pacific

(Image: Food Secure Pacific Working Group, 2010).

Food security has increasingly been recognized as a challenge for the Pacific region. Leaders at the 39th Pacific Islands Forum in 2008 acknowledged "the high importance of food security as an emerging issue which poses challenges for the future well-being of people across the region" and urged high political commitment, calling on governments to take "immediate action to address food security issues nationally and, where possible, regionally through a range of measures across key sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, trade and transport."[38]

Expanding on this model, the 2010 Pacific Food Summit, highlighted three factors as specific challenges for food security in the Pacific region: population, climate change, and governance. The Pacific Food Summit first addressed the challenge posed by population, highlighting the fact that in 2010 there were ten million people living in the region, half of who live in urban areas, with a growth rate of four percent a year. It was also noted that families spend a significant portion of their income, between 39–50 percent, on food.[39] Climate change poses a significant challenge to food security, as fisheries and farmland have been and will continue to be impacted. Changes in precipitation patterns, increased disease vectors, and loss of land all have immediate impacts on agricultural production and contribute to de-

[37] Food Secure Pacific Working Group, "Towards a Food Secure Pacific. Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific: 2011–2015" (Port Vila, 2010): 7.

[38] *Ibid.*

[39] Western Pacific Region, World Health Organization, "Pacific Food Summit," Meeting Report (Port Vila: World Health Organization, April 2010): 3.

creased crop biodiversity.[40] In addition, the World Health Organization (WHO) notes that governments will face increasingly difficult demands of managing population and climate challenges alongside while economic growth, political stability, and self-sufficiency.[41]

Alongside these factors, other trends emerge across the Pacific. Notably, there is an increased consumption of imported foods, both as a product and consequence of changing global food systems. An increasingly urban population has contributed to shifting societal diets toward imported and less nutritious food. The WHO also finds consistent health trends across the Pacific: 70 percent of people in the region do not consume the recommended daily servings of fruit and vegetables, and obesity and diabetes rates have risen to some of the highest in the world.[42] These trends of consuming more imported food and increased health risks are central to food security issues throughout the region.

2.4 Food security in Guam

In addition to the food security trends demonstrated to exist throughout the Pacific, the food security situation in Guam is particularly impacted by a number of highly context-specific factors. Among these factors is Guam's political status, which has contributed to the increase of cheap imported food. Imports have largely created a situation where there is enough to eat—sufficient food availability—but insufficient nutritional value. Further, adequate access and utilization components of food security are lacking in Guam. Food prices, the spread of quality nutritious food, the geographic location of major supermarkets, food assistance programs, and diets and popular consumption patterns contribute to a larger picture of poor access and weak utilization of healthy food. Climate and weather events, including effects of climate change, affect the stabilization element of food security in Guam.

2.4.1 Availability and access

There is no immediate shortage of food in Guam. During regular times, grocery stores are well stocked and there are a variety of options for purchasing food. Markets range from warehouse style stores and supermarkets to 'mom and pop shops', farmers' markets, and roadside produce stands (pictured: *Food availability in Guam*). Food products vary between locally grown and imported, processed foods.

Imports constitute approximately 90 percent of the food in Guam. According to recent data from the Government of Guam's Bureau of Statistics and Plans, food data for the 3 year period from 2011 to 2013, estimated that annual food imports in Guam consisted of $8.25 million in vegetables and fruits; $41 million chicken, pork, and beef; and $14 million fish and seafood.[43] This figure includes commodities for resale; it does not include military, government, promotion, or personal items. The majority of all imports (of food and non-alcoholic beverage products and commodities) are from the United States, followed by Japan.[44] In 2013, total imports comprised 68.1 percent and 57.7 percent of all surface and air cargo respectively, while exports made up 11.8 percent of surface cargo and 19.9 percent of air cargo.[45] These figures show that import commodities largely outweigh exports.

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[40] John Campbell and Olivia Warrick, "Climate Change and Migration Issues in the Pacific" (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Pacific Office, August 2014): 2.

[41] World Health Organization, "Pacific Food Summit." 4.

[42] *Ibid:* 3.

[43] Gena Rojas, Fred Schumann, and Maria Claret M. Ruane, "Guam Farmer Survey: February–April 2014," PCEI Technical Report (Pacific Center for Economic Initiatives, University of Guam, May 2014).

[44] Lorileet T. Crisostomo and Albert M. Perez, "Guam Import Data," External Trade Section (Hagåtña: Bureau of Statistics and Plans, December 2014).

[45] Bureau of Statistics and Plans, "Guam's Facts and Figures at a Glance 2013."

Food availability in Guam

In order clockwise:

(1) Locally grown produce sold by the organization Farm to Table Guam at the Mangilao Night Market;

(2) a produce stand at the Saturday morning Dededo Farmers' Market;

(3) canned goods at a warehouse grocery store; and

(4) the grocery section in a gas station market store.

Despite high food import figures, a pilot study found that grocery stores in Guam lacked nutritious products. Based on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Thrifty Food Plan, a majority of stores lacked an average of five of twelve categories of nutritious foods, and only 12 percent of stores fulfilled eleven or more categories.[46] SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) is one of the largest national programs to grant food benefits based on individual and household needs. The average benefit granted to individuals in Guam in 2014 was $191.08, while the average for the U.S. was $125.01. Guam ranks second highest in the country, after Hawaii, where the average benefit amount was at $225.38. The household averages were $443.02 in Hawaii and $583.75 in Guam.[47] Comparing prices for food, the pilot study found that food in Guam was 15 percent more expensive than in Hawaii and 49 percent higher than in the continental U.S.[48] In 2013, the average income per

[46] The Thrift Food Plan (TFP) is a measurement of the cost of nutritious diets. The Plan serves as the basis for the U.S. food assistance program allotments, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program).

[47] Food and Nutrition Service, "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: State Activity Report, Fiscal Year 2014," State Activity Report (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Program Accountability and Administration Division, United States Department of Agriculture, October 2015), *www.fns.usda.gov/pd/snapmain.html*.

[48] Rojas, Schumann, and Ruane, "Guam Farmer Survey: February–April 2014."

person in Guam was $30,500,[49] while the U.S. average was $54,000.[50] Given the relatively low per capita GDP and high prices of food, it can be difficult for people to regularly access healthy food.

Not only is the average food assistance benefit higher in Guam; a higher portion of the population depends on the assistance program. Comparing U.S. Census data and SNAP reports from 2014, Washington, D.C. had the highest percentage in the continental U.S., with approximately 22 percent of the population on food assistance, while an estimated 29 percent were on food assistance in Guam.[51] Furthermore, although food assistance benefits are accepted at some farmers' markets in Guam, anecdotal evidence shows that many SNAP beneficiaries purchase mainly nonperishable food items in large quantities. This means families dependent on food assistance purchase less fresh, healthy produce and more imported, processed foods, which affects their health. Although there are adequate amounts of food on the island, the nutritional wealth is not equitably distributed, and many households and individuals depend on government assistance to purchase basic food items. In addition to the numbers for food assistance and per capita GDP, recent data shows at least 1,745 homeless people in Guam. Over 400 of these are Chamorro and over 600 come from other islands in the Federated States of Micronesia.[52]

Estimating the amount of local food produced in Guam is a difficult task. The primary challenge involves counting the farms, followed thereafter by the fact that not all farms keep detailed records of their harvests. Censuses of agriculture collected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture provide at least a general picture of farms in Guam. The Census defines a farm as any place "from which $1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during a 12 month period." In 1993, the definition was set at $100. The 1940 Census found 2,529 farms. The 1998 Census found 201 farms, approximately 65 percent of which were operated by individuals over 55 years of age,[53] and the Census taken in 2014 totaled only 104.[54] These numbers are subject to some speculation, as it is often acknowledged that many farms go unaccounted for due to irregular record keeping, informal set-ups, and inconsistent communication. However, the numbers do reflect a real trend in the number of farms declining. Furthermore, the farmer population is growing older, as existing farmers age and fewer young farmers take their place. Further, the Guam Farmer Survey conducted by researchers at the University of Guam estimates that 64.62 percent of farmers gave unsold produce away, 3.08 percent threw it away, and 29.23 percent used it for personal consumption, animal feed, or other uses.[55] These findings show that there is great potential for increased food sales through, for example, produce marketing or production of value-added commodities.

2.4.2 Utilization

The utilization component of food security refers to whether people have the knowledge and means necessary for accessing and consuming a diet that will enable them to lead a healthy and productive life.[56] Health challenges in Guam have grown significantly in recent history. The Government of Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) reports that Guam is facing a health crisis due to high rates of non-communicable diseases. The DPHSS and Non-Communicable Disease Consortium identify the pathway to non-communicable diseases as beginning with underlying causes of globalization, urbanization, and an aging population; aggravated by factors including an unhealthy diet; contributing to risk factors of obesity and high blood pressure; and leading to chronic diseases.[57] Heart disease,

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[49] Central Intelligence Agency, "United States," Government, *The World Factbook,* accessed September 10, 2016, *https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html*.

[50] Central Intelligence Agency, "United States," Government, *The World Factbook,* accessed September 10, 2016, *https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html*.

[51] Food and Nutrition Service, "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: State Activity Report, Fiscal Year 2014."

[52] Bureau of Statistics and Plans, "Guam Statistical Yearbook 2014" (Hagåtña: Office of the Governor of Guam, 2015).

[53] United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service, and Bureau of Statistics and Plans, Government of Guam, "1998 Census of Agriculture: Guam," Census, (October 2003).

[54] Rojas, Schumann, and Ruane, "Guam Farmer Survey: February–April 2014."

[55] *Ibid.*

[56] Simmons, "Harvesting Peace: Food Security, Conflict, and Cooperation."

[57] Government of Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services and Non-Communicable Disease Consortium, "Guam Non-Communicable Disease Strategic Plan 2014–2018," Live Healthy Guam (Mangilao: Non-Communicable Disease Consortium, December 2013).

malignant neoplasms (cancers), cerebrovascular disease (such as stroke or hypertension), diabetes, and septicemia (such as life-threatening infections) made up five of the top six leading causes of death in 2014.[58] Life-style behaviors, including diet, have led to alarming increases in rates of diabetes, cancer, obesity, heart attacks, and strokes.[59] These diseases cause 58.8 percent of the overall death rate, which is 8.5 percent higher than that of the United States, as shown in *Table 1.*[60]

Table 1: Age-Adjusted NCD Death Rates per 100,000 Population, Guam and the United States, 2010[61]

	Guam	United States
Deaths, all causes	810.6	747.0
Heart disease	254.9	179.1
Cancer	133.6	172.8
Cerebrovascular disease/stroke	71.6	39.1
Diabetes	37.7	20.8

This data shows that people in Guam die from life-style and preventable diseases such as hypertension, strokes, heart disease, and diabetes at much greater rates than people in the continental U.S. Diets in Guam promote obesity, another contributing factor to these diseases, through high occurrence of fast food, processed food, high sugar, salt, trans fat, and highly saturated foods. In 2012, 32.4 percent and 29.1 percent of people in Guam were considered to be overweight and obese, respectively.[62] In particular, Guam childhood obesity rates are about 23 percent, compared with 17 percent in the U.S.[63] This is partly attributed to the fact that in 2009, only about 24 percent of people in Guam ate adequate servings of fruits and vegetables daily.[64]

Furthermore, even produce that is purchased at local grocery stores may lack nutritional value. Imported produce, which constitutes the majority of food sold in grocery stores in Guam, is harvested before it is fully ripe and is often ripened using gassing or other unnatural techniques to ensure it lasts during the shipping process and holds a shelf-life in stores.

Lifestyle is an important component in considering the utilization and health crisis in Guam. Food sharing has been and continues to be an important component of social gatherings in Guam, particularly at fiestas. Fiestas, barbeques, and other similar events take place nearly every weekend in many locations throughout Guam. These events are an opportunity for family and community members to gather or celebrate special occasions, and where food is prepared in abundance. A typical menu includes meat and fish, rice, and cakes, among other dishes. A recent study on the nutritional composition of fiestas found the fiesta menu presented high availability of food but a nutritional imbalance. The availability of food is credited to a long tradition of reciprocal behavior in Guam, extending from early Chamorro society and exemplified by the exchanging of food dishes and goods today, especially at fiestas. Though there is plenty of food at fiestas and other events, there is little variety or nutritional content. Most foods at fiestas were found to be high in energy, fat, and saturated fat.[65] The shift away from traditional foods such as breadfruit, taro, yams, and seafood toward lower quality imported food and cooking methods high in fat value affect the nutritious intake and health of many in Guam.

2.4.3 Stability

Finally, the fourth component of food security is stability, whether conditions of access, availability, and utilization can be sustained over time. One of the factors impacting stability in Guam is the climate. Currently, the major factor associated with climate affecting food is pest management. The climate in Guam is well suited to many types of pests and invasive species that pose a threat to crops, affecting

[58] Bureau of Statistics and Plans, "Guam Statistical Yearbook 2014."

[59] V. Peter Roberto, Department of Health and Social Services, quoted in Western Pacific Region World Health Organization, "Pacific Food Summit," Meeting Report (Port Vila: World Health Organization, April 2010).

[60] Office of the Governor of Guam, "Health Revolution."

[61] Government of Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services and Non-Communicable Disease Consortium, "Guam Non-Communicable Disease Strategic Plan 2014–2018."

[62] Office of the Governor of Guam, "Health Revolution."

[63] Yvette C. Paulino, *et al.,* "Overweight and Obesity Prevalence among Public School Children in Guam," *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* 26, no. 2 (May 2015): 53–62.

[64] Office of the Governor of Guam, "Health Revolution."

[65] Paulino, *et al.,* "Overweight and Obesity Prevalence among Public School Children in Guam": 233–44.

farmers' livelihoods and food production. Examples vary from the Ageratum yellow vein virus (AYVV) that infected tomato plants in northern Guam around 2007, to the brown tree snake that arrived more than 60 years ago and effectively led to the extinction of nearly every native bird species in Guam and is projected to cause changes in tree distributions and reductions in native trees as well as power outages.[66]

Furthermore, climate change is affecting weather patterns and sea levels in the Pacific. Climate change will bring more frequent and intense extreme weather events and alter water and land resources, such as suitable farmland, fresh water availability, and fisheries. Throughout the Pacific, climate change is expected to contribute to an increase in tropical cyclone speed by up to 20 percent; variation in rainfall, storm and extreme weather event-related damage or destruction of farmland; as well as inundation of coasts, freshwater salinization, shifting fisheries, and increased incidence of disease.[67] These events will not only affect food production and storage in Guam, but will impact fuel prices and transportation of imports to the island. When Super-typhoon Pongsona hit Guam in 2002, the storm destroyed infrastructure, causing power outages, loss of water pressure, and fuel shortages. Emergency food stamps were issued for those who lost their food, including some of the more than 3,000 families whose homes were damaged or destroyed, but gasoline stocks were so low that DPHSS employees struggled to get to work and many beneficiaries could not reach the food stamp centers.[68] Similarly, because Guam is so reliant on imports, other events such as worker strikes, technical problems, slowed or failed negotiations, market crashes, or acts of terror could similarly severely impact the island's food security. These factors combined with Guam's increased appetite for cheap processed foods have left the island more susceptible to shocks in food and fuel prices.

3. Case study: local food initiatives in Guam

Although food security is a multidimensional term, this case study focuses specifically on the concept of access. As demonstrated in Section 2, availability has been the focus of a number of studies and utilization has, at least in part, been addressed by other papers.[69] Stability will likely be affected by increased severe weather events and other effects of climate change, which could impact both local production and imported resources. Other events, many of which might be more unpredictable, such as security threats, acts of terrorism, and economic slumps or crashes, also have the potential to greatly impact the food security situation in Guam, as they could affect or interrupt import shipments. Meanwhile, the matter of access requires more research and, in this report, can best be understood through a systems perspective. As outlined in Section 2, access is affected by food prices as well as inequalities, policy and political climates, location of markets and stores, and other factors.

This case study aims to enhance understanding of the multiple dimensions of food security, particularly the accessibility component. Specifically, this research is designed to highlight local food initiatives, examining goals and impacts in relation to food security, in relation to prospects for positive peace in Guam. The following sections will first explain the research methodology, including defining key indicators; second, discuss the research more broadly; and third, present the findings. These results will be further explored the recommendations and opportunities presented in Section 5, after a discussion of limitations in Section 4.

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 Definitions

There are a number of key terms that have been used throughout the research process and feature in this report. They are defined and measured as follows:

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[66] Vince Stricherz, "Brown Tree Snake Could Mean Guam Will Lose More than Its Birds," *UW Today,* August 21, 2008, *http://www.washington.edu/news/2008/08/21/brown-tree-snake-could-mean-guam-will-lose-more-than-its-birds-2*.

[67] Food Secure Pacific Working Group, "Towards a Food Secure Pacific. Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific: 2011–2015."

[68] Scott Radway, Mark-Alexander Pieper, and Steve Limtiaco, "Gasoline Shortage Adds to Guam's Post-Typhoon Trauma," *Pacific Daily News,* December 12, 2002, *http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/weather/news/2002-12-12-guam-gas-shortage_x.htm*.

[69] *E.g.,* John Connell, "Food Security in the Island Pacific: Is Micronesia as Far Away as Ever?," *Regional Environmental Change,* no. 15 (2015): 1299–1311.

Food security "exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."[70]

Positive peace is defined as "peace that exceeds the absence of violence, as characterized by the presence of justice, fairness, well-being in individual and group interactions."[71] Positive peace is measured with guidance from the Global Peace Index (GPI), which qualifies it as "the attitudes, institutions, and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies."[72] The GPI highlights eight factors that comprise this concept of positive peace, defined as:

1. **Well-functioning government:** a government that provides public and civil services, fosters trust, maintains political stability, and upholds the rule of law.
2. **Sound business environment:** economic conditions and support for private businesses are sound; business operations are regulated properly.
3. **Equitable distribution of resources:** resources are equally and equitably accessible, including healthcare, education, and wealth.
4. **Acceptance of the rights of others:** basic human rights and freedoms are not only safeguarded by laws, but also practiced and observed through social and cultural norms.
5. **Good relations with neighbors:** peaceful relations are maintained with neighboring countries.
6. **Free flow of information:** free and independent media sources allow people to access information.
7. **High levels of human capital:** the skills, knowledge, and behaviors of a citizenry.
8. **Low levels of corruption:** where corruption exists, governments work for prevention, and also strive to hold responsible parties accountable.[73]

Furthermore, the idea of positive peace represents society's ability to "meet the needs of citizens, reduce the number of grievances that arise and resolve remaining disagreements without the use of violence."[74] For this case study, specific attention was paid to the third indicator, to understand how local food initiatives affect the equitable distribution of resources. This measurement lends itself to better understanding the access component of food security.

Local food initiatives are each identified based on the operating individual's or group's expressed interest or active involvement in the production, processing, selling, or consumption of local food. Initiatives are furthermore classified and prioritized based on the amount of time and activities dedicated to local food, most often a full-time job. A local food initiative might, for example, be a restaurant that strives to source ingredients locally or an organization focusing on different aspects of local food education, marketing, or production.

3.1.2 Research design and parameters

This research is designed as a case study with in-depth interviews to optimize learning about the multi-faceted stories behind local food initiatives, their dynamic goals, and varied methods of measuring success. The multiple case study design allows for an exploratory and interpretive approach. Opportunistic and convenience sampling techniques are used in order to take advantage of unexpected and relevant cases. This sampling technique was particularly well suited to this study because of the research's relation to the local community. Being independent and a visiting researcher lends itself to a fresh, unbiased, and neutral perspective. However, much of the networking and information sharing in Guam is informal or undocumented. For example, some businesses, organizations, or events are shared primarily through word of mouth, and might not be listed in either hardcopy, electronic, and online resources. In order to reach a representative and wider sample of local food initiatives, the researcher worked to create a network while simultaneously conducting interviews and gathering data. By first identifying the desired types of groups for contact within the defined "local food initiative," the researcher was then

[70] Jägerskog and Swain, *Emerging Security Threats in the Middle East: The Impact of Climate Change and Globalization.*

[71] Galtung, *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization.*

[72] Institute for Economics & Peace, "Positive Peace Report: 2015" (New York City: Institute for Economics & Peace, October 2015).

[73] Institute for Economics & Peace, "Positive Peace Report: 2015."

[74] *Ibid:* 9.

able to form networks and navigate among contacts to facilitate interviews with relevant and appropriate parties.

The target grounds identified for the sample within the definition of "local food initiative" include:

- Organizations (food or farm cooperatives, nonprofit organizations)
- Farms
- Educators (University research and extension service, educational farm)
- Vendors (restaurants, markets)

At least two cases were selected for each target group category. Cases were chosen based on (1) *relevance:* if the case displayed a significant interest in local food, which was measured based on their stated mission and goals, as well as the types of programs they sponsored or in which they participated; (2) *availability:* many individuals were difficult to reach due to schedule conflicts, the nature of work being conducted primarily off-line; and the researcher's restraints due largely to the brevity of the research period; and (3) *prominence:* because this study is particularly interested in larger systems at play and noticeable impacts on the community, parties that held a prominent or growing role in the community were given first priority.

This study was conducted from June to August 2016 on the Island of Guam. All interviews were limited to a discussion of activities on the island. Featured local food initiatives are all current and ongoing projects and all individuals interviewed are currently involved in such work.

3.2 Research findings

Anecdotally, food security is easily identified as an issue in Guam. Conversations around food quickly turn to a discussion of the reliance on imports or the recent changes in public health—including increased rates of obesity and diabetes—in connection with the processed foods that comprise a large part of many people's diets. In conversations as well as throughout the case study interviews, the primary concern seems to focus on the availability and, to a certain extent, utilization pillars of food security. Meanwhile, the access component of food security is strikingly absent from most conversations, research, and programming around the matter. This gap was the driving question behind the case study research.

3.2.1 Trends across and between groups

Responses during the case study interviews yielded a number of trends. These trends are particularly useful in understanding the overlaps and gaps between different sectors or initiatives happening in Guam. The trends can be classified into a few thematic areas. The areas detailed below highlight priorities suggested by the local food community, particularly as they relate to developing and sustaining positive peace. The areas of interest include market constraints for local produce, the lack of quality labor in the local agriculture sector, opportunities for improved communication among interested parties, and the need for education around nutrition related to local food. *Table 2* presents the top interests comparatively across groups, according to their top goals, perceived impacts, and observed challenges.

Table 2: Local food initiative goals, impact, and challenges

Group	Goals	Impact	Challenges
Farmers	• Import substitution • Provide healthy, quality, variety foods • Improve the health of the land	• Job creation • Providing local, natural food • Providing for health benefits	• Costs of farming: power and water prices, *etc.* • Competing with foreign farmers, both internationally and in Guam • Pests and invasive species • Weather and climate events • Politics • Lack of sufficient labor
Organizations	• Support local farmers • Encourage healthy eating • Improve the health of the island	• Supporting the local economy • Supporting healthier food options	• Competition with import prices • Invasive species • Weather events • Poor communication between groups

Table 2: Local food initiative goals, impact, and challenges—Continued

Group	Goals	Impact	Challenges
Educators	• Import substitution • Improve crop production • Encourage self-sufficiency for more people • Encourage young farmers	• Fostering young people's interest in farming • Supporting local farmers	• Climate and weather changes • Lack of labor • Heavy use of chemicals on farms • Poor marketing for produce • Loss of land • Weak consumer industry • Poor communication between groups
Vendors	• Encourage healthy eating	• Providing healthy food	• Unstable availability of produce • Difficult sourcing of locally grown and processed meats

All types of local food initiatives prioritized issues related to health, market conditions, and weather events. Discussing goals and perceived impact, many interviewees highlighted their focus on and contribution to improving the health of the island. Farms, organizations, educators, and vendors all stressed both their goals and their impacts related to producing or supporting local produce in order to increase peoples' nutrition and health.

Goals, impact, and challenges for many also focused on issues related to the import market. Import substitution was a common goal and multiple interviewees also perceived one of their greatest impacts to be related to import substitution. Their impact in supporting the local economy, whether through job creation or supporting local farmers, was repeated several times. Furthermore, multiple respondents noted challenges related to the import market, such as the struggle for local farmers to remain competitive with imports in light of the high costs they face.

Finally, challenges related to climate change and weather events also featured prominently in groups' responses. Many interviewees cited weather events such as storms and typhoons that destroy crops, damage infrastructure and property, or hinder production, as well as changes in weather patterns and related pest issues as major challenges facing the local food community.

3.2.2 Potential for positive peace

1. Favorable market conditions for local produce

Nearly all interviewees commented on the current market conditions as a barrier to increasing local food production and consumption in Guam. Many individuals estimate that local products make up less than ten percent of what is currently sold in Guam. Farmers cannot realistically dedicate the necessary time or resources to producing at high capacity unless they are confident of a return on their investment. If there existed a greater space in the market or a higher priority on selling local food and locally produced value-added goods, farmers would be better able to increase their production.

Opportunities and positive peace

A key opportunity here is to conduct a study about market conditions and capacity. Many people reported that produce is grown in response to farmers and others' perception of what customers look for or request. A survey would be helpful in capturing information about what type of produce is currently being produced, as well as better articulating what produce is needed and wanted in Guam to suit the economy, diet, and growing conditions, and evaluating the potential for more value-added products. Furthermore, this type of research could be expanded to help establish appropriate, standardized price lists.

Another opportunity for enhancing market conditions would be to assist farmers in expanding their options in the type of vendors they supply. There are currently several farmers' markets in Guam and many food stands selling local produce. Though some farmers already sell to local grocery stores, there seems to be strong potential for more to do so. The feasibility study might further explore such an opportunity. It will also be important for local farmers to expand beyond these outlets. For example, hospitals, schools, hotels, and the military are all large markets with significant purchasing power. Greater organization of farmers through cooperatives

or other community organizations guided by reliable and recent research would be helpful in facilitating these processes.

These initiatives stand to make a substantial contribution to positive peace on the island. Greater availability of local food in the market could lead to more competitive prices. This would make healthy food potentially more accessible to larger groups of people, such as those limited to buying less expensive options. Favorable market conditions could also encourage farmers to produce not only more food, but also a greater variety of produce. More availability, choice, and reliability of local produce in stores could help create a shift in how people buy and what they eat. Presumably, this would benefit farmers' livelihoods, consumer budgets, and public health.

2. Sufficient labor in local agriculture

Not only are there far fewer farms in Guam today than there were 40 or 50 years ago, but the farmer demographic is aging. Existing farmers tend to be older and there is a lack of interest or commitment among younger generations to take on farming either as a family tradition or new endeavor. This tendency has been attributed to growing jobs in the military or government, and more generally toward urbanization. More people are moving to urban areas or looking to work in office environments, rather than in farm fields.

Existing farmers also struggle to find enough quality labor to help in their fields. Several farmers and other interviewees who work closely with farmers noted that there is not sufficient quality labor available. They cited struggles to find abled individuals with strong work ethic who could adequately contribute to farm productivity. Many also noted an increasing number of foreign-owned farmers or foreign workers on farms. Interviewees noted that foreign-owned farms may not pay the same fees and dues as local farmers, such as social security taxes or a minimum wage to workers, and that they might source pesticides and other goods through unofficial channels. This is perceived to create not only an imbalanced cost scenario, but also the potential of serious risks to the environment and food safety.

Opportunities and positive peace

One avenue for addressing the labor issues is through increased education. Some nonprofit organizations, community groups, and academic institutions focus on involving students and young people in the agricultural process. Weekend science programs, field trips to farms, school farming and gardening initiatives, and educational programs teaching basic nutrition represent such efforts to shift eating habits, connect young people to their land, and reintroduce an appreciation for farming. Greater support of such efforts through official channels, such as government programming, conducive policy framework, targeted grant programs, and dedicated resources could greatly improve the situation.

Involving more young people in farming and agriculture stands to contribute to Guam's overall positive peace. Such efforts could yield greater interest among young people for farm work, farm ownership or operation, support of local agriculture, and healthy and nutritious diets based on local food. In turn, such outcomes could lead to improvements in the industry, enhanced production, preservation and further development of local and traditional knowledge, circulation of money in the local economy, as well as a more diversified economy and improved island health. Though these changes may take years to be realized, education is a crucial component of fostering the process and long-term change.

3. Enhanced communication among local-food interest groups

A number of interviewees emphasized the need for better communication between the many different actors in Guam who are working in local food. Repeatedly, there was reference to the perception that different groups act either without regard for or without consultation of other related groups. For instance, the perception of programs being conducted without specific care for farmers' interests; distributors, vendors, and farmers all misunderstanding the constraints that keep them from reaching local-food goals; or grants that are received without the recipient group being fully aware of what is necessary or without being able to properly carry out the specified activities.

These perceptions were found across groups: among and within farms, organizations, educators, and vendors. Although these perceptions are not always accurate, or only partially correct, they point to a more important issue: there is room for more effective communication among local-food interests in Guam.

Opportunities and positive peace

Sharing knowledge, resources, and data among different actors and sectors could potentially reduce redundancies in work; increase all sectors' productivity, through enhanced resources and opportunities; and support more democratic decision-making and boost community support or public buy-in.

One example of this is in discussion of organic certification. Although there are a number of individuals who are trained in organic certification in Guam, there is not yet an organic certification board on the island. Without this board, produce in Guam cannot be marketed as an organic product. Perceptions vary as to whether this step is truly necessary. A study might be useful in determining whether there is a significant demand for organic produce in Guam. Further identifying key priorities for actively engaging farmers, distributors, and vendors would be essential to successfully implementing an organic certification process. Alternatives to organics might also be a worthwhile consideration. Establishing a system similar to that of Hawaii Organic might be more context-appropriate and could potentially meet the needs of the local community more effectively.

A more connected community with strong networks stands to be more resilient. Networks provide and facilitate connections between and within sectors to address challenges and embrace opportunities. For instance, strong lines of communication and more direct collaboration could mean academic and civil organizations would be better equipped to build on each others' strengthens and contribute more efficiently to shared goals and objectives. Such networks could also be more apt at navigating market or political systems or pushing for necessary changes. Sharing resources to address challenges fosters greater resiliency that will be crucial as Guam faces increased impacts of globalization, militarization, and climate change.

4. Targeted education highlighting nutritional benefits of local food

Almost all interviewees stressed the importance of the health benefits of local food. This is not surprising, given that the health challenges currently facing the island are largely food related, such as diabetes, obesity, and other diseases. Several cases also noted the need for increased education to promote the benefits of local food and teach young people and families about the impact their diet has on their health. In another example that emerged during interviews, a local restaurant owner leads weekend programs about nutrition and to teach families how to adopt more healthy diets. Although some such education efforts already exist, more is needed in order to combat current unhealthy diet trends and widespread consumption of imported, highly processed foods.

Opportunities and positive peace

In addition to restaurants or other businesses and community groups leading such education efforts, there are a number of other entry points for incorporating nutrition education. School lunch programs and health classes are natural fits for teaching about the benefits of eating healthy. Schools, businesses, and community groups focusing on health programming should strengthen connections with the health sector as well. In response to the health crisis, more public health campaigns, local clinics, and organizations promoting health have emerged. Partnerships between these initiatives and actors in the local food sector could be mutually beneficial.

Such intersectional efforts could reach a wider audience by introducing campaigns at large community gatherings. For example, more healthy food stands or stalls that promote an understanding of healthy lifestyles in connection with local produce might be well suited at the Wednesday evening Chamorro Village or other events with large audiences. Local village marts also provide good settings for expanding nutrition education. Local marts often hold prominent roles in the community and many become destinations for individuals and families to look for specific products. Featuring nutrition information and healthy options regularly at such locations has the potential for nutrition efforts to reach more people in a way that would also benefit local businesses.

Efforts to improve the overall health of the island through a local-food approach would have wide reaching benefits for positive peace. Aside from enhancing well-being directly through contributing to healthier lifestyles, such efforts could also benefit the business community, more equitably distribute resources and make information more readily accessible. Integrating nutrition information more widely and mainstreaming local food across such initiatives is an effective way of addressing multiple challenges currently facing Guam, especially if done through cross-sectional and collaborative channels.

3.2.3 Further areas for exploration

Although interviews covered a wide range of responses and highlighted many important issues facing the local food community in Guam, there were certain topics

that remained underrepresented in conversations. These topics may warrant further consideration and examination. In particular, this report found that food initiatives either lacked or did not prioritize the following:

1. **Diversified access to local food**—More attention should be dedicated to understanding who has access to local, healthy food. For example, physical points of sale for local food at farmers' markets, food stands, or grocery stores, may be inaccessible to some people. Prices of food may further exclude some people from buying or producing local food. Particular attention should be paid to whether these occurrences disproportionately impact certain groups that may be in vulnerable or disadvantaged situations owing to their socioeconomic, geographic, or other situations. For example, data should be compiled to highlight intersections between demographics (socioeconomic, ethnic, racial, age, gender, *etc.*), health, reliance on food assistance benefits, homelessness, geographic location, and nutritional consumption. Alternative approaches to improving food accessibility might be considered, such as implementing policies to support job growth and nutrition interventions, rather than simply increasing food benefits. The *Community Food Security Assessment Toolkit,* available through the Electronic Publications from the Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program, highlights techniques for such data collection with regard to community leadership in assessing all aspects of household food security.
2. **Focus on traditions and culture values**—A small number of interviewees highlighted connections to traditional knowledge, practices, and food. Increasing attention to this component could serve the local food community in a number of ways, not least of which include preserving indigenous species of plants. These benefits would contribute to the overall health and biodiversity of the island and could potentially encourage production of goods and services for the tourism industry that would boost the local economy. Furthermore, indigenous and local knowledge and practices such as risk management and resource preservation make important contributions to local food security and should be further recognized and actively engaged.
3. **Connection to colonialism**—The policies, practices, and current situation in Guam is inexplicably tied to not only the legacy of historic colonialism, but also to Guam's current political status as an unincorporated organized territory of the U.S. Understanding and addressing historical and modern impacts Guam's political status are essential to forming a complete picture of the food security situation and to take effective steps to remedy harms and provide for positive, sustained growth that focuses most on the needs of the local community.

Excluding these topics may prevent a complete understanding and thorough approaches necessary for strengthening local food initiatives and benefiting the community. As the local food community continues to grow in Guam, it will be important to address these and other issues that may arise in order to better serve the entire community and to foster food security as well as positive peace.

4. Limitations

There were a number of factors limiting this research. Primarily, time was a major obstacle. This affected which groups were included in the study and the overall spread of the research. The time constraints on this research limited the type of data that could be collected. An extended research period and more collaboration with local actors would allow this case study to benefit from a mixed methods approach, such as combining the interviews with surveys to capture, for example, more consumer experiences. Furthermore, a research period that allowed for baseline data collection regarding positive peace indicators, as well as a data collection at a future point would allow for useful comparisons to track developments and measure impact of local food initiatives on positive peace.

Another factor limiting this research was the lack of relevant data. For example, it was noted that farm Census data has not been consistently collected and available results are not completely reliable. This meant that assessing the number of farms and levels of farm production is difficult in Guam. Furthermore, some studies on aspects of food security have been initiated and either not completed or not published. The lack of publicly available research and consistent, reliable data on this topic is a barrier to those seeking to create well-informed projects based on data and facts. Further research will help address this gap.

5. Recommendations

1. **Enhanced understanding of the food security situation**—Effective action around food security must build on accurate and updated information. Studies, data collection, and analysis should be continued and increasingly collaborate with community stakeholders. This would contribute to available knowledge practically so as to better meet the needs of the community. Areas for further study might include:
   a. Farmer surveys to measure productivity, types of produce being grown, potential for increased capacity, *etc.;*
   b. Consumer interest and market space for greater variety of local produce;
   c. Potential for introducing more value-added products;
   d. Surveys and studies to better understand market saturation and opportunities; and
   e. Research on connections between population demographics and access to and utilization of healthy food.
2. **Expanded education on nutrition**—Increased public awareness and understanding around basic nutrition and links between diet and health are crucial to improving food security. There is much work being done in Guam to improve health, specifically to decrease rates of diabetes and other diseases. This work could be combined with efforts to raise awareness of the health benefits to eating local produce. Integrating knowledge and action around health and local food through nutrition would benefit people's well-being and support local agriculture.
3. **Encouraging young farmers**—Programs targeting and engaging young people in food systems could help encourage more of them to work on or start farms. Education in schools and training programs to introduce young people to farming and allow them to experience it are important steps toward increasing the number of local farmers and shifting the farmer demographic to include a younger population. This will also help to build continuity of skills and productivity and to pass on local knowledge, both of which are increasingly important as the current farming population ages.
4. **Market expansion**—Studies and surveys could provide greater potential for expanding the market. Large opportunities exist in Guam that are relatively underdeveloped for local farmers. Opportunities for farmers to expand to supply other vendors besides typical grocery stores and farmers' markets could include contracts or arrangements with the tourism industry and military. The tourism industry is projected to continue growing. With many hotels and restaurants, there is potential to market "local food" as a selling point for tourists and for local food sales to increase. There is also an expected increase in military presence. While this may have other effects on the food security situation, one opportunity might be to work with the military to supply local food both to base stores in Guam and to export food from Guam to other U.S. military bases. This opportunity could be beneficial to military personnel and their families by enhancing their quality of life and healthy food options, and to farmers in Guam through added demand for their produce.
5. **Improved communication and coordination**—Stronger channels of communication between interested groups in Guam would enhance the opportunities available to individual groups and the collective of local food initiatives, benefitting the food security situation. Between academics, policy makers, nonprofits, business, and farmers, there are many different goals and strategies for addressing food security dilemmas. Sharing knowledge, data, and resources more effectively both within and across these groups could benefit food security efforts and improve the overall resiliency of the island.
7. **Targeted food accessibility programs***—Equitable distribution is a key factor in achieving food security. Using data to assess the community's food security situation could indicate which individuals and groups are in more vulnerable situations. This information could influence targeted programming to ensure that assistance programs do not reinforce harmful power structures and that food is equitably accessible.

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* **Editor's note:** the numbered entry for **6** was not in the report as submitted. It has be reproduced herein as it was published.

6. Conclusion

Food is connected both as a cause and consequence of conflict and is reciprocally linked to peace. Violence can lead to or exacerbate food insecurity by disrupting food production, interrupting distribution, hindering investment in food sectors, or destroying infrastructure and assets. Likewise, food insecurity has been shown to be a contributing factor in conflict, though not definitively as a cause in itself. Food can aggravate conflict through, among other things, contributing to riots and instability over food price spikes, resource competition, and inequalities. Food is also a means for achieving or stabilizing peace. Food resources are essential to fostering household and country resiliency and can enable a community to adapt to, recover from, and thrive after conflict.

The Pacific islands have faced particular challenges in achieving food security. Population, climate change, and governance have and are projected to continue to influence food security. In Guam, these factors are further complicated by context-specific factors. Perhaps most consequential to food security in Guam are the island's political status and related trade policies, the widespread dependence on food assistance, a market economy that favors imports, and diet trends that have contributed to poor nutrition and a health crisis.

This report has highlighted different aspects of food security in Guam and analyzed these factors in the context of positive peace. Guam has been shaped by history that is rich in indigenous and local knowledge and skills. The Chamorro people have long been a self-sufficient people. Developments in globalization and militarization have greatly influenced this and other aspects of life on the island. Modern political, economic, social, and other developments have had many positive impacts on the daily life of people in Guam, but have also contributed to challenges and obstacles to realizing positive peace, including food security.

Strengthening the presence and consumption of local food in Guam offers the potential to improve the well-being of the population. Local food plays an important part in the food security situation on the island and relates to the pillars of positive peace. According to findings presented by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), national level food security is required before household food security can be achieved.[75] This means that availability of food must be secured before access and utilization can be fully realized and enjoyed. This requires more government policies and investments, whereas household security can be built through specific programs.[76] Food quantity and options are widely available in Guam. Grocery stores are well stocked under normal conditions and vendors carry a wide range of food options. The recommendations outlined in this report lend themselves to further strengthening this, targeting availability and stability aspects of food security through strengthening the local economy, supporting local farmers, and mitigating and adapting to effects of climate and other impacts. The recommendations further aim to enhance the accessibility and utilization aspects of food security through addressing health issues and ensuring equitable access to healthy local food.

In addition to the limitations previously addressed, this study's attempts to link food security and positive peace have been relatively incomplete. As stated, efforts to define and evaluate the current food security situation have been hindered by the lack of consistent and reliable data. Although there are studies on specific aspects of food security, researchers and practitioners in Guam have identified gaps in available data, such as the inconsistent farmer surveys. This kind of data is essential for forming a holistic picture of the situation, as well as for understanding finer aspects, such as equitable access to nutritious food across demographics. In the context of this case study, these obstacles made it difficult to have a well-informed perspective of food security necessary to then discuss food in relation to positive peace.

In order to better understand how food security will contribute to positive peace, there is a need for better metrics on both subjects. More disaggregated data concerning the current food security situation is needed, including information on what farmers produce, potential for greater production and value-added products, nutrition consumption, and household food security detailed by demographic. The interviews in this case study provided a useful basis for considering how local food initiatives currently impact and aim to influence aspects of positive peace and well-being through local food. These conversations and the recommendations that emerged from interviews are valuable and would further benefit from an analysis of positive peace indicators. Positive peace indicators and information about the food security situation before, during, and after World War II, as well the current situation and

[75] Breisinger, *et al.,* "Building Resilience for Food and Nutrition Security."
[76] *Ibid.*

future projections would not only enhance understanding of the relationship between conflict, peace, and food, but also help shape future efforts so as to effectively contribute to positive peace.

Food security promises to be an increasingly important consideration for Guam, other Pacific islands, and beyond. As factors such as globalization and climate change continue to impact food production and distribution, it will be essential to better understand the multi-faceted dynamics of food security. Addressing food security continues to be a matter of ensuring people have enough to eat and that no one is limited by hunger or perishes due to starvation. But in communities where there is negative peace, where people are not actively engaged in conflict, food security takes on added importance in contributing to the greater well-being of society. Adaptive measures must benefit food security in a way that fosters positive peace. Food security is essential if society is to do more than survive; it is paramount to our ability to thrive.

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SUBMITTED LEGISLATION

H.R. 8489, Price Reform In Cattle Economics Act (PRICE Act)

I

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8489

To make improvements with respect to the pricing of cattle in the United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 1, 2020

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota (for himself, Mr. SOTO, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. GIANFORTE, Mr. HAGEDORN, Mr. EMMER, and Mr. SMITH of Missouri) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, Energy and Commerce, and Foreign Affairs, 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 make improvements with respect to the pricing of cattle in the United States, and for other purposes.

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—This Act may be cited as the ''Price Reform In Cattle Economics Act'' or the ''PRICE Act''.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Membership of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States.
Sec. 3. Overtime and holiday fee relief for small meat, poultry, and egg processing plants.
Sec. 4. Interstate internet sales of certain State-inspected meat allowed.
Sec. 5. Interstate internet sales of certain State-inspected poultry allowed.
Sec. 6. Assistance for new and expanded livestock or meat processors.
Sec. 7. New and expanding livestock or meat processing grants.
Sec. 8. Research on meat and poultry processing facilities.
Sec. 9. Improving farm management knowledge and skills for livestock producers.
Sec. 10. Feasibility study on implementing requirements with respect to reported negotiated cash sales of cattle to individual packing plants.
Sec. 11. Cattle contract library.
Sec. 12. Dissemination to farm and agricultural workers of information and training on best practices used to respond to the COVID–19 pandemic.
Sec. 13. Cover crops planted due to prevented planting.
Sec. 14. Emergency use of CRP land during pandemic.

SEC. 2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES.

Section 721(k)(2) of the Defense Production Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. 4565(k)(2)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (H) through (J) as subparagraphs (I) through (K), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (G) the following:

"(H) The Secretary of Agriculture.".

SEC. 3. OVERTIME AND HOLIDAY FEE RELIEF FOR SMALL MEAT, POULTRY, AND EGG PROCESSING PLANTS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED ACT.—The term ''covered Act'' means—

(A) the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 601 et seq.);

(B) the Poultry Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 451 et seq.); and

(C) the Egg Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 1031 et seq.).

(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—The term ''establishment'' means—

(A) a meat establishment subject to the requirements of the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 601 et seq.);

(B) a poultry establishment subject to the requirements of the Poultry Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 451 et seq.); and

(C) an egg products processing plant subject to the requirements of the Egg Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 1031 et seq.).

(3) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Agriculture.

(4) SMALL ESTABLISHMENT; VERY SMALL ESTABLISHMENT.—The terms ''small establishment'' and ''very small establishment'' have the meaning given those terms in the final rule entitled ''Pathogen Reduction; Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems'' (61 Fed. Reg. 38806 (July 25, 1996)).

(b) OVERTIME AND HOLIDAY FEES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, for an inspection of an establishment conducted pursuant to a covered Act, the Secretary shall discount the rate charged—

(A) by not less than 30 percent of the overtime and holiday published rate in the case of a small establishment; and

(B) by not less than 75 percent of the overtime and holiday published rate in the case of a very small establishment.

(2) RULEMAKING; RETROACTIVE IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall—

(A) complete a rulemaking establishing the discounted rates required under paragraph (1); and

(B) implement those discounted rates to apply retroactively to the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) EFFECTIVENESS.—The Secretary—

(1) shall carry out subsection (b) until the total amount of funds appropriated pursuant to the authorization under subsection (d) are expended; and

(2) may carry out subsection (b) after those funds are expended only to the extent and in the amount provided in advance in appropriations Acts.

(d) FUNDING.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section, $58,000,000, to remain available until expended.

SEC. 4. INTERSTATE INTERNET SALES OF CERTAIN STATE-INSPECTED MEAT ALLOWED.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 301(c)(2) of the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 661(c)(2)) is amended, by inserting after the first sentence, the following: ''For the purposes of this subparagraph, any retail store, restaurant, or similar retail-type establishment may sell over the internet and ship by carrier in commerce (other than for export to a foreign country) any State-inspected meat or meat food product, provided the meat or meat food product so inspected is shipped directly to household consumers and in normal retail quantities.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 301 of the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 661) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1), by inserting before the period at the end the following: ''or for distribution pursuant to the second sentence of paragraph (c)(2)''; and

(2) in subsection (c)(2), in the first sentence, by inserting ''or by'' after ''conducted at''.

SEC. 5. INTERSTATE INTERNET SALES OF CERTAIN STATE-INSPECTED POULTRY ALLOWED.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5(c)(2) of the Poultry Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 454(c)(2)) is amended, by inserting after the first sentence, the following: ''For the purposes of this subparagraph, any retail store, restaurant, or similar retail-type establishment may sell over the internet and ship by carrier in commerce (other than for export to a foreign country) any State-inspected poultry product, provided the poultry product so inspected is shipped directly to household consumers and in normal retail quantities.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 5 of the Poultry Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 454) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1), by inserting before the period at the end the following: ''or for distribution pursuant to the second sentence of paragraph (c)(2)''; and

(2) in subsection (c)(2), in the first sentence, by inserting ''or by'' after ''conducted at''.

SEC. 6. ASSISTANCE FOR NEW AND EXPANDED LIVESTOCK OR MEAT PROCESSORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture (in this section referred to as the ''Secretary'') may make or guarantee a loan for the purpose of—

(1) facilitating economic opportunity for livestock and meat producers seeking further processing capacity and diversification of processor ownership to increase competitiveness in the livestock and meat industry;

(2) increasing value-added opportunities for livestock and meat production through investment in processing capacity;

(3) improving, developing, or financing livestock and meat processing activity and employment including through the financing of working capital; or

(4) promoting the interstate trade and local sales of processed meat by financing improvements

to meet relevant Federal, State, and local regulatory standards.

(b) ELIGIBILITY; GENERAL LIMITATIONS.—

(1) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENT.—An entity shall be eligible for a loan or guarantee under this section if the entity is—

(A) a public, private, or cooperative organization organized on a for-profit or nonprofit basis;

(B) an Indian tribe on a Federal or State reservation, or any other federally recognized Indian tribal group; or

(C) an individual.

(2) FACILITY LOCATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), a facility constructed with proceeds from a loan made or guaranteed under this section shall be in a rural area.

(B) EXCEPTION.—A facility constructed with proceeds from a loan made or guaranteed under this section may be in a non-rural area if—

(i) the primary use of the loan involved is for the facility, and the facility will provide value-added processing for ag-

ricultural producers that are located within 300 miles of the facility;

(ii) the applicant demonstrates to the Secretary that the primary benefit of making the loan or guarantee will be to provide employment for residents of a rural area;

(iii) the loan involved will be used to increase the competitiveness of meat, poultry, or seafood processing in a region; and

(iv) the principal amount of the loan involved does not exceed $50,000,000.

(C) RURAL AREA DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term ''rural area'' has the meaning given the term in section 343(a)(13) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act.

(3) LIMITATIONS.—

(A) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT OF LOAN INVOLVED.—A loan of more than $50,000,000 may not be made or guaranteed under this section.

(B) LIMITATION ON ELIGIBILITY.—A loan may not be made or guaranteed under this section to an entity that is owned in partnership or in whole by—

(i) a foreign entity; or

(ii) an entity that currently processes over 5 percent of the daily harvest of any species.

(c) SPECIAL RULES APPLICABLE WITH RESPECT TO COOPERATIVES.—

(1) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT OF LOAN INVOLVED.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subsection (b)(3), a loan of not more than $100,000,000 may be made or guaranteed for a cooperative organization under this section.

(B) CONDITIONS APPLICABLE IF LOAN INVOLVED IS FOR MORE THAN $50,000,000.—A loan of more than $50,000,000 may not be made or guaranteed for a cooperative organization under this section unless the loan is used to carry out a project that—

(i) provides for the value-added processing of agricultural commodities; or

(ii) significantly increases competitiveness or increases capacity where insufficient capacity exists for livestock harvest or meat processing, as determined by the Secretary.

(2) INTANGIBLE ASSETS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In determining whether a cooperative organization is eligible for a loan or guarantee under this section, the Secretary may consider the market value of a properly appraised brand name, patent, or trademark of the cooperative.

(B) ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE.—In the sole discretion of the Secretary, if the Secretary determines that the action would not create or otherwise contribute to an unreasonable risk of default or loss to the Federal Government, the Secretary may take accounts receivable as security for the obligations entered into in connection with a loan made or guaranteed under this section, and a borrower may use accounts receivable as collateral to secure such a loan.

(3) PURCHASE OF COOPERATIVE STOCK.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make or guarantee a loan in accordance with this section to an individual farmer or rancher for the purpose of purchasing capital stock of a farmer or rancher cooperative established for the purpose of processing an agricultural commodity.

(B) PROCESSING CONTRACTS DURING INITIAL PERIOD.—A cooperative described in subparagraph (A) with respect to which a farmer or rancher receives a guarantee to purchase stock under subparagraph (A) may contract for services to process agricultural commodities or otherwise process value-added agricultural products, during the 5-year period beginning on the date the cooperative commences operations, in order to provide adequate time for the planning and construction of the processing facility of the cooperative.

(C) FINANCIAL INFORMATION.—A farmer or rancher from whom the Secretary requires financial information as a condition of making or guaranteeing a loan under subparagraph (A) shall provide the information in the manner generally required by commercial agricultural lenders in the geographical area in which the farmer or rancher is located.

(d) CONDITIONS APPLICABLE WITH RESPECT TO USING LOAN INVOLVED FOR REFINANCING.—A borrower may use 25 percent of a loan made or guaranteed under this section to refinance a loan made for a purpose described in subsection (a) if—

(1) the borrower is current and performing with respect to the loan to be refinanced;

(2) the borrower has not defaulted on any payment required to be made with respect to the loan to be refinanced;

(3) none of the collateral for the loan to be refinanced has been converted; and

(4) there is adequate security or full collateral for the loan to be refinanced.

(e) LOAN APPRAISAL.—The Secretary may require that any appraisal made in connection with a loan made or guaranteed under this section be conducted by a specialized appraiser that uses standards that are similar to standards used for similar purposes in the private sector, as determined by the Secretary.

(f) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $100,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2023.

SEC. 7. NEW AND EXPANDING LIVESTOCK OR MEAT PROCESSING GRANTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture may make grants to—

(1) expand, diversify, and increase competition in livestock or meat processing activities;

(2) improve compliance with livestock and meat processing statutes (including the regulations issued thereunder), such as the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 661) and the Poultry Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 454);

(3) provide relief from financial barriers to entry into the livestock and meat processing industry; and

(4) update, expand, or otherwise improve existing facilities.

(b) ELIGIBLE GRANTEES.—An entity shall be eligible for a grant under this section if the entity is—

(1) a governmental entity;

(2) a public, private, or cooperative organization organized on a for-profit or nonprofit basis; or

(3) an Indian tribe on a Federal or State reservation or any other federally recognized Indian tribal group.

(c) USE OF FUNDS.—An entity to which a grant is made under this section may use the grant funds for a livestock or meat producing business opportunity, or a new or expanded processing project, that—

(1) identifies and analyzes business opportunities, including feasibility studies as required for creditworthiness;

(2) identifies, trains, and provides technical assistance to existing or prospective rural entrepreneurs and managers or processing facilities;

(3) provides technical assistance to gain compliance with Federal, State, or local regulations;

(4) conducts regional, community, and local economic development planning and coordination, and leadership development; or

(5) establishes a center for training, technology, and trade that will provide training to livestock or meat processing employees.

(d) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2023.

SEC. 8. RESEARCH ON MEAT AND POULTRY PROCESSING FACILITIES.

Subtitle K of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3310 et seq.) is amended by inserting the following:

"SEC. 1473I. RESEARCH ON MEAT AND POULTRY PROCESSING FACILITIES.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, shall make competitive grants to land-grant col-

leges and universities to conduct and publish research on the feasibility of establishing new and expanding existing meat and poultry processing facilities.

"(b) USE OF FUNDS.—A land-grant college or university receiving a grant under subsection (a) shall use grant funds to conduct research that identifies—

"(1) regional differences and availability of livestock in underserved locations;

"(2) opportunities for varying sizes and scales of processing in various locations;

"(3) the advantages and disadvantages of scale; and

"(4) the approval process (including required inspections) for marketing meat and poultry products under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) or the Poultry Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 451 et seq.) or under State law.

"(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2023.".

SEC. 9. IMPROVING FARM MANAGEMENT KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS.

The Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 is amended by inserting after section 1672E (7 U.S.C. 5925g) the following:

"SEC. 1672F. IMPROVING FARM MANAGEMENT KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall make competitive extension and education grants for the purpose of improving the farm management knowledge and skills of livestock producers.

"(b) SELECTION CRITERIA.—In selecting grant recipients under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to applicants that—

"(1) demonstrate an ability to work directly with livestock producers;

"(2) collaborate with farm management educational programs and associations; and

"(3) include in such application a description of the curriculum the applicant is seeking to carry out to educate livestock producers on risk management through futures market participation, crop insurance products, and other strategies.

"(c) ADMINISTRATION.—Paragraphs (4), (7), (8), and (11)(B) of subsection (b) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 3157(b)) shall apply with respect to the making of grants under this section.

"(d) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'livestock' has the meaning given such term in section 1501(a) of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (7 U.S.C. 9081(a)).

"(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2020 through 2023.".

SEC. 10. FEASIBILITY STUDY ON IMPLEMENTING REQUIREMENTS WITH RESPECT TO REPORTED NEGOTIATED CASH SALES OF CATTLE TO INDIVIDUAL PACKING PLANTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Office of the Chief Economist, shall conduct a study on the feasibility of the implementation of requirements with respect to negotiated cash sales of cattle to individual packing plants required to be reported under chapter 2 of subtitle B of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1635d et seq.). Such study shall assess the feasibility of implementing each of the following requirements with respect to such sales:

(1) All packing plants purchase at least 50 percent of the average weekly number of livestock to be slaughtered by such packing plant through negotiated cash sales under which the sellers of such livestock are required to deliver such livestock to the packers involved within 14 days.

(2) All packing plants purchase at least 30 percent of the average weekly number of livestock to be slaughtered by such packing plant through nego-

tiated cash sales under which the sellers of such livestock are required to deliver such livestock to the packers involved within 14 days.

(3) Assessments of the value of livestock be collected before paying negotiated cash sellers to encourage sufficient price discovery in individual regions.

(4) The establishment of various regional targets for cash sales within a 14-day delivery window at individual packing plants in order to achieve sufficient price discovery.

(5) The creation and compensation of a pool of negotiated cash market traders to incentivize cash sales for greater price discovery.

(6) The potential for increased prices due to changes made by the Secretary to confidentiality rules that prohibit reporting in any given region or window.

(7) Any other requirement that would encourage sufficient price discovery, as determined by the Secretary.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—The study under subsection (a) shall assess, with respect to each proposed requirement studied under such subsection—

(1) the impact on producers, processors, and other market participants subject to regulation under the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921 (7 U.S.C. 181 et seq.);

(2) the economic cost and benefit to various segments of the meatpacking industry, including cow calf producers, stockers, backgrounders, farmer feeders, custom feeders, and other market participants, as determined by the Secretary;

(3) the economic cost and benefits of premiums paid and received for quality factors of fed cattle;

(4) the economic cost and benefits for cattle producers of various sizes, including the impact on producers from various regions;

(5) the economic cost and benefits of price discovery to the beef industry and supply chain as a whole;

(6) the economic outcomes for consumers of beef;

(7) the implementation cost to the Department of Agriculture; and

(8) the proposed enforcement mechanism or mechanisms.

(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary

of Agriculture shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate, a report on the findings of the study conducted under subsection (a).

SEC. 11. CATTLE CONTRACT LIBRARY.

Section 222 of the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921 (7 U.S.C. 198a) is amended—

(1) in the heading by striking ''**SWINE**'' inserting ''**CATTLE AND SWINE**'';

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking ''swine producers'' and inserting ''cattle producers and swine producers''; and

(B) by striking ''production of swine'' and inserting ''production of cattle and swine''; and

(C) by striking ''including swine'' and inserting ''including cattle and swine'';

(3) in subsection (b), by striking ''available to swine producers'' and inserting ''available to cattle producers and swine producers''; and

(4) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by inserting ''cattle and'' before ''swine'' each place it appears in subparagraphs (A) and (B); and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the heading, by striking "**SWINE**" and inserting "**CATTLE AND SWINE**"; and

(ii) by inserting "cattle and" before "swine" each place it appears in subparagraphs (B), (C), and (D).

SEC. 12. DISSEMINATION TO FARM AND AGRICULTURAL WORKERS OF INFORMATION AND TRAINING ON BEST PRACTICES USED TO RESPOND TO THE COVID–19 PANDEMIC.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 502(i)(1)(B) of the Rural Development Act of 1972 (7 U.S.C. 2662(i)(1)(B)) is amended—

(1) in the subparagraph heading, by inserting "AND AGRICULTURAL WORKER" before "SAFETY";

(2) in the matter preceding clause (i)—

(A) by inserting "and agricultural worker" before "safety education"; and

(B) by striking "timber harvesters, and farm families" and inserting "agricultural processors and handlers, timber harvesters, farm families, and other participants in the agricultural supply chain";

(3) in clause (iii), by striking ''dermititis'' and inserting ''dermatitis'';

(4) in clause (v), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(5) in clause (vi), by striking the period and inserting ''; and''; and

(6) by adding at the end the following:

''(vii) other relevant health and safety guidance, guidelines, requirements, or information.''.

(b) APPROPRIATION.—Out of any money in the Treasury of the United States not otherwise expended, there are appropriated to the Secretary of Agriculture $50,000,000 for the purpose of disseminating information related to the COVID–19 pandemic under section 502(i)(1)(B) of the Rural Development Act of 1972.

(c) RURAL HEALTH DISRUPTION PRIORITIZATION FLEXIBILITY.—Section 6101(a) of the Agricultural Act of 2018 (132 Stat. 4726–4727; Public Law 115–334) is amended by striking paragraph (2) and redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (2).

SEC. 13. COVER CROPS PLANTED DUE TO PREVENTED PLANTING.

Section 508A(c) of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 (7 U.S.C. 1508a(c)) is amended—

(1) by amending subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) to read as follows:

"(B) SECOND CROP PLANTED.—The producer may plant a second crop on the same acreage for harvest in the same crop year and collect one of the following:

"(i) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), an indemnity payment established by the Corporation for the first crop, but not to exceed 35 percent of the prevented planting guarantee for the acreage for the first crop.

"(ii) An indemnity that is equal to 100 percent of the prevented planting guarantee for the acreage for the first crop, if each of the following conditions are met:

"(I) The Secretary determines that the acres planted are in an area with low hay or forage supplies due to widespread excessive moisture, flood, drought, or other factors.

"(II) The second crop will be planted with an intended use of ani-

mal feed that is hayed, grazed, or chopped.

"(III) The second crop will be donated or used by the producer."; and

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) by inserting "a second crop planted as described in paragraph (1)(B)(ii) or" before "double cropping"; and

(B) by striking "make an election under paragraph (1)(B)" and inserting "makes an election under paragraph (1)(B)(i)".

SEC. 14. EMERGENCY USE OF CRP LAND DURING PANDEMIC.

Section 1233(b)(1)(B)(i)(I) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3833(b)(1)(B)(i)(I)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding item (aa), by striking "or other emergency," and inserting "or other emergency (including a pandemic),"; and

(2) in item (cc), by inserting "or pandemic" after "natural disaster event".

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H.R. 421, Assuring You Uniform Dietary Assistance (AYUDA) Act of 2021 (AYUDA Act)

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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 421

To amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to treat the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in the same manner as Guam is treated.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 21, 2021

Mr. SABLAN (for himself, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. SCHRADER, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Ms. MENG, Ms. CHU, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. COURTNEY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

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A BILL

To amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to treat the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in the same manner as Guam is treated.

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 "Assuring You Uniform Dietary Assistance (AYUDA) Act of 2021".

SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012) is amended—

(1) in subsection (r) by inserting ''the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,'' after ''Guam'', and

(2) in subsection (u)(3) by inserting ''the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,'' after ''Guam,''.

(b) ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS.—Section 5 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2014) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b) by inserting ''the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,'' after ''Guam,'', and

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1) by striking ''and Guam,'' and inserting ''Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,'', and

(B) in the last sentence by striking ''or Guam'' and inserting ''Guam, or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands'', and

(3) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(B)—

(i) in the heading by striking ''GUAM.'' and inserting ''GUAM AND THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS.'',

(ii) in clause (i) by inserting ''and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands'' after ''Guam'', and

(iii) in clause (ii) by inserting ''and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands'' after ''Guam'', and

(B) in paragraph (6)(B) by inserting ''the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,'' after ''Guam,''.

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on October 1, 2021.

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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1162

To make supplemental appropriations for the Departments of Agriculture, the Interior, Homeland Security, Labor, and Commerce for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2021, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 18, 2021

Mr. NEGUSE (for himself, Mr. KILMER, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Mr. HUFFMAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, 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 make supplemental appropriations for the Departments of Agriculture, the Interior, Homeland Security, Labor, and Commerce for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2021, and for other purposes.

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 ''21st Century Conservation Corps Act''.

SEC. 2. SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENTS OF AGRICULTURE, THE INTERIOR, HOMELAND SECURITY, LABOR, AND COMMERCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The following amounts are appropriated, out of any amounts in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2021, and for other purposes:

(1) FOREST SERVICE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS.—For additional amounts for the Forest Service—

(A) $8,075,000,000 for ''National Forest System'', to remain available through September 30, 2023, of which—

(i) $3,500,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2023, shall be used for hazardous fuels management activities, subject to the conditions that the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service (referred to in this paragraph as the ''Secretary'')—

(I) shall prioritize hazardous fuels reduction projects using those amounts for projects—

(aa) for which any applicable processes under the National

Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) have been completed or are in the process of being completed;

(bb) that are noncommercial;

(cc) that focus on small diameter trees, thinning, strategic fuel breaks, and fire use to modify fire behavior, as measured by the projected reduction of uncharacteristically severe wildfire effects for the forest type, such as adverse soil impacts, tree mortality, or other impacts;

(dd) that maximize the retention of large trees, as appropriate for the forest type, to the extent that the trees promote fire-resilient stands;

(ee) that do not include the establishment of permanent roads; and

(ff) for which funding would be committed to decommission all

temporary roads constructed to carry out the project;

(II) shall not harvest vegetation—

(aa) from any old growth stand, unless the old growth stand is part of a science-based ecological restoration project authorized by the Secretary that meets applicable protection and old growth enhancement objectives, as determined by the Secretary; or

(bb) within any inventoried roadless area; and

(III) shall complete and submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives an annual report describing the number of acres of land on which projects carried out using those amounts effectively mitigated wildfire risk;

(ii) $150,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2023, shall be deposited in the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Fund for ecological restoration treatments, as authorized by section 4003(f) of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (16 U.S.C. 7303(f)): *Provided*, That the Secretary may expend such funds on any proposal that has received or been approved for funding through the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Fund and will be implemented through the collaborative process described in section 4003(b)(2) of that Act (16 U.S.C. 7303(b)(2));

(iii) $300,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2023, shall be used to implement watershed protection and restoration action plans developed as part of the Watershed Condition Framework established under section 304 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6543);

(iv) $25,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2021, for ''Recre-

ation, Heritage, and Wilderness'', which shall be used for the Every Kid Outdoors program established under section 9001 of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (16 U.S.C. 6804 note; Public Law 116–9); and

(v) $100,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2023, shall be used for plan monitoring programs developed pursuant to section 219.12 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations), including multi-party monitoring under those programs;

(B) $6,000,000,000 for ''Capital Improvement and Maintenance'', to remain available through September 30, 2023, subject to the conditions that—

(i) the Secretary shall prioritize the use of those amounts to carry out authorized activities—

(I) to provide stewardship for existing system roads and trails;

(II) to improve water quality;

(III) to improve, maintain, or restore infrastructure for—

(aa) the passage of fish and wildlife; and

(bb) recreational use;

(IV) to decommission unneeded roads;

(V) to improve visitor services; and

(VI) to improve recreational and educational access, opportunities, and other services to underserved communities; and

(ii) $300,000,000 shall be used for the Forest Service Legacy Roads and Trails Remediation Program established by section 8 of Public Law 88–657 (as added by section 5);

(C) $2,400,000,000 for "State and Private Forestry", of which—

(i) $100,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2023, shall be used for competitive grants under the landscape-scale restoration program established under section 13A of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2109a), of which $50,000,000 shall be

used to enter into contracts with Indian tribes pursuant to the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.);

(ii) $100,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be used for the Forest Legacy Program;

(iii) $100,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2023, shall be used for the urban and community forestry program;

(iv) $100,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2023, shall be used for the community forest and open space conservation program; and

(v) $2,000,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2023, shall be used for State fire assistance (National Fire Capacity);

(D) $30,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2023, shall be used for the Water Source Protection Program established under section 303 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6542);

(E) $100,000,000 for the purchase of personal protective equipment and other preparedness and response expenses relating to COVID–19, to remain available through September 30, 2023: *Provided*, That the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall consider allocating personal protective equipment and appropriate testing for COVID–19 to Federal and cooperating wildland firefighters and law enforcement personnel from Federal land management agencies; and

(F) $2,000,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2023, to carry out the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act (16 U.S.C. 583k et seq.).

(2) NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE.—For an additional amount for the Natural Resources Conservation Service, $5,500,000,000 for "Conservation Operations", to remain available through September 30, 2025, which shall be used to fund alternative funding arrangements under section 1271C(d) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3871c(d)), the eligible partner (as defined in section 1271A of that Act (16 U.S.C. 3871a)) with respect to which demonstrates

quantifiable and cost-efficient sediment and nutrient reductions, and near-term job creation, subject to the conditions that—

(A) the amounts shall be used—

(i) to fund high-impact resiliency projects to restore watersheds, the eligible partner (as so defined) with respect to which demonstrates—

(I) quantifiable reductions to nonpoint source pollution;

(II) quantified increases in streamflow that functionally benefit native fish and wildlife species; or

(III) quantified streamflow preference to account for recreational usage; and

(ii) to provide $200,000,000 in technical assessment funding to eligible partners (as so defined) to analyze and identify the high-impact sediment, nutrient, and streamflow benefits available in watersheds in advance of projects carried out using those amounts, on a State-by-State and watershed-by-watershed basis, by December 31, 2022; and

(B) with respect to a high-impact resiliency project described in subparagraph (A)(i) funded using amounts made available under this paragraph—

(i) the project shall be approved on an expedited basis;

(ii) the project shall receive 100 percent Federal financial assistance, including 60 percent of the assistance provided at the beginning of the project, with eligible partners (as so defined) managing the projects receiving an additional 20 percent administrative rate; and

(iii) of the amount provided for the project, not more than 15 percent shall be used by the Secretary of Agriculture to provide technical assistance and measure project results.

(3) COMMUNITY WOOD ENERGY AND WOOD INNOVATION PROGRAM.—$100,000,000 for the Secretary of Agriculture for competitive grants under the Community Wood Energy and Wood Innovation Program established under section 9013 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8113), to remain available through Sep-

tember 30, 2023: *Provided,* That the Secretary of Agriculture may award the grants without regard to section 9013(g)(2) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8113(g)(2)).

(4) DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS.—For additional amounts—

(A) for the Bureau of Land Management—

(i) $2,025,000,000 for ''Management of Lands and Resources'', to remain available until September 30, 2023, which shall be used for hazardous fuels management activities, subject to the conditions that the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the Bureau of Land Management (referred to in this subparagraph as the ''Secretary'')—

(I) shall prioritize hazardous fuels reduction projects using those amounts for projects—

(aa) for which any applicable processes under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.)

have been completed or are in the process of being completed;

(bb) that are noncommercial;

(cc) that focus on small diameter trees, thinning, strategic fuel breaks, and fire use to modify fire behavior, as measured by the projected reduction of uncharacteristically severe wildfire effects for the forest type, such as adverse soil impacts, tree mortality, or other impacts;

(dd) that maximize the retention of large trees, as appropriate for the forest type, to the extent that the trees promote fire-resilient stands;

(ee) that do not include the establishment of permanent roads; and

(ff) for which funding would be committed to decommission all temporary roads constructed to carry out the project;

(II) shall not harvest vegetation from any old growth stand, unless the old growth stand is part of a science-based ecological restoration project authorized by the Secretary that meets applicable protection and old growth enhancement objectives, as determined by the Secretary; and

(III) shall complete and submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives an annual report describing the number of acres of land on which projects carried out using those amounts effectively mitigated wildfire risk;

(ii) $25,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2021, for the Every Kid Outdoors program established under section 9001 of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (16 U.S.C. 6804 note; Public Law 116–9); and

(iii) $2,000,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2023, for ''Management of Lands and Resources'', subject to the condition that the Secretary shall prioritize the use of those amounts to carry out authorized activities—

(I) to provide stewardship for existing system roads and trails;

(II) to improve water quality;

(III) to improve, maintain, or restore infrastructure for the passage of fish and wildlife;

(IV) to decommission unneeded roads;

(V) to improve visitor services; and

(VI) to improve recreational and educational access, opportunities, and other services to underserved communities;

(B) for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, to remain available until September 30, 2023—

(i) $300,000,000 for ''Resource Management'', of which—

(I) $150,000,000 shall be used for the partners for fish and wildlife program; and

(II) $150,000,000 shall be used for migratory bird management under the North American waterfowl joint ventures program; and

(ii) $15,000,000 for ''National Wildlife Refuge System'', which shall be used for the Every Kid Outdoors program established under section 9001 of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (16 U.S.C. 6804 note; Public Law 116–9);

(C) for the Bureau of Reclamation, $4,505,000,000 for ''Water and Related Resources'', of which—

(i) $4,500,000, to remain available through September 30, 2023, shall be used to carry out the WaterSMART program authorized by subtitle F of title IX of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (42 U.S.C. 10361 et seq.), subject to the conditions that—

(I) high-impact resiliency projects funded using those amounts shall have—

(aa) quantifiable and high-efficiency improvements to regional drought resiliency; and

(bb) quantifiable increases in streamflows that functionally benefit native fish and wildlife species;

(II) grants provided using those amounts shall be approved on an expedited basis;

(III) the amount of a grant provided using those amounts shall be not more than $50,000,000; and

(IV) $100,000,000 shall be provided in technical assessment funding to recipients of amounts under that program to analyze and identify the high-impact sediment, nutrient, and streamflow benefits available in watersheds in advance of projects carried out using those amounts, on a State-

by-State basis, by December 31, 2022; and

(ii) $5,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2021, shall be used for the Every Kid Outdoors program established under section 9001 of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (16 U.S.C. 6804 note; Public Law 116–9);

(D) for the Bureau of Indian Affairs—

(i) $500,000,000 for maintenance or repairs to Tribal drinking water infrastructure; and

(ii) $45,000,000 for "Operation of Indian Programs", of which—

(I) $20,000,000 shall be used for forestry, subject to the condition that such amount shall be divided equally between Tribal priority allocation and forest projects;

(II) $20,000,000 shall be made available to Indian Tribes on a competitive basis to build capacity for participation in large landscape-scale forest health treatments; and

(III) $5,000,000 shall be used for a workforce development initiative to recruit and retain forestry professionals on Indian land; and

(E) for the National Park Service—

(i) $575,000,000 for ''Operation of the National Park Service'', to remain available through September 30, 2021, of which—

(I) $25,000,000 shall be used for the Every Kid Outdoors program established under section 9001(b)(1) of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (16 U.S.C. 6804 note; Public Law 116–9);

(II) $50,000,000 shall be used to support programming and partnerships with youth-serving organizations; and

(III) $500,000,000 shall be used for the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, subject to the conditions that—

(aa) 49 percent of the funds shall be divided equally among each State, territory of the United States, and the District of Columbia;

(bb) 49 percent of the funds shall be divided proportionally among the States and territories of the United States based on the urban population of the States and territories of the United States, as determined by the 2010 census;

(cc) 2 percent of the funds shall be reserved for the provision of funds to Tribal governments by the Secretary;

(dd) the Secretary shall coordinate with the chief executive officers of the States and territories of the United States to distribute grants at a Federal share of 100 percent on an expedited basis to support job creation and economic revitalization in low-in-

1 come communities through
2 projects that—
3 (AA) acquire land and
4 water for parks and other
5 public outdoor recreation
6 purposes;
7 (BB) develop new, or
8 renovate existing, public out-
9 door recreation facilities;
10 and
11 (CC) improve delivery
12 of recreation services, in-
13 cluding personnel, training,
14 facilities, programming,
15 recreation equipment, and
16 supplies; and
17 (ee) priority shall be given
18 to projects that—
19 (AA) create or signifi-
20 cantly enhance access to
21 park, waterway, and rec-
22 reational opportunities in a
23 qualifying urban area that
24 lacks parks and outdoor
25 recreation areas within 0.5

1 miles of, or 10-minute walk-
2 ing distance from, the quali-
3 fying urban area;
4 (BB) improve outdoor
5 recreation opportunities for
6 high-need populations based
7 on income, age, or other
8 measures of vulnerability
9 and need;
10 (CC) provide opportuni-
11 ties for employment or job
12 training in park construc-
13 tion, site rehabilitation, or
14 operations;
15 (DD) engage and em-
16 power underserved commu-
17 nities and youth; and
18 (EE) take advantage of
19 coordination among various
20 levels of government; and
21 (ii) $6,000,000,000 for ''Construc-
22 tion'', to remain available through Sep-
23 tember 30, 2023, subject to the condition
24 that the Secretary of the Interior (acting
25 through the Director of the National Park

Service) shall prioritize the use of the amounts to carry out authorized activities—

(I) to provide stewardship for existing National Park System roads and trails;

(II) to improve water quality;

(III) to improve, maintain, or restore infrastructure for the passage of fish and wildlife;

(IV) to improve visitor services; and

(V) to improve recreational and educational access, opportunities, and other services to underserved communities.

(5) DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS.—For an additional amount for the Department of Homeland Security for ''Disaster Relief Fund'', $2,000,000,000 for the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities program under section 203 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5133), to remain available until September 30, 2031, for the purposes of increasing

wildfire, floodplain, urban heat, and climate resiliency on an expedited basis.

(6) DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS.—For an additional amount for the Department of Commerce for "Operations, Research, and Facilities", $2,000,000,000 for the National Oceans and Coastal Security Fund established under section 904 of the National Oceans and Coastal Security Act (16 U.S.C. 7503) to award grants under section 906 of that Act (16 U.S.C. 7505), to remain available until September 30, 2031, for the purposes of creating jobs, restoring wetlands, dunes, reefs, marshes, kelp forests, mangroves, and other living shorelines to reduce flood risks, create habitat, and restart tourism.

(7) DEPARTMENT OF LABOR APPROPRIATIONS.—$9,000,000,000 for the Department of Labor for the Civilian Conservation Corps program established under subtitle E of title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, to remain available through September 30, 2022.

(b) LOCAL BENEFIT; ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS.—To the extent practicable, in using amounts made available under subsection (a)(1), the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service—

(1) is encouraged to enter into stewardship contracting projects under section 604 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591c) in order to maximize the economic benefit for rural communities; and

(2) shall carry out projects using those amounts in accordance with section 104 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6514).

(c) COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.—In carrying out projects using amounts made available under this section, each Secretary concerned shall, to the maximum extent practicable, engage—

(1) historically underrepresented communities; or

(2) historically disenfranchised communities.

(d) PUBLIC LANDS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS.—In carrying out conservation projects using amounts made available under paragraphs (1) through (6) of subsection (a), each Secretary concerned—

(1) shall, to the maximum extent practicable, use—

(A) qualified youth or conservation corps (as defined in section 203 of the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1722)); and

(B) nonprofit wilderness, trails, and recreation stewardship organizations; and

(2) may use such amounts as are necessary to provide technical assistance.

(e) MATCHING FUNDS WAIVER.—Any otherwise applicable matching funds requirements, including under section 212(a)(1) of the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1729(a)(1)), shall be waived for high-impact resiliency projects described in paragraphs (2)(A)(i) and (4)(C)(i)(I) of subsection (a) carried out using amounts made available under this section.

(f) FEDERAL COORDINATION.—The head of each Federal agency for which amounts are made available under this section shall monitor and track, through an online platform that is usable by personnel across Federal agencies—

(1) the expenditure of those amounts; and

(2) the conservation outcomes achieved through those expenditures.

(g) PRIORITY.—In using amounts made available under this section, the Secretary of Agriculture or the Secretary of the Interior, as applicable, shall give priority to funding high-impact resiliency projects described in paragraphs (2)(A)(i) and (4)(C)(i)(I) of subsection (a) that

maximize quantifiable environmental benefits for the least cost.

SEC. 3. OUTFITTERS AND GUIDES RELIEF PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ''eligible entity'' means—

(A) a holder of a special use permit that has fewer than 500 full-time equivalent employees; and

(B) a small- or medium-sized ski area with a special use permit to operate a ski area of National Forest System land.

(2) FUND.—The term ''Fund'' means the Outfitters and Guides Relief Fund established by subsection (b).

(3) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Treasury.

(4) SPECIAL USE PERMIT.—The term ''special use permit'' means—

(A) with respect to the Forest Service—

(i) a special use authorization (as defined in section 251.51 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations)), for guiding or outfitting (as those

terms are defined in that section (or successor regulations)); or

(ii) a permit that a ski area is required to hold to operate on Federal land;

(B) with respect to the National Park Service, a commercial use authorization for outfitting and guiding issued under—

(i) section 803(h) of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6802(h)); or

(ii) section 101925 of title 54, United States Code;

(C) with respect to the National Park Service, a concession contract for outdoor recreation activities awarded under subchapter II of chapter 1019 of title 54, United States Code (not including a commercial use authorization under section 101925 of that title);

(D) with respect to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, a special use permit for recreational, sport fishing, or hunting outfitting and guiding;

(E) with respect to the Bureau of Land Management, a special recreation permit for commercial outfitting and guiding;

(F) with respect to the Bureau of Reclamation, a use authorization for guiding, outfitting, or other recreational services;

(G) with respect to the Coast Guard, a license issued by the Coast Guard to operate an uninspected passenger vessel described in section 2101(51)(B) of title 46, United States Code;

(H) with respect to the Corps of Engineers, a contract for recreation services; and

(I) with respect to a State agency that issues recreational special use permits to recreation service providers, a special use agreement for recreational services.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF FUND.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States a fund, to be known as the ''Outfitters and Guides Relief Fund''.

(c) PAYMENTS TO ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall use amounts in the Fund to provide payments to eligible entities in accordance with this section.

(2) COORDINATION.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall coordinate with—

(A) the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, in the

case of a special use permit issued by the Forest Service;

(B) the Secretary of the Interior, in the case of a special use permit issued by—

(i) the Department of the Interior; or

(ii) a State agency described in subsection (a)(4)(I);

(C) the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, acting though the Commandant of the Coast Guard, in the case of a special use permit issued by the Coast Guard; and

(D) the Secretary of Defense, in the case of a special use permit issued by the Corps of Engineers.

(d) APPLICATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To receive a payment under this section, not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary an application to receive a payment.

(2) LIMITATION.—An eligible entity may submit applications under paragraph (1) not more frequently than once every 90 days during the 18-

month period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act.

(e) PAYMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the amount of a payment under this section shall be an amount equal to the difference between—

(A) during the period that the eligible entity was unable to provide recreational services at full capacity under a special use permit due to a State or Federal action resulting from the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (referred to in this subsection as the ''covered period''), the sum obtained by adding—

(i) the operating and administrative expenses, including payments to independent contractors, of the eligible entity directly relating to recreational services under the special use permit, as calculated based on the average of the 3 previous years; and

(ii) the payroll expenses and owner compensation of the eligible entity directly relating to recreational services under the

special use permit, as calculated based on the average of the 3 previous years; and

(B) the full gross revenue of the eligible entity during the covered period directly relating to recreational services under the special use permit.

(2) CERTAIN ENTITIES.—Subject to paragraph (3), in the case of an eligible entity that has been a holder of a special use permit for less than 3 years, the amount of a payment under this section shall be an amount equal to the lesser of—

(A) the operating expenses of the eligible entity during the covered period directly relating to recreational services under the special use permit during the covered period; and

(B) $30,000.

(3) LIMITATION.—An eligible entity shall not receive any amount under this section that covers expenses or compensation described in paragraphs (1) and (2) for which assistance has been provided under—

(A) section 7(a)(36) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a)(36));

(B) section 7(b)(2) of that Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)(2)); or

(C) section 12005 of the CARES Act (15 U.S.C. 1512 note; Public Law 116–136).

(f) DUTIES OF ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity shall use a payment received under this section to continue business operations of the eligible entity.

(2) CONDITION.—As a condition on the receipt of a payment under this section, an eligible entity shall retain not less than—

(A) 70 percent of the full-time equivalent positions of the eligible entity, based on the average number of full-time equivalent positions of the eligible entity during the comparable period, as determined by the Secretary, over the 3 previous years; and

(B) 60 percent of the contractor positions of the eligible entity, based on the average number of contractor positions of the eligible entity during the comparable period, as determined by the Secretary, over the 3 previous years.

(g) APPROPRIATION.—There is appropriated, out of amounts in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, $2,000,000,000 to the Fund for the period of fiscal years 2021 and 2022, to remain available until expended.

SEC. 4. EVERY KID OUTDOORS PROGRAM.

Section 9001 of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (16 U.S.C. 6804 note; Public Law 116–9) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (5) and inserting the following:

"(5) STUDENT.—The term 'student' means any fourth, fifth, or sixth grader or home-schooled learner 10 to 12 years of age residing in the United States, including any territory or possession of the United States."; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (2)(C), in the subparagraph heading, by striking "IN GRADE FOUR"; and

(B) by striking paragraph (5).

SEC. 5. FOREST SERVICE LEGACY ROADS AND TRAILS REMEDIATION PROGRAM.

Public Law 88–657 (16 U.S.C. 532 et seq.) (commonly known as the "Forest Roads and Trails Act") is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 8. FOREST SERVICE LEGACY ROADS AND TRAILS REMEDIATION PROGRAM.

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the Forest Service Legacy Roads and Trails Remediation Program (referred to in this section as the 'Program').

"(b) ADMINISTRATION.—The Program shall be administered by the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service (referred to in this section as the 'Secretary').

"(c) NATIONAL STRATEGY.—The Secretary shall develop a national strategy to carry out the Program in accordance with this section.

"(d) ACTIVITIES.—In carrying out the Program, the Secretary shall—

"(1) carry out critical maintenance and urgent repairs and associated activities on National Forest System roads, trails, and bridges;

"(2) restore passages of fish and other aquatic species by removing or replacing unnatural barriers from those passages;

"(3) consider recreational access when improving water quality and habitat conditions; and

"(4) decommission roads in accordance with subsection (h).

"(e) PRIORITY.—In implementing the Program, the Secretary shall give priority to projects that protect or restore—

"(1) water quality;

"(2) a watershed that supplies a public drinking water system;

"(3) the habitat of a threatened, endangered, or sensitive fish or wildlife species; or

"(4) a watershed for which the Secretary has completed a watershed protection and restoration action plan pursuant to section 304 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6543).

"(f) NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—Except with respect to a project carried out on a watershed for which the Secretary has entered into a cooperative agreement under section 323 of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 (16 U.S.C. 1011a), each project carried out under this section shall be on a National Forest System road or trail.

"(g) IDENTIFICATION OF MINIMUM ROAD SYSTEMS.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall identify, for each unit of the National Forest System, the minimum road system and unneeded roads in accordance with section 212.5(b) of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act).

"(h) UNNEEDED ROADS.—The Secretary shall decommission any roads identified as unneeded under subsection (g) as soon as practicable after making the identification under that subsection.

"(i) REVIEW; REVISION.—The Secretary shall review, and may revise, an identification made under subsection (g) for a unit of the National Forest System during a revision of the land and resource management plan applicable to that unit.

"(j) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $100,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2030.".

SEC. 6. 21ST CENTURY CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF 21ST CENTURY CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS.—Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3111 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subtitle E (29 U.S.C. 3241 et seq.) as subtitle F; and

(2) by inserting after subtitle D the following:

"Subtitle E—21st Century Civilian Conservation Corps

"SEC. 176. 21ST CENTURY CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS PROGRAM.

"(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) PROJECT PARTNER.—The term 'project partner' means the Department of Agriculture, the Interior, Homeland Security, Commerce, or Labor, a

State or local resource management agency, or another entity responsible for community development or climate adaption.

"(2) QUALIFIED YOUTH OR CONSERVATION CORPS.—The term 'qualified youth or conservation corps' means an entity carrying out a qualified youth or conservation corps, as defined in section 203 of the Public Land Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1722).

"(3) QUALIFIED YOUTH OR CONSERVATION CORPS CRITERIA.—The term 'qualified youth or conservation corps criteria' means the model and standards for a program described in section 203(11) of the Public Land Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1722(11)).

"(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish and carry out a 21st Century Civilian Conservation Corps program. The program shall be carried out using qualified youth or conservation corps criteria and through Civilian Conservation Corps projects.

"(c) GRANTS.—In carrying out the 21st Century Civilian Conservation Corps program, the Secretary shall make grants to eligible qualified youth or conservation corps, acting in partnership with project partners, to carry out Civilian Conservation Corps projects, in which the

1 grant funds are used to administer comprehensive youth
2 and workforce development programs.
3 "(d) APPLICATION.—
4 "(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive a
5 grant under this section for a Civilian Conservation
6 Corps project, a qualified youth or conservation
7 corps shall submit an application to the Secretary,
8 at such time and in such manner as the Secretary
9 may require, that contains—
10 "(A) a description of the project, including
11 how the project relates to goals described in
12 subsection (e);
13 "(B) the scope of work and budget for the
14 project;
15 "(C) the number of enrollees needed to
16 carry out the project;
17 "(D) a description of the manner in which
18 the qualified youth or conservation corps shall
19 recruit, screen, and select enrollees;
20 "(E) a description of the manner in which
21 the qualified youth or conservation corps shall
22 recruit, train, and engage individuals from di-
23 verse backgrounds and underrepresented com-
24 munities as enrollees;

"(F) a description of the manner in which the qualified youth or conservation corps will provide, through the project—

"(i) education, work experience, and work-based learning; and

"(ii) training, such as basic skills training, the development of job-specific occupational skills, or other training activities, designed to lead to the attainment of an industry-recognized credential, including a description of the training that leads to the credential;

"(G) a description of the stipend, allowance, or other benefits an enrollee in the project will receive;

"(H) a description of the supportive services that an enrollee in the project will receive; and

"(I) information specifying how the qualified youth or conservation corps will collect such information on the project and enrollees as the Secretary may require, and submit a report containing that information to the Secretary.

"(2) APPLICATION PREFERENCE.—The Secretary shall give preference to entities submitting applications that describe how the project will—

"(A) serve communities historically impacted by underinvestment or environmental injustice; or

"(B) engage youth from historically disenfranchised populations.

"(e) ELIGIBLE USE OF FUNDS.—A qualified youth or conservation corps may use funds distributed for each Civilian Conservation Corps project, with goals relating to conservation, outdoor recreation, or other environmental matters, for—

"(1) education, work experience, and workforce investment activities outlined in section 129(c)(2) related to conservation, outdoor recreation, and other environmental industries;

"(2) other education and training activities that focus on career development in such industries;

"(3) activities leading to development and completion of the project;

"(4) activities for data collection, management, and reporting;

"(5) other activities designed to lead to successful completion of the project and workforce development outcomes;

"(6) any administrative activities supporting the project; and

"(7) project monitoring activities.

"(f) QUALIFIED YOUTH OR CONSERVATION CORPS.—In carrying out projects under this section, the Secretary shall—

"(1) consult with the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps—

"(A) to establish standards used to identify appropriate types of Civilian Conservation Corps projects, and activities to be provided and workforce development outcomes sought, through those projects; and

"(B) to establish specific performance accountability measures for evaluating Civilian Conservation Corps projects; and

"(2) enter into a contract or cooperative agreement with the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps to develop recommendations for the standards and measures described in paragraph (1).".

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEMS.—Section 121(b)(1)(C)(ii)(II) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3151(b)(1)(C)(ii)(II)) is amended by striking ''subtitles C through E'' and inserting ''subtitles C, D, and F''.

(2) TRANSITION.—Section 503(b) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3343(b)) is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: ''(as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act)''.

(c) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is amended—

(1) by striking the item relating to the subtitle heading for subtitle E of title I and inserting the following:

''Subtitle F—Administration'';

and

(2) by inserting after the item relating to section 172 the following:

''Subtitle E—21st Century Civilian Conservation Corps

''Sec. 176. 21st Century Civilian Conservation Corps program.''.

SEC. 7. TEMPORARY WAIVER OF SKI AREA PERMIT AND RENTAL FEES DURING THE COVID–19 PANDEMIC.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED FEE.—The term ''covered fee'' means a ski area permit or rental fee authorized under—

(A) section 701 of division I of the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 (16 U.S.C. 497c);

(B) section 7 of the Act of April 24, 1950 (64 Stat. 84, chapter 97; 16 U.S.C. 580d);

(C) section 302 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1732); or

(D) section 803(h) of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6802(h)).

(2) COVERED PERIOD.—The term ''covered period'' means the period beginning on March 13, 2020, and ending on June 1, 2021.

(b) WAIVER OF COVERED FEES.—Notwithstanding the provisions of law described in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of subsection (a)(1), covered fees shall be temporarily waived and not required to be paid to the

United States for the covered period, due to the COVID–19 pandemic, if the following conditions are met:

(1) The applicable permit or lease was issued before March 13, 2020.

(2) The applicable permit or lease is in effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

(3) The applicable permit or lease holder was in good standing as of March 13, 2020.

(c) REIMBURSEMENT.—Any covered fee paid to the United States during the covered period shall be reimbursed, as soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, by the United States to the holder of the applicable permit or lease under which the covered fee was paid.

SEC. 8. TEMPORARY WAIVER OF OUTDOOR RECREATION LAND USE PERMIT FEES.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AUTHORIZATION.—The term ''authorization'' means an authorization (including a special use permit and a concession contract) for the holder of the authorization to provide recreational services and operations related to public recreation that was executed by the Secretary concerned and the holder of the authorization under a covered law.

(2) COVERED AUTHORIZATION.—The term ''covered authorization'' means an authorization—

(A) that was awarded or issued by the Secretary concerned before March 13, 2020;

(B) that is in effect on the date of enactment of this Act, including an authorization that is expired, but that, as of the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary concerned is continuing to treat as being in effect; and

(C) under which the holder was in good standing as of March 13, 2020.

(3) COVERED FEE.—The term ''covered fee'' means any fee owed under a covered authorization that is accrued or otherwise based on revenues obtained or operations conducted during the period beginning on March 13, 2020, and ending on December 31, 2021.

(4) COVERED LAW.—The term ''covered law'' means—

(A) the last paragraph under the heading ''FOREST SERVICE'' in the Act of March 4, 1915 (16 U.S.C. 497);

(B) section 7 of the Act of April 24, 1950 (64 Stat. 84, chapter 97; 16 U.S.C. 580d);

(C) section 803(h) of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6802(h)); and

(D) subchapter II of chapter 1019 of title 54, United States Code.

(5) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—The term ''Secretary concerned'' means—

(A) the Secretary of the Interior, with respect to an authorization executed by the Secretary of the Interior; and

(B) the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to an authorization executed by the Secretary of Agriculture.

(b) COVERED FEE RELIEF.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law—

(1) any covered fees shall be waived and shall not be required to be paid to the Secretary concerned; and

(2) any covered fees that have been paid to the Secretary concerned before the date of enactment of this Act shall, as soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, be reimbursed by the Secretary concerned to the holder of the covered authorization under which the covered fee was paid.

(c) EXTENSION OF TERM OF COVERED AUTHORIZATIONS.—

(1) EXTENSION OF COVERED AUTHORIZATIONS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary concerned shall extend the term of any covered authorization by an additional 2 years.

(2) LIMITATION.—Any extension under paragraph (1) shall be subject to any authority of the Secretary concerned to revoke an authorization, including for reasons based on the unsatisfactory performance of the holder of the authorization.

SEC. 9. WORKFORCE TRAINING.

(a) DEFINITION OF QUALIFIED YOUTH OR CONSERVATION CORPS.—In this section, the term ''qualified youth or conservation corps'' has the meaning given the term in section 203 of Public Law 91–378 (commonly known as the ''Youth Conservation Corps Act of 1970'') (16 U.S.C. 1722).

(b) TRAINING.—The Secretaries of Agriculture, the Interior, Homeland Security, Commerce, and Labor shall collaborate with institutions of higher education, the Corps Network, the outdoor recreation business community, and public land stewardship and outdoor recreation organizations to support institutions of higher education in developing, coordinating, and carrying out nationally consistent

1 and standardized training for all qualified youth or con-
2 servation corps participants.
3 (c) INCLUSIONS.—The training described in sub-
4 section (b) shall include—
5 (1) the foundations of Federal public land and
6 recreation management and stewardship;
7 (2) principles of sustainable outdoor recreation
8 and resource management;
9 (3) recreation and resource management job-
10 specific occupational skills; and
11 (4) other basic skills training to ensure that
12 qualified youth or conservation corps participants
13 are—
14 (A) prepared for their work with the quali-
15 fied youth or conservation corps; and
16 (B) prepared for careers relating to con-
17 servation, outdoor recreation, and other envi-
18 ronmental industries after serving in the quali-
19 fied youth or conservation corps.
20 **SEC. 10. REFORESTATION.**
21 (a) REFORESTATION TRUST FUND.—
22 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 303 of Public Law
23 96–451 (16 U.S.C. 1606a) is amended—
24 (A) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking "Subject to" and all that follows through "the Secretary" and inserting "The Secretary";

(ii) by striking paragraph (2); and

(iii) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (2);

(B) in subsection (d)—

(i) in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(I) by striking the subsection designation and all that follows through "The Secretary" and inserting the following:

"(d) REFORESTATION BY SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE.—The Secretary"; and

(II) by striking "for";

(ii) in paragraph (1)—

(I) by inserting "for" before "reforestation"; and

(II) by striking "and" at the end;

(iii) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (4);

(iv) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

"(2) to the Chief of the Forest Service to reforest National Forest System land determined to be in need of active reforestation based on field surveys that have been conducted after sufficient time has elapsed to determine regeneration potential based on forest type, aspect, and elevation, in accordance with subsection (f), by planting the maximum reasonable number of trees according to the best available science;

"(3) to carry out the Reforest America Grant Program established under section 6 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978; and"; and

(v) in paragraph (4) (as so redesignated), by inserting "for" before "properly"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(e) REFORESTATION BY SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.—The Secretary of the Interior shall obligate such sums from the Trust Fund as are necessary to reforest land managed by the Bureau of Land Management and land managed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs determined to be in need of active reforestation based on field surveys that have been conducted after sufficient time has elapsed to determine regeneration potential based on forest type, aspect, and elevation, in accordance with subsection (f),

by planting the maximum reasonable number of trees according to the best available science.

"(f) REFORESTATION.—

"(1) DEFINITION OF CONNECTIVITY.—In this subsection, the term 'connectivity' means the degree to which the landscape facilitates native species movement.

"(2) REFORESTATION.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Reforestation under subsections (d)(2) and (e) shall consist of ecologically based site preparation, tree planting, and subsequent management using practices that—

"(i) are informed by climate change science and the importance of spatial pattern;

"(ii) enhance forest health, resilience, and biodiversity; and

"(iii) reduce vulnerability to future forest mortality and catastrophic wildfire.

"(B) POST-WILDFIRE REFORESTATION.—In the case of reforestation under subsections (d)(2) and (e), sums available in the Trust Fund shall not be used—

"(i) for post-wildfire salvage logging; or

"(ii) in any area that has been salvage logged during the preceding 10-year period.

"(3) PRIORITY.—In carrying out reforestation under subsections (d)(2) and (e), the Chief of the Forest Service and the Secretary of the Interior, as applicable, shall give priority to planting—

"(A) on land that was subject to a mortality event caused by a high intensity wildfire, pest infestation, invasive species, or drought or other extreme weather;

"(B) that will restore and maintain resilient landscapes;

"(C) on land on which the planting provides increased habitat connectivity for wildlife; and

"(D) that will provide the largest potential long-term increase in carbon sequestration.

"(g) MANDATORY FUNDING.—To carry out paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection (d) and subsection (e), the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer from the general fund of the Treasury into the Trust Fund

$3,500,000,000 for fiscal year 2022 and each fiscal year thereafter, to remain available until expended.''.

(2) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior shall issue regulations necessary to carry out the amendments made by this section.

(b) REFOREST AMERICA GRANT PROGRAM.—The Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 is amended by inserting after section 5 (16 U.S.C. 2103a) the following:

''SEC. 6. REFOREST AMERICA GRANT PROGRAM.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) COMMUNITY OF COLOR.—The term 'community of color' means, in a State, a census block group in an urban area for which the aggregate percentage of residents who identify as Black, African-American, Asian, Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Latino, other non-White race, or linguistically isolated is—

''(A) not less than 50 percent; or

''(B) is significantly higher than the State average.

''(2) ELIGIBLE COST.—The term 'eligible cost' means, with respect to a project of an eligible entity under the Program—

"(A) the cost of implementing a reforestation project, including by—

"(i) planning and designing the reforestation activity, including considering relevant science;

"(ii) establishing tree nurseries;

"(iii) purchasing trees; and

"(iv) ecologically based site preparation, including the labor and cost associated with the use of machinery;

"(B) the cost of maintaining and monitoring planted trees for a period of up to 3 years to ensure successful establishment of the trees;

"(C) with respect to reforestation in an urban area under subsection (e) in a low income community that has an existing tree canopy cover of not more than 20 percent, not more than 50 percent of the cost of the maintenance of any nearby tree canopy; and

"(D) any other relevant cost, as determined by the Secretary.

"(3) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term 'eligible entity' means—

"(A) a State agency;

"(B) a local governmental entity;

"(C) an Indian Tribe; and

"(D) a nonprofit organization.

"(4) ELIGIBLE LAND.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'eligible land' means—

"(i) land owned in fee simple by an eligible entity—

"(I)(aa) for which, at the time of application to the Program under subsection (c), the forest stocking level of the land is less than 25 percent of regional norms for forest properties with comparable tree species and soil characteristics; and

"(bb) that is in need of active reforestation due to events such as—

"(AA) high intensity wildfire;

"(BB) pest infestation;

"(CC) invasive species; and

"(DD) drought and other extreme weather; or

"(II) that was formerly forest land and has been abandoned or in-

completely reclaimed from mining, commercial development, clearing for agriculture, or other nonforest use; and

"(ii) with respect to reforestation in an urban area under subsection (e), land in that urban area that is owned in fee simple by an eligible entity.

"(B) EXCLUSION.—The term 'eligible land' does not include land on which the eligible entity conducted a timber harvest—

"(i) not later than 5 years before the date on which the eligible entity submits an application under subsection (c); and

"(ii) that resulted in a forest stocking level described in subparagraph (A)(i)(I)(aa).

"(5) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term 'Indian Tribe' has the meaning given the term 'Indian tribe' in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

"(6) LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY.—The term 'local governmental entity' means any municipal government or county government with jurisdiction over local land use decisions.

"(7) LOW INCOME COMMUNITY.—The term 'low income community' means any census block group in an urban area in which not less than 30 percent of the population lives below the poverty line (as defined in section 673 of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902)).

"(8) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.—The term 'nonprofit organization' means an organization that—

"(A) is described in section 170(h)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and

"(B) operates in accordance with 1 or more of the purposes described in section 170(h)(4)(A) of that Code.

"(9) PROGRAM.—The term 'Program' means the Reforest America Grant Program established under subsection (b)(1).

"(10) SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service.

"(11) URBAN AREA.—The term 'urban area' means an area identified by the Bureau of the Census as an 'urban area' in the most recent census.

"(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a program, to be known as the 'Reforest America Grant Program', under which the Secretary shall award grants to eligible entities to conduct projects to reforest eligible land in accordance with this section.

"(2) REFORESTATION.—In carrying out the Program, the Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable, award sufficient grants each year to plant the maximum reasonable number of trees according to the best available science.

"(c) APPLICATIONS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity that seeks to receive a grant under the Program shall submit an application at such time, in such form, and containing such information as the Secretary may require, including the information described in paragraph (2), to—

"(A) the State forester or equivalent official of the State in which the eligible entity is located; or

"(B) in the case of an eligible entity that is an Indian Tribe, an official of the governing body of the Indian Tribe.

"(2) CONTENTS.—An application submitted under paragraph (1) shall include—

"(A) the reason that the forest stocking level of the land is less than 25 percent of regional norms for forest properties with comparable tree species and soil characteristics, if applicable;

"(B) the natural, economic, and environmental benefits of returning the eligible land to forested condition;

"(C) an estimate of the annual carbon sequestration that will be achieved by the replanted forests, using processes determined by the Secretary;

"(D) a reforestation plan that includes—

"(i) a list of expected eligible costs;

"(ii) a description of the site preparation and the tree species to be planted;

"(iii) a description of the manner in which the design of the project is informed by climate change science and will enhance forest health, resilience, and biodiversity;

"(iv) an explanation of the manner in which the land will be maintained for 36

1 months after planting to ensure successful
2 establishment; and
3 "(v) an explanation of the manner in
4 which the land will be managed later than
5 36 months after planting, including wheth-
6 er that management shall include a timber
7 harvest;
8 "(E) in the case of an application for an
9 urban reforestation project under subsection
10 (e)—
11 "(i) a description of the manner in
12 which the tree planting shall address dis-
13 parities in local environmental quality,
14 such as lower tree canopy cover; and
15 "(ii) a description of the anticipated
16 community and stakeholder engagement in
17 the project; and
18 "(F) any other relevant information re-
19 quired by the Secretary.
20 "(3) APPLICATIONS TO SECRETARY.—Each offi-
21 cial that receives an application under paragraph (1)
22 shall submit the application to the Secretary with a
23 description of the application and any other relevant
24 information that the Secretary may require.
25 "(d) PRIORITY.—

"(1) DEFINITION OF CONNECTIVITY.—In this subsection, the term 'connectivity' means the degree to which the landscape facilitates native species movement.

"(2) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under the Program, the Secretary shall give priority—

"(A) to projects that provide the largest potential increase in carbon sequestration per dollar;

"(B) to projects that provide increased habitat connectivity for wildlife;

"(C) to projects under which an eligible entity will enter into a contract or cooperative agreement with 1 or more qualified youth or conservation corps (as the term is defined in section 203 of Public Law 91–378 (commonly known as the 'Youth Conservation Corps Act of 1970') (16 U.S.C. 1722)); and

"(D) in the case of urban reforestation projects under subsection (e), to projects that—

"(i) are located in a community of color or a low-income community;

"(ii) are located in a neighborhood with poor local environmental quality, in-

cluding lower tree canopy cover and higher maximum daytime summer temperatures;

"(iii) are located in a neighborhood with high amounts of senior citizens or children;

"(iv) are located immediately adjacent to large numbers of residents;

"(v) will collaboratively engage neighbors and community members that will be closely affected by the tree planting in as many aspects of project development and implementation as possible; and

"(vi) will employ a substantial percentage of the workforce locally, with a focus on engaging unemployed and underemployed persons in communities of color and low-income communities.

"(e) URBAN REFORESTATION.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the Program, the Secretary shall award sufficient grants each year to projects carried out in urban areas to plant, to the maximum extent practicable—

"(A) 5,000,000 trees in each of calendar years 2022 through 2024;

"(B) 10,000,000 trees in each of calendar years 2025 through 2028; and

"(C) 15,000,000 trees in calendar year 2029 and each calendar year thereafter.

"(2) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Secretary shall award a grant to an eligible entity under the Program to conduct a reforestation project in an urban area in an amount equal to not more than 90 percent of the cost of reforesting the eligible land, as determined by the Secretary.

"(3) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—As a condition of receiving a grant described in paragraph (2), an eligible entity shall provide, in cash or through in-kind contributions from non-Federal sources, matching funds in an amount equal to not less than 10 percent of the cost of reforesting the eligible land, as determined by the Secretary.

"(f) PROHIBITED CONVERSION TO NONFOREST USE.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), an eligible entity that receives a grant under the Program shall not sell or convert land that was reforested under the Program to nonforest use.

"(2) REIMBURSEMENT OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity that receives a grant under this Program and sells or converts land that was reforested under the Program to nonforest use shall pay to the Federal Government an amount equal to the greater of—

"(A) the amount of the grant; and

"(B) the current appraised value of timber stocks on that land.

"(3) LOSS OF ELIGIBILITY.—An eligible entity that receives a grant under this Program and sells or converts land that was reforested under the Program to nonforest use shall not be eligible for additional grants under the Program.

"(g) COSTS.—

"(1) FEDERAL SHARE.—Unless otherwise provided under this section, the Secretary shall award a grant to an eligible entity under the Program in an amount equal to not more than 75 percent of the cost of reforesting the eligible land, as determined by the Secretary.

"(2) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—Unless otherwise provided under this section, as a condition of receiving a grant under the Program, an eligible entity shall provide, in cash or through in-kind contributions from non-Federal sources, matching funds

in an amount equal to not less than 25 percent of the cost of reforesting the eligible land, as determined by the Secretary.

"(h) PLANTING SURVIVAL.—An eligible entity that receives a grant under the Program shall—

"(1) not later than 36 months after planting has been completed using the grant funds, submit to the responsible State or Tribal official, as applicable, a monitoring report that describes project implementation, including the survival rate of all plantings made under the grant; and

"(2) if the survival rate reported in the monitoring report under paragraph (1) is, after 36 months, less than the required minimum survival rate for the geographic area in which the planting is located, as determined by a State forester or equivalent State or Tribal official, as applicable, replant tree seedlings in a quantity equivalent to half of the original planting, using comparable means to the original planting.

"(i) PREVAILING WAGE REQUIREMENT.—Any contractor or subcontractor entering into a service contract in connection with a project under the Program shall—

"(1) be treated as a Federal contractor or subcontractor for purposes of chapter 67 of title 41,

United States Code (commonly known as the 'McNamara-O'Hara Service Contract Act of 1965'); and

"(2) pay each class of employee employed by the contractor or subcontractor wages and fringe benefits at rates in accordance with prevailing rates for the class in the locality, or, where a collective-bargaining agreement covers the employee, in accordance with the rates provided for in the agreement, including prospective wage increases provided for in the agreement.

"(j) REPORT.—The Secretary shall annually submit to the relevant committees of Congress a report that describes the activities of the Program, including the total amount of carbon sequestered by replanted forests during the year covered by the report.

"(k) FUNDING.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Of the funds of the Reforestation Trust Fund established under section 303 of Public Law 96–451 (16 U.S.C. 1606a), the Secretary shall use such sums as are necessary to carry out the Program.

"(2) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—Of the funds used under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall allocate not more than 10

percent for each fiscal year to State foresters or equivalent officials, including equivalent officials of Indian Tribes, for administrative costs and technical assistance under the Program.''.

SEC. 11. CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM.

(a) SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENTS FOR CLIMATE STEWARDSHIP PRACTICES.—Section 1240L(d) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–24(d)) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by striking ''ROTATIONS AND ADVANCED GRAZING MANAGEMENT'' and inserting ''ROTATIONS, ADVANCED GRAZING MANAGEMENT, AND CLIMATE STEWARDSHIP PRACTICES'';

(2) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) and (C) as subparagraphs (C) and (D), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

''(B) CLIMATE STEWARDSHIP PRACTICE.—The term 'climate stewardship practice' means any of the following practices:

''(i) Alley cropping.

''(ii) Biochar incorporation.

"(iii) Conservation cover.

"(iv) Conservation crop rotation.

"(v) Contour buffer strips.

"(vi) Contour farming.

"(vii) Cover crops.

"(viii) Critical area planting.

"(ix) Cross wind trap strips.

"(x) Field borders.

"(xi) Filter strips.

"(xii) Forage and biomass planting, including the use of native prairie seed mixtures.

"(xiii) Forest stand improvements.

"(xiv) Grassed waterways.

"(xv) Hedgerow planting.

"(xvi) Herbaceous wind barriers.

"(xvii) Multistory cropping.

"(xviii) Nutrient management, including nitrogen stewardship activities.

"(xix) Prescribed grazing.

"(xx) Range planting.

"(xxi) Residue and tillage management with no till.

"(xxii) Residue and tillage management with reduced till.

"(xxiii) Riparian forest buffers.

"(xxiv) Riparian herbaceous buffers.

"(xxv) Silvopasture establishment.

"(xxvi) Stripcropping.

"(xxvii) Tree and shrub establishment, including planting for a high rate of carbon sequestration.

"(xxviii) Upland wildlife habitat.

"(xxix) Vegetative barriers.

"(xxx) Wetland restoration.

"(xxxi) Windbreak renovation.

"(xxxii) Windbreaks and shelterbelts.

"(xxxiii) Woody residue treatment.

"(xxxiv) Any other vegetative or management conservation activity that significantly—

"(I) reduces greenhouse gas emissions;

"(II) increases carbon sequestration; or

"(III) enhances resilience to increased weather volatility.";

(3) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking "or" at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting "; or"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(C) conservation activities relating to climate stewardship practices."; and

(4) in paragraph (3), by striking "rotations or advanced grazing management" and inserting "rotations, advanced grazing management, or conservation activities relating to climate stewardship practices".

(b) PAYMENT LIMITATIONS.—Section 1240L(f) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–24(f)) is amended by striking "fiscal years 2019 through 2023" and inserting "the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2023, the period of fiscal years 2024 through 2028, or the period of fiscal years 2029 through 2033".

(c) FUNDING.—Section 1241 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3841) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking "2023" and inserting "2030"; and

(B) in paragraph (3)(B)—

(i) in clause (ii), by striking "$725,000,000" and inserting "$1,725,000,000";

(ii) in clause (iii), by striking "$750,000,000" and inserting "$2,750,000,000";

(iii) in clause (iv)—

(I) by striking "$800,000,000" and inserting "$3,800,000,000"; and

(II) by striking "and" at the end;

(iv) in clause (v)—

(I) by striking "$1,000,000,000" and inserting "$5,000,000,000"; and

(II) by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(v) by adding at the end the following:

"(vi) $6,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2024; and

"(vii) $7,000,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2030.";

(2) in subsection (b), by striking "2023" and inserting "2030"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(k) FUNDING FOR CLIMATE STEWARDSHIP PRACTICES.—Of the funds made available under subsection (a)(3)(B), the Secretary shall set aside the following amounts to be used exclusively to enroll in the conservation stewardship program contracts comprised predomi-

nantly of conservation activities relating to climate stewardship practices (as defined in section 1240L(d)(1)) or bundles of practices comprised predominantly of conservation activities relating to climate stewardship practices (as so defined):

"(1) $1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2021.

"(2) $2,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2022.

"(3) $3,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2023.

"(4) $4,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2024.

"(5) $5,000,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2030.".

SEC. 12. EMERGENCY DESIGNATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The amounts provided by this Act and the amendments made by this Act are designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4(g) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (2 U.S.C. 933(g)).

(b) DESIGNATION IN SENATE.—In the Senate, this Act and the amendments made by this Act are designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4112(a) of H. Con. Res. 71 (115th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018.

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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1363

To amend the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 to provide for an additional goal of the Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority (AGARDA) to enhance the role of agriculture in innovative sustainability solutions.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 25, 2021

Mr. NEGUSE (for himself and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

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A BILL

To amend the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 to provide for an additional goal of the Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority (AGARDA) to enhance the role of agriculture in innovative sustainability solutions.

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 "Sustainable Agriculture Research Act".

SEC. 2. ADDITIONAL GOAL OF AGARDA TO ENHANCE ROLE OF AGRICULTURE IN INNOVATIVE SUSTAINABILITY SOLUTIONS.

Section 1473H(b)(2) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3319k(b)(2)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as subparagraph (E); and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following:

''(D) to enhance the role of agriculture in innovative voluntary resilience solutions in the United States through the development of agricultural technologies that address—

''(i) the impact of extreme weather on crop production;

''(ii) the expansion of the potential for long-term carbon storage through agriculture;

''(iii) increased economic and practical feasibility for renewable and sustainable energy on farms and in the agriculture industry; and

"(iv) increased adoption of voluntary conservation practices that sequester carbon and build on-farm climate resilience; and".

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H.R. 1692, Rehabilitating Economic Success Through Overcoming Rural Emergencies Act (RESTORE Act)

AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1692

To extend and expand the Wildfire Hurricane Indemnity Program to cover losses due to high winds, polar vortexes, and hailstorms.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 9, 2021

Mr. JACKSON (for himself, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. BRADY, Mr. ARRINGTON, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Ms. VAN DUYNE, Mr. PFLUGER, Mr. TONY GONZALES of Texas, Mr. BABIN, and Mr. FALLON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

---

A BILL

To extend and expand the Wildfire Hurricane Indemnity Program to cover losses due to high winds, polar vortexes, and hailstorms.

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 ''Rehabilitating Economic Success Through Overcoming Rural Emergencies Act'' or the ''RESTORE Act''.

SEC. 2. USDA WILDFIRE HURRICANE INDEMNITY PROGRAM EXTENSION AND EXPANSION.

The Secretary of Agriculture shall make payments for necessary expenses related to losses of crops (including losses due to high winds or derechos, polar vortexes (including losses to dairy cooperatives due to power outages or curtailments), hailstorms, freeze, and all losses eligible for assistance under subpart O of part 760 of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations, including any drought losses in 2020 and 2021, notwithstanding the limitations of section 791(b) of title VII of division B of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020) pursuant to title I of the Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2019 (Public Law 116–20), as amended by section 116 of the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2020 (Public Law 116–59) and as further amended by subsection (c) of section 791 of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (Public Law 116–94) for crop losses in calendar year 2020 and calendar year 2021, except that payments for losses incurred in 2020 and 2021 shall be—

(1) in the case of producers, subject only to the limitations provided under section 760.1507 of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(2) in the case of dairy cooperatives, shall be paid in the same manner and subject to the same

limitations as cooperative processors under section 791(c) of title VII of division B of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (Public Law 116–94).

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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2011

To amend the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to increase the age of eligibility for children to receive benefits under the special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 18, 2021

Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, Ms. SCHRIER, and Mr. YOUNG) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

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A BILL

To amend the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to increase the age of eligibility for children to receive benefits under the special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children, and for other purposes.

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 "Wise Investment in Children Act of 2021" or the "WIC Act of 2021".

SEC. 2. AGE OF ELIGIBILITY FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITION OF CHILD.—Section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

"(2) CHILD.—The term 'child' means—

"(A) a person who has attained their first birthday but has not yet attained their fifth birthday; and

"(B) for purposes of subsection (d)(3)(A)(iii)(II), a person who has attained their first birthday but has not yet attained their sixth birthday.";

(2) in subsection (e)(4)(A), by striking "up to age 5"; and

(3) in subsection (f)(7)(D)(i), by striking "under the age of 5".

(b) CERTIFICATION.—Section 17(d)(3)(A)(iii) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(d)(3)(A)(iii)) is amended—

(1) by striking "A State" and inserting the following:

"(I) IN GENERAL.—A State"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(II) 5-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN.—

"(aa) IN GENERAL.—Subject to a waiver under clause (vi), beginning not later than October 1, 2026, a State shall certify a participant child who has had a fifth birthday but has not yet attained their sixth birthday, during the period that ends on the earlier of—

"(AA) the sixth birthday of the child; and

"(BB) the first date on which the child attends full day kindergarten.

"(bb) REQUIREMENTS.—Each State that certifies a child under item (aa) shall—

"(AA) ensure that the participant child receives required health and nutrition assessments; and

"(BB) establish a system to determine the first

date on which a participant child attends full day kindergarten.''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1902(a)(53)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(53)(A)) is amended by striking ''below the age of 5'' and inserting ''(as defined in that section)''.

SEC. 3. CERTIFICATION OF INFANTS.

(a) DEFINITION OF INFANT.—Section 17(b) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(b)) is amended by striking paragraph (5) and inserting the following:

''(5) INFANT.—The term 'infant' means—

''(A) a person under 1 year of age; and

''(B) for purposes of subsection (d), a person under 2 years of age.''.

(b) CERTIFICATION.—Section 17(d)(3)(A) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(d)(3)(A)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(iv) INFANTS.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—Subject to a waiver under clause (vi), beginning not later than October 1, 2026, a State shall certify an infant for a period of not more than 2 years.

"(II) ASSESSMENTS.—In certifying an infant under subclause (I), a State shall ensure that the infant receives required health and nutrition assessments.".

SEC. 4. EXTENSION OF POSTPARTUM PERIOD.

(a) BREASTFEEDING WOMEN.—

(1) DEFINITION OF BREASTFEEDING WOMAN.—Section 17(b) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(b)) is amended by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

"(1) BREASTFEEDING WOMAN.—The term 'breastfeeding woman' means—

"(A) a woman who is not more than 1 year postpartum and is breastfeeding the infant of the woman; and

"(B) for purposes of subsection (d), a woman who is not more than 2 years postpartum and is breastfeeding the infant of the woman.".

(2) CERTIFICATION.—Section 17(d)(3)(A)(ii) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(d)(3)(A)(ii)) is amended by striking "1 year" and all that follows through "earlier" and inserting "not more than 2 years postpartum".

(b) POSTPARTUM WOMEN.—

(1) DEFINITION OF POSTPARTUM WOMAN.—Section 17(b) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(b)) is amended by striking paragraph (10) and inserting the following:

"(10) POSTPARTUM WOMAN.—The term 'postpartum woman' means—

"(A) a woman up to 6 months after termination of pregnancy; and

"(B) for purposes of subsection (d), a woman up to 2 years after termination of pregnancy.".

(2) CERTIFICATION.—Section 17(d)(3)(A) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(d)(3)(A)) (as amended by section 3(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(v) POSTPARTUM WOMEN.—Subject to a waiver under clause (vi), beginning not later than October 1, 2026, a State shall certify a postpartum woman for a period of up to 2 years after the termination of pregnancy of the postpartum woman.".

SEC. 5. WAIVER FOR CERTIFICATION.

Section 17(d)(3)(A) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(d)(3)(A)) (as amended by section 4(b)(2)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking "clause (ii)" and inserting "this subparagraph"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(vi) WAIVER.—

"(I) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may grant a waiver to a State agency, on request, that waives the certification deadline requirement described in clause (iii), (iv), or (v).

"(II) SPECIFIC DATE.—A State agency requesting a waiver under subclause (I) shall specify a date by which the State agency anticipates that it will implement the certification requirement under clause (iii), (iv), or (v) for which it seeks a waiver.

"(III) ELIGIBILITY FOR WAIVER.—To be eligible for a waiver under subclause (I), a State agency shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Secretary 1 or more of the following:

"(aa) There are unusual technological barriers to implementation.

1 "(bb) Operational costs are
2 not affordable within the nutri-
3 tion services and administration
4 grant of the State agency.
5 "(cc) It is in the best inter-
6 est of the program for the Sec-
7 retary to grant the waiver.".

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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2099

To extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 19, 2021

Mr. NEGUSE (for himself and Mrs. RODGERS of Washington) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, 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 extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.

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 ''Secure Rural Schools Reauthorization Act of 2021''.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY SELF-DETERMINATION ACT OF 2000.

(a) DEFINITION OF FULL FUNDING AMOUNT.—Section 3(11) of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 7102(11)) is amended by striking subparagraphs (D) and (E) and inserting the following:

"(D) for fiscal year 2017, the amount that is equal to 95 percent of the full funding amount for fiscal year 2015;

"(E) for each of fiscal years 2018 through 2020, the amount that is equal to 95 percent of the full funding amount for the preceding fiscal year; and

"(F) for fiscal year 2021 and each fiscal year thereafter, the amount that is equal to the full funding amount for fiscal year 2017.".

(b) SECURE PAYMENTS FOR STATES AND COUNTIES CONTAINING FEDERAL LAND.—

(1) SECURE PAYMENTS.—Section 101 of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 7111) is amended, in subsections (a) and (b), by striking "2015, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020" each place it appears and inserting "2015 and 2017 through 2023".

(2) DISTRIBUTION OF PAYMENTS TO ELIGIBLE COUNTIES.—Section 103(d)(2) of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 7113(d)(2)) is amended by striking "2020" and inserting "2023".

(c) PILOT PROGRAM TO STREAMLINE NOMINATION OF MEMBERS OF RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEES.—Section 205 of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 7125) is amended by striking subsection (g) and inserting the following:

"(g) RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT PILOT PROGRAMS.—

"(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

"(A) APPLICABLE DESIGNEE.—The term 'applicable designee' means the applicable regional forester.

"(B) NATIONAL PILOT PROGRAM.—The term 'national pilot program' means the national pilot program established under paragraph (4)(A).

"(C) REGIONAL PILOT PROGRAM.—The term 'regional pilot program' means the regional pilot program established under paragraph (3)(A).

"(2) ESTABLISHMENT OF PILOT PROGRAMS.—In accordance with paragraphs (3) and (4), the Secretary concerned shall carry out 2 pilot programs to appoint members of resource advisory committees.

"(3) REGIONAL PILOT PROGRAM.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary concerned shall carry out a regional pilot program to allow an applicable designee to appoint members of resource advisory committees.

"(B) GEOGRAPHIC LIMITATION.—The regional pilot program shall only apply to resource advisory committees chartered in—

"(i) the State of Montana; and

"(ii) the State of Arizona.

"(C) RESPONSIBILITIES OF APPLICABLE DESIGNEE.—

"(i) REVIEW.—Before appointing a member of a resource advisory committee under the regional pilot program, an applicable designee shall conduct the review and analysis that would otherwise be conducted for an appointment to a resource advisory committee if the regional pilot program was not in effect, including any review and

analysis with respect to civil rights and budgetary requirements.

"(ii) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this paragraph relieves an applicable designee from any requirement developed by the Secretary concerned for making an appointment to a resource advisory committee that is in effect on December 20, 2018, including any requirement for advertising a vacancy.

"(4) NATIONAL PILOT PROGRAM.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary concerned shall carry out a national pilot program to allow the Chief of the Forest Service or the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, as applicable, to submit to the Secretary concerned nominations of individuals for appointment as members of resource advisory committees.

"(B) APPOINTMENT.—Under the national pilot program, subject to subparagraph (C), not later than 30 days after the date on which a nomination is transmitted to the Secretary concerned under subparagraph (A), the Secretary concerned shall—

"(i) appoint the nominee to the applicable resource advisory committee; or

"(ii) reject the nomination.

"(C) AUTOMATIC APPOINTMENT.—If the Secretary concerned does not act on a nomination in accordance with subparagraph (B) by the date described in that subparagraph, the nominee shall be deemed appointed to the applicable resource advisory committee.

"(D) GEOGRAPHIC LIMITATION.—The national pilot program shall apply to a resource advisory committee chartered in any State other than—

"(i) the State of Montana; or

"(ii) the State of Arizona.

"(E) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this paragraph relieves the Secretary concerned from any requirement relating to an appointment to a resource advisory committee, including any requirement with respect to civil rights or advertising a vacancy.

"(5) TERMINATION OF EFFECTIVENESS.—The authority provided under this subsection terminates on October 1, 2023.

"(6) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later 180 days after the date described in paragraph (5), the Secretary concerned shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

"(A) with respect to appointments made under the regional pilot program compared to appointments made under the national pilot program, a description of the extent to which—

"(i) appointments were faster or slower; and

"(ii) the requirements described in paragraph (3)(C)(i) differ; and

"(B) a recommendation with respect to whether Congress should terminate, continue, modify, or expand the pilot programs.".

(d) EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT SPECIAL PROJECTS ON FEDERAL LAND.—

(1) EXISTING ADVISORY COMMITTEES.—Section 205(a)(4) of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 7125(a)(4)) is amended by striking "December 20, 2021" each place it appears and inserting "December 20, 2023".

(2) EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY.—Section 208 of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-

Determination Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 7128) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking "2022" and inserting "2025"; and

(B) in subsection (b), by striking "2023" and inserting "2026".

(e) ACCESS TO BROADBAND AND OTHER TECHNOLOGY.—Section 302(a) of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 7142(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking "and" at the end;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting "; and"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(5) to provide or expand access to—

"(A) broadband telecommunications services at local schools; or

"(B) the technology and connectivity necessary for students to use a digital learning tool at or outside of a local school campus.".

(f) EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY TO EXPEND COUNTY FUNDS.—Section 304 of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 7144) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking "2022" and inserting "2025"; and

(2) in subsection (b), by striking "2023" and inserting "2026".

(g) AMOUNTS OBLIGATED BUT UNSPENT; PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS.—Title III of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 7141 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by redesignating section 304 as section 305; and

(2) by inserting after section 303 the following:

"SEC. 304. AMOUNTS OBLIGATED BUT UNSPENT; PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS.

"(a) AMOUNTS OBLIGATED BUT UNSPENT.—Any county funds that were obligated by the applicable participating county before October 1, 2017, but are unspent on October 1, 2020—

"(1) may, at the option of the participating county, be deemed to have been reserved by the participating county on October 1, 2020, for expenditure in accordance with this title; and

"(2)(A) may be used by the participating county for any authorized use under section 302(a); and

"(B) on a determination by the participating county under subparagraph (A) to use the county

1 funds, shall be available for projects initiated after
2 October 1, 2020, subject to section 305.
3 "(b) PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS.—Notwith-
4 standing any other provision of law, effective beginning
5 on the date of enactment of the Secure Rural Schools Re-
6 authorization Act of 2021, no county funds made available
7 under this title may be used by any participating county
8 for any lobbying activity, regardless of the purpose for
9 which the funds are obligated on or before that date.".

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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2241

To direct the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a Civilian Climate Corps, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 26, 2021

Mr. NEGUSE (for himself and Ms. SPANBERGER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, and Education and Labor, 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 direct the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a Civilian Climate Corps, and for other purposes.

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 "Civilian Climate Corps Act of 2021".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) the United States has a strong history of citizen response to national calls to service in order to help the United States recover during a crisis;

(2) more than 80 years ago, the United States rose to the challenge of the Great Depression with the creation of citizen service programs, such as the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration;

(3) millions of participants in the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration program benefitted from paid employment and opportunities to develop the skills of the participants while constructing units of the National Park System and public land infrastructure and producing cultural works still enjoyed today;

(4) the signature programs of the Corporation for National and Community Service, which are the AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps, AmeriCorps VISTA, and National Senior Service Corps programs, can and should be expanded to meet current needs;

(5) individuals in every State and territory have been infected with the COVID–19 virus and killed

by COVID–19, with more than 29,000,000 cases causing more than 500,000 deaths;

(6) in response to the COVID–19 pandemic, States, Tribal governments, and cities across the United States have closed down businesses, schools, and public events, leading to a dramatic drop in economic activity and a sharp projected decline in the United States economy;

(7) more than 18,000,000 people in the United States are receiving unemployment benefits, with weekly unemployment filings continuing to increase;

(8) young workers, women, workers with low educational attainment, part-time workers, and racial and ethnic minorities have experienced high unemployment rates throughout the COVID–19 pandemic;

(9) the United States and the world are facing a profound climate crisis and the impacts of climate change will continue to intensify according to current trajectories;

(10) the scientific community has made it clear that significant and rapid action is necessary to avoid the most catastrophic impacts of climate change;

(11) on January 27, 2021, President Biden issued Executive Order 14008 (86 Fed. Reg. 7619 (February 1, 2021)), which calls for the creation of a Civilian Climate Corps Initiative in which participants would work—

(A) to conserve and restore public land and water;

(B) to increase reforestation;

(C) to increase carbon sequestration in the agricultural sector;

(D) to protect biodiversity;

(E) to improve access to recreation;

(F) to bolster community resilience; and

(G) to address climate change;

(12) the Civilian Climate Corps presents a unique opportunity for flexible, locally driven responses to meet State and local employment, environmental, and recovery needs; and

(13) the Civilian Climate Corps would create conservation and resilience jobs that emphasize accessible training opportunities to help a generation of workers develop robust professional skills.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committees on Appropriations, Energy and Natural Resources, Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, and Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate; and

(B) the Committees on Appropriations, Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Education and Labor of the House of Representatives.

(2) CORPS.—The term ''Corps'' means the Civilian Climate Corps established under section 4(a).

(3) DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED COMMUNITY.—The term ''disproportionately impacted community'' means a community with significant representation of communities of color, low-income communities, or Tribal and Native American communities, that experiences, or is at risk of experiencing higher or more adverse human health or environmental effects.

(4) QUALIFIED YOUTH SERVICE OR CONSERVATION CORPS.—The term ''qualified youth service or conservation corps'' means—

(A) a program authorized under—

(i) the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.);

(ii) title I of Public Law 91–378 (commonly known as the "Youth Conservation Corps Act of 1970") (16 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.); or

(iii) the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1721 et seq.), including the Indian Youth Service Corps authorized under section 210 of that Act (16 U.S.C. 1727b); and

(B) the Urban Youth Corps authorized under section 106 of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 (42 U.S.C. 12656).

(5) SECRETARIES.—The term "Secretaries" means the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture, acting jointly.

(6) TRIBAL AND NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY.—The term "Tribal and Native American community" means a population of people who are members of—

(A) an Indian Tribe (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304));

(B) an urban Indian (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)) community;

(C) a Native Hawaiian (as defined in section 815 of the Native American Programs Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 2992c)) community; or

(D) a Native American Pacific Islander (as defined in section 815 of the Native American Programs Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 2992c)) community.

SEC. 4. CIVILIAN CLIMATE CORPS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretaries, in coordination with the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall enter into an interagency agreement establishing a Civilian Climate Corps, to be operated in accordance with the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.) and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4950 et seq.).

(b) CONSULTATION.—The Secretaries shall consult with the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps and other relevant national service organizations for the purpose of identifying appropriate projects, activities, and workforce development outcomes for the Corps.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries, in coordination with the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that describes—

(1) the proposed number of Corps members; and

(2) the recommended amount of funding for the Corps for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2025.

(d) DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS OF PARTICIPANTS.—In selecting members for the Corps, the Secretaries shall ensure that—

(1) members are from economically, geographically, and ethnically diverse backgrounds; and

(2) veterans, individuals with disabilities, and people of various sexes, sexual orientations, and gender identities are represented.

SEC. 5. REQUIREMENTS FOR CORPS SERVICE PROJECTS.

A service project carried out by the Corps shall—

(1)(A) prioritize efforts to assist disproportionately impacted communities; or

(B) be carried out in partnership with a qualified youth service or conservation corps;

(2) be coordinated with Tribal and Native American communities to protect natural cultural resources; and

(3) accomplish 1 or more of the following objectives:

(A) Conserving, monitoring, and restoring public land and water to help mitigate and adapt to climate change.

(B) Addressing the needs of frontline communities experiencing the worst effects of climate change.

(C) Building resilience to climate change through nature-based solutions, such as living shorelines, wetlands, green stormwater infra-

structure, and sustainable forest management, to appropriately manage natural systems that buffer human communities from environmental harm.

(D) Assisting natural disaster-prone communities and disproportionately impacted communities by replacing aging infrastructure with climate-ready upgrades, such as improved stream crossings and enhanced energy efficiency for community facilities and housing.

(E) Promoting traditional ecological knowledge natural climate solutions, such as ecologically appropriate reforestation and sequestration and techniques, such as aquaponics and regenerative practices, in the agricultural sector, to help mitigate climate change by reducing atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations.

(F) Supporting the resilience of natural systems to climate change by protecting biodiversity through targeted conservation efforts and eradication of invasive species.

(G) Increasing education of the general public on climate adaptation and mitigation, including ways in which private landowners can initiate similar efforts on private land.

(H) Improving access to outdoor recreation to promote a continued national appreciation for the natural environment.

(I) Addressing environmental degradation in disproportionately impacted communities.

(J) Supporting the resilience of agricultural and food supply systems to ensure reliable and equitable access to nutritious foods, particularly among disproportionately impacted communities.

(K) Advancing the resiliency and carbon emission reductions of participating agencies through installation of small-scale clean energy equipment or facility weatherization projects on public land.

(L) Addressing urban and suburban greening and revitalization, including—

(i) the preservation, restoration, and expansion of open spaces;

(ii) the conversion of blacktops;

(iii) the installations of green roofs; and

(iv) the planting of trees.

SEC. 6. MATCHING FUNDS WAIVER.

Any otherwise applicable matching funds requirements, including under section 212(a)(1) of the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1729(a)(1)), shall be waived for projects carried out using amounts made available under this Act.

SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this Act for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2025.

(b) RESERVATION OF FUNDS FOR INDIAN TRIBAL AND NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Of the amounts appropriated to carry out this Act for any fiscal year, the Secretaries shall reserve not less than 5 percent for projects carried out in Tribal and Native American communities.

(2) CONSULTATION REQUIRED.—The Secretaries shall consult with each applicable Tribal and Native American community with respect to any projects carried out with funds reserved for use in Tribal and Native American communities under this subsection.

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H.R. 2477, Urban Forests Act of 2021

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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2477

To provide support for urban forests, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 13, 2021

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS (for herself, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. YOUNG, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Labor, 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

---

A BILL

To provide support for urban forests, and for other purposes.

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 ''Urban Forests Act of 2021''.

SEC. 2. URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY ASSISTANCE.

(a) TREE CITY USA GRANT PROGRAM.—Section 9 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (h) and (i) as subsections (j) and (k), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (g) the following;

"(h) TREE CITY USA GRANT PROGRAM.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a grant program to be known as the 'Tree City USA Grant Program' to provide competitive grants to eligible entities to enhance and maintain urban forests.

"(2) APPLICATION.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to be awarded a grant under paragraph (1), an eligible entity shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require, including a proposal to enhance and maintain urban forests.

"(B) APPLICATION ASSISTANCE.—A nonprofit organization that partners with an eligible entity may submit an application under subparagraph (A) on behalf of such eligible entity.

"(3) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall give priority to el-

igible entities that submit proposals under paragraph (2)(A) that—

"(A) enhance, maintain, or improve access to urban forests in—

"(i) typically underserved areas; or

"(ii) areas with low tree or environmental equity;

"(B) further a statewide assessment or local government initiative to enhance and maintain urban forests;

"(C) include a plan to mitigate risks from insects, disease, and non-native invasive species; and

"(D) include a plan to monitor and maintain new and existing trees.

"(4) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may provide technical assistance to local governments to assist such local governments with—

"(A) becoming eligible entities; and

"(B) proposals under paragraph (2)(A).

"(5) MATCHING FUNDS.—An eligible entity that receives a grant under this subsection shall contribute an amount of non-Federal funds (in cash or in kind) that is at least equal to the amount of the Federal funds received.

"(6) PREMIER TREE CITY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of the Urban Forests Act of 2021, and annually through 2030 thereafter, the Secretary shall designate as a 'Premier Tree City' one eligible entity awarded a grant under this subsection to recognize the superior efforts of such eligible entity in enhancing and maintaining urban forests.

"(7) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In addition to the amounts authorized under subsection (k), there are authorized to be appropriated $1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2030 to carry out this subsection.

"(8) ELIGIBLE ENTITY DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term 'eligible entity' means a local government that—

"(A) serves an urban and community area; and

"(B) a tree planting non-profit organization recognizes as having—

"(i) a tree board or department;

"(ii) a tree care ordinance;

"(iii) a community forestry program with an annual budget of at least $2 per capita; and

"(iv) an Arbor Day observance and proclamation.".

(b) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR URBAN WOOD UTILIZATION.—Section 9 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105), as amended by subsection (a), is further amended by inserting after subsection (h) the following:

"(i) PILOT PROJECT FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR URBAN WOOD UTILIZATION.—

"(1) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements with State and local governments, institutions of higher education, private or non-profit organizations, and other entities that support projects that create wood products from dead and fallen trees in urban and community areas.

"(2) PRIORITIZATION.—The Secretary shall prioritize entering into cooperative agreements that—

"(A) support local job creation;

"(B) are located in typically underserved areas or areas with low tree or environmental equity;

"(C) develop new uses for dead and fallen trees; and

"(D) improve urban forest health and resiliency.

"(3) TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may provide technical or financial assistance to entities that enter into a cooperative agreement under paragraph (1) to facilitate—

"(A) research on new uses for dead and fallen trees in urban and community areas; and

"(B) market expansion opportunities for products made from dead and fallen trees in urban and community areas.

"(4) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of the Urban Forests Act of 2021, the Secretary shall provide a report to the relevant committees on—

"(A) the implementation of this subsection; and

"(B) recommendations to encourage economic development and job creation by creating new markets for wood products made from urban timber sources.

"(5) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

"(A) DEAD AND FALLEN TREES.—The term 'dead and fallen trees' means trees that—

"(i) are dying or have died;

"(ii) have partially or completely fallen over; or

"(iii) have been negatively impacted by insects, disease, or weather-related disturbances.

"(B) RELEVANT COMMITTEES.—The term 'relevant committees' means—

"(i) the Committees on Natural Resources and Agriculture of the House of Representatives; and

"(ii) the Committees on Energy and Natural Resources and Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.".

(c) PROGRAM OF EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CLARIFICATION FOR CARBON STORAGE.—Section 9(d)(3) of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105(d)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C), by striking "and" after the semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (D), by inserting "and" after the semicolon; and

(3) by inserting at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(E) identifying opportunities to increase carbon storage through afforestation and scientific urban and community forestry management;".

(d) NATIONAL URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY ADVISORY COUNCIL.—Section 9(g) of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105(g)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(F) MEETINGS.—The Council established under this subsection shall meet not less than twice annually."; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(7) RENEWAL OF COUNCIL.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of the Urban Forests Act of 2021, the Secretary shall renew the Council.

"(B) TERMINATION.—The Council shall not terminate except as provided by an Act of Congress.".

(e) URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY ACTION PLAN CLARIFICATION FOR CARBON STORAGE.—Section

9(g)(3) of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105(g)(3)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(G) Recommendations for identifying opportunities to increase carbon storage through afforestation and scientific urban and community forestry management.".

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Subsection (k) of section 9 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105), as redesignated by subsection (a), is amended—

(1) by striking "$30,000,000" and inserting "$50,000,000"; and

(2) by striking "fiscal years 1991 through 1995" and inserting "fiscal years 2021 through 2025".

SEC. 3. CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTER URBAN FORESTRY DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.

Section 147(d) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3197(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(4) URBAN FORESTRY.—

"(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, the Secretary of Agriculture and the

Secretary of Labor shall jointly establish Civilian Conservation Centers in urban and community areas (as defined in subsection (j) of section 9 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105)).

"(B) FOCUS.—In addition to the training and skills required under paragraph (1), the Civilian Conservation Centers established pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall provide training on urban forestry issues, including urban forest conservation, management, maintenance, and monitoring.".

SEC. 4. FOREST INVENTORY 5-YEAR REPORTS.

Section 3(e)(3) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1642(e)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking "and" at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (C)—

(A) by inserting ", including forest carbon" before "over the previous"; and

(B) by striking the period at the end and inserting "; and"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(D) demonstrates the efforts taken by the Forest Service to—

"(i) conduct a strategic national forest inventory by measuring a statistically designed consistent historical series of field plots in combination with advanced technology to improve data, information, and estimates of precision; and

"(ii) use advanced geospatial technologies to improve the area and volume estimates described in clause (i), especially for sub-State regions and smaller areas.".

SEC. 5. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO COORDINATE URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAMS.

Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Labor, and Transportation and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to—

(1) identify strategies to increase equitable access to urban forests through existing programs and authorities;

(2) coordinate existing urban forestry programs;

(3) conduct research on the benefits of urban forests for air quality, heat island mitigation, energy burden reduction, and enhanced shading for heat-resilient housing and active transit; and

(4) conduct research on improving coordination between the agencies to address insects, disease, and non-native invasive species in urban and community areas.

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H.R. 2500, Forest Technology Enhancements for Conservation and Habitat Improvement Act (Forest TECH Improvement Act)

I

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2500

To direct the Secretary of Agriculture to assess the use of new technologies across reforestation activities, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 14, 2021

Mr. MOORE of Utah (for himself, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, and Mr. OWENS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

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A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Agriculture to assess the use of new technologies across reforestation activities, and for other purposes.

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 ''Forest Technology Enhancements for Conservation and Habitat Improvement Act'' or the ''Forest TECH Improvement Act''.

SEC. 2. REFORESTATION TECHNOLOGY PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PILOT PROGRAM.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of

this section, the Secretary of Agriculture, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, shall either establish a research, development, and testing pilot program or expand an applicable existing program to—

(1) assess new technologies, including unmanned aircraft system, geospatial, or remote sensing technologies, across all reforestation activities;

(2) accelerate the deployment and integration of such technologies into the operations of the Secretaries; and

(3) collaborate and cooperate with State, Tribal, and private geospatial information system organizations with respect to such technologies.

(b) EXPANDING USE OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretaries shall enter into an agreement to develop consistent protocols and plans for the use of unmanned aircraft system technologies for reforestation activities.

(c) DOMESTIC MANUFACTURE REQUIREMENT.—Any unmanned aircraft system technology or component of unmanned aircraft system technology used under this section shall be made and manufactured in the United States.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as prohibiting the Secretary of Ag-

riculture from using unmanned aircraft systems technologies in effect on the date of the enactment of this section.

(e) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''unmanned aircraft system'' has the meaning given the term in section 44801 of title 49, United States Code.

(f) SUNSET.—The authority to carry out this section shall terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this section.

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H.R. 2518, Producing Responsible Energy and Conservation Incentives and Solutions for the Environment Act (PRECISE Act)

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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2518

To leverage incentives for the adoption of costly precision agriculture technology, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 14, 2021

Mrs. HINSON (for herself, Mr. FEENSTRA, Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS, and Mrs. FISCHBACH) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

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A BILL

To leverage incentives for the adoption of costly precision agriculture technology, and for other purposes.

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 ''Producing Responsible Energy and Conservation Incentives and Solutions for the Environment Act'' or the ''PRECISE Act''.

SEC. 2. CONSERVATION LOAN AND LOAN GUARANTEE PROGRAM.

Section 304 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1924) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(3), by redesignating subparagraphs (F) and (G) as subparagraphs (G) and (H), respectively, and inserting after subparagraph (E) the following:

"(F) the adoption of precision agriculture practices, and the acquisition of precision agriculture technology;";

(2) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking "and";

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking the period and inserting "; and"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(4) producers who use the loans to adopt precision agriculture practices or acquire precision agriculture technology, including adoption or acquisition for the purpose of participating in the environmental quality incentives program under subchapter A of chapter 4 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985.";

(3) in subsection (e), by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

"(2) 90 percent of the principal amount of the loan in the case of—

"(A) a producer that is a qualified socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher or a beginning farmer or rancher; or

"(B) loans that are used for the purchase of precision agriculture technology."; and

(4) in subsection (f)—

(A) by striking "(f) ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.—The Secretary" and inserting the following:

"(f) ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.—

"(1) GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY.—The Secretary"; and

(B) by adding after and below the end the following:

"(2) COORDINATION WITH NRCS.—In making or guaranteeing loans under this section, the Secretary shall ensure that there is coordination between the Farm Service Agency and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.".

SEC. 3. ASSISTANCE TO RURAL ENTITIES.

Section 310B(a)(2) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) by striking "and" at the end of subparagraph (C);

(2) by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (D) and inserting "; and"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(E) expanding precision agriculture practices, including by financing equipment and farm-wide broadband connectivity, in order to promote best-practices, reduce costs, and improve the environment.".

SEC. 4. ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 1240A(6)(B)(v) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–1(6)(B)(v)) is amended by inserting "(including the adoption of precision agriculture practices and the acquisition of precision agriculture technology)" after "planning".

(b) PAYMENTS.—

(1) OTHER PAYMENTS.—Section 1240B(d)(6) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(d)(6)) is amended—

(A) by striking "A producer shall" and inserting the following:

"(A) PAYMENTS UNDER THIS SUBTITLE.—A producer shall"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

"(B) CONSERVATION LOAN AND LOAN GUARANTEE PROGRAM PAYMENTS.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—A producer receiving payments for practices on eligible land under the program may also receive a loan or loan guarantee under section 304 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act to cover costs for same practices on the same land.

"(ii) NOTICE TO PRODUCER.—The Secretary shall inform a producer participating in the program in writing of the availability of a loan or loan guarantee under section 304 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act as it relates to costs of implementing practices under this program.".

(2) INCREASED PAYMENTS FOR HIGH-PRIORITY PRACTICES.—Section 1240B(d)(7) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(d)(7)) is amended, in the subsection heading, by inserting "STATE-DETERMINED" before "HIGH-PRIORITY".

(3) INCREASED PAYMENTS FOR PRECISION AGRICULTURE.—Section 1240B(d) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(8) INCREASED PAYMENTS FOR PRECISION AGRICULTURE.—Notwithstanding paragraph (2), the Secretary may increase the amount that would otherwise be provided for a practice under this subsection to not more than 90 percent of the costs associated with adopting precision agriculture practices and acquiring precision agriculture technology.".

(c) CONSERVATION INCENTIVE CONTRACTS.—Section 1240B(j)(2)(A)(i) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(j)(3)(A)(i)) is amended by inserting "(which may include the adoption of precision agriculture practices and the acquisition of precision agriculture technology)" after "incentive practices".

SEC. 5. CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM.

(a) CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PAYMENTS.—Section 1240L(c)(3) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–24(c)(3)) is amended to read as follows:

"(3) EXCLUSIONS.—A payment to a producer under this subsection shall not be provided for conservation activities for which there is no cost incurred or income forgone by the producer.".

(b) SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENTS FOR RESOURCE-CONSERVING CROP ROTATIONS AND ADVANCED GRAZING MANAGEMENT.—Section 1240L(d) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–24(d)) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by striking ''AND ADVANCED GRAZING MANAGEMENT'' and inserting '', ADVANCED GRAZING MANAGEMENT, AND PRECISION AGRICULTURE'';

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''; or'' and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) precision agriculture.''; and

(3) in paragraph (3), by striking ''or advanced grazing management'' and inserting '', advanced grazing management, or precision agriculture''.

SEC. 6. DELIVERY OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

Section 1242(f) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3842(f)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(6) SOIL HEALTH PLANNING.—The Secretary shall emphasize the use of third-party providers in providing technical assistance for soil health planning, including planning related to the use of cover crops, precision conservation management, com-

1 prehensive nutrient management planning, and other
2 innovative plans.''.

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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2562

To address the nationwide shortage of tree seedlings, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 15, 2021

Mr. BENTZ (for himself, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. NEWHOUSE, and Mr. GOSAR) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

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A BILL

To address the nationwide shortage of tree seedlings, and for other purposes.

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 ''Solving Our Shortages for Seedlings Act'' or the ''SOS for Seedlings Act''.

SEC. 2. SEEDLING STRATEGY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall develop and implement a national strategy to in-

crease the capacity of Federal, State, Tribal, and private nurseries to address the nationwide shortage of tree seedlings.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) be based on the best available science and data; and

(2) identify and address—

(A) regional seedling shortages of bareroot and container tree seedlings;

(B) regional reforestation opportunities and the seedling supply necessary to fulfill such opportunities;

(C) opportunities to enhance seedling diversity and close gaps in seed inventories; and

(D) barriers to expanding, enhancing, or creating new infrastructure to increase nursery capacity.

SEC. 3. FEDERAL NURSERIES.

Section 2 of the Act of June 9, 1930 (16 U.S.C. 576a; commonly known as the ''Knutson-Vandenberg Act''), is amended by striking ''each fiscal year after year ending June 30, 1934, not to exceed $400,000,'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2021 through 2030, $25,000,000,''.

SEC. 4. LOAN PROGRAM FOR STATE, TRIBAL, AND PRIVATE NURSERIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall carry out a loan program to make or guarantee qualified nursery loans to eligible entities under this section.

(b) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a qualified nursery loan or loan guarantee under this section, an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary of Agriculture an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require, including a plan to maintain the genetic and physical quality of seedlings of the eligible entity.

(c) PRIORITY.—In making qualified nursery loans or loan guarantees under this section, the Secretary of Agriculture shall give priority to eligible entities that—

(1) are small businesses, in particular small businesses located in rural areas;

(2) create or support jobs, particularly in rural areas; and

(3) serve regions with high demand for reforestation.

(d) QUALIFIED NURSERY PROJECT.—A loan or loan guarantee under this section may only be used to carry out a qualified nursery project to—

(1) develop, expand, enhance, or improve nursery capacity or infrastructure;

(2) establish nurseries; or

(3) develop or implement quality control measures at nurseries.

(e) LOAN AND LOAN GUARANTEE TERMS.—

(1) AMOUNT GUARANTEED.—The portion of a loan that the Secretary of Agriculture may guarantee under this section may not be greater than 80 percent of the principal amount of such loan.

(2) REPAYMENT.—The period of repayment for a loan made under this section shall not exceed 20 years.

(f) ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.—

(1) LIMITATION ON AUTHORITY.—The total amount of qualified nursery loans made or guaranteed under this section by the Secretary may not exceed $1,000,000,000.

(2) DISTRIBUTION.—The Secretary shall ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, that loans made or guaranteed under this section are distributed across diverse geographic regions.

(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ''eligible entity'' means—

(A) a State, Tribal, or local government; or

(B) a domestic private, non-profit, or cooperative organization.

(2) NURSERY.—The term "'nursery'' means a State, Tribal, or local government or private owned facility that grows, stores, extracts, or monitors bareroot or container tree seedlings.

(3) QUALIFIED NURSERY LOAN.—The term ''qualified nursery loan'' means a low-interest loan, the proceeds of which are used to cover the costs to the borrower of carrying out a qualified nursery project described in subsection (d).

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H.R. 2581, Biochar Innovations and Opportunities for Conservation, Health, and Advancements in Research Act of 2021 (BIOCHAR Act of 2021)

AUTHENTICATED
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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2581

To establish a biochar demonstration project and biochar grant program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 15, 2021

Ms. HERRELL (for herself, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. NEWHOUSE, and Mr. GOSAR) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, 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

---

A BILL

To establish a biochar demonstration project and biochar grant program, and for other purposes.

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 ''Biochar Innovations and Opportunities for Conservation, Health, and Advancements in Research Act of 2021'' or the ''BIOCHAR Act of 2021''.

SEC. 2. BIOCHAR DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.

(a) DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretaries shall establish a program to enter into partnerships with eligible entities to carry out demonstration projects to support the development and commercialization of biochar in accordance with this subsection.

(B) LOCATION OF DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—The Secretaries shall, to the maximum extent practicable, establish at least one biochar demonstration project in each Forest Service region.

(2) PROPOSALS.—To be eligible to enter into a partnership to carry out a biochar demonstration project under paragraph (1)(A), an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretaries a proposal at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretaries may require.

(3) PRIORITY.—In selecting proposals under paragraph (2), the Secretaries shall give priority to partnering with eligible entities that submit proposals to carry out biochar demonstration projects that—

(A) have the most carbon sequestration potential;

(B) will create new jobs and contribute to local economies, particularly in rural areas;

(C) will demonstrate—

(i) new and innovative uses of biochar;

(ii) viable markets for cost effective biochar-based products;

(iii) the ecosystem services of biochar;

(iv) the benefits of biochar to restore forest heath and resiliency, including for forest soils and watersheds; or

(v) any combination of purposes specified in clauses (i) through (iv);

(D) are located in local markets that have the greatest need for the biochar production units due to—

(i) nearby lands identified as having high or very high or extreme risk of wildfire;

(ii) availability of sufficient quantities of feedstocks; or

(iii) a high level of demand for biochar or other commercial byproducts of biochar; or

(E) any combination of purposes specified in subparagraphs (A) through (D).

(4) USE OF FUNDS.—In carrying out the program established under paragraph (1)(A), the Secretaries may enter into partnerships and provide funding to carry out demonstration projects that—

(A) acquire and test various feedstocks and their efficacy;

(B) develop and optimize commercially and technologically viable biochar production units, including mobile and permanent units;

(C) demonstrate the production of biochar from forest residues and the use of biochar to restore forest health and resiliency;

(D) build, expand, or establish biochar facilities;

(E) conduct research on new and innovative uses of biochar or demonstrate cost-effective market opportunities for biochar and biochar-based products;

(F) carry out any other activities the Secretaries determine appropriate; or

(G) any combination of the purposes specified in subparagraphs (A) through (F).

(5) FEEDSTOCK REQUIREMENTS.—To the maximum extent practicable, a biochar demonstration project under this subsection shall, with respect to the feedstock used under such project, derive at least 50 percent of such feedstock from forest thinning and management activities, including mill residues, conducted on National Forest System lands.

(6) REVIEW OF BIOCHAR DEMONSTRATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries shall conduct regionally specific research, including economic analyses and life-cycle assessments, on the biochar produced from the demonstration projects under this subsection, including—

(i) the effects of such biochar on—

(I) forest health and resiliency;

(II) carbon capture and sequestration, including increasing soil carbon in the short-term and long-term;

(III) productivity, reduced input costs, and water retention in agricultural practices;

(IV) soil and grassland health for grazing activities, including grazing activities on Federal land;

(V) environmental remediation activities, including abandoned mine land remediation; and

(VI) other ecosystem services of biochar;

(ii) the efficacy of biochar as a co-product of biofuels or in biochemicals; and

(iii) whether biochar can effectively be used to produce any other technologically and commercially viable outcome.

(B) COORDINATION.—The Secretaries shall, to the maximum extent practicable, provide data, analysis, and other relevant information collected under subparagraph (A) to eligible institutions conducting research and development activities on biochar pursuant to receiving a grant under subsection (b).

(7) LIMITATION ON FUNDING FOR ESTABLISHING BIOCHAR FACILITIES.—In the case of an eligible entity that enters in to a partnership to carry out a biochar demonstration project under this subsection and seeks to establish a biochar facility under such demonstration project, the Secretaries may not provide funding to such eligible entity in an

amount greater than 35 percent of the capital cost of establishing such biochar facility.

(b) BIOCHAR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall establish an applied biochar research and development grant program to make competitive grants to eligible institutions to carry out the activities described in paragraph (3).

(2) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection, an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary a proposal at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(3) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible institution that receives a grant under this subsection shall use the grant funds to conduct applied research on—

(A) the effect of biochar on forest health and resiliency, accounting for variations in biochar, soil, climate, and other factors;

(B) the effect of biochar on soil health and water retention, accounting for variations in biochar, soil, climate, and other factors;

(C) the long-term carbon sequestration potential of biochar;

(D) the best management practices of biochar and biochar based-products to—

(i) maximize carbon sequestration benefits; and

(ii) maximize the commercial viability and application of such products in forestry, agriculture, environmental remediation, water quality improvement, and other uses;

(E) the regional uses of biochar to increase productivity and profitability, including—

(i) uses in agriculture and environmental remediation; and

(ii) use as a co-product in fuel production;

(F) new and innovative uses from biochar byproducts; and

(G) opportunities to expand markets for biochar and create jobs, particularly in rural areas.

(c) REPORTS.—

(1) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretaries shall submit a report to Congress that—

(A) includes policy and program recommendations to improve the widespread use of biochar;

(B) identifies the areas of research needed to advance biochar commercialization; and

(C) identifies barriers to further biochar commercialization, including permitting and siting considerations.

(2) PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL BUDGET REQUEST.—Beginning 2 years after the date of the enactment of this section and annually until the date described in subsection (d), the Secretaries shall include in the budget materials submitted to Congress in support of the President's annual budget request (submitted to Congress pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code) for each fiscal year a report on the status of the demonstration projects carried out under subsection (a) and the research and development grants carried out under subsection (b).

(d) SUNSET.—The authority to carry out this section shall terminate on the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of this section.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) BIOCHAR.—The term "biochar" means carbonized biomass produced by converting feedstock

through reductive thermal processing for non-fuel uses.

(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term "eligible entity" means—

(A) State, local, and Tribal governments;

(B) eligible institutions; and

(C) private, non-private, or cooperative entities.

(3) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term "eligible institution" means land-grant colleges and universities, including institutions eligible for funding under the—

(A) Act of July 2, 1862;

(B) Act of August 30, 1890, including Tuskegee University;

(C) Public Law 87–788 (commonly known as the "McIntire-Stennis Act of 1962"); or

(D) Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note).

(4) FEEDSTOCK.—The term "feedstock" means excess biomass in the form of plant matter or materials that serves as the raw material for the production of biochar.

(5) SECRETARIES.—The term "Secretaries" means—

(A) the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service; and

(B) the Secretary of Energy, acting through the Director of the Office of Science.

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H.R. 2639, Trillion Trees Act

I

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2639

To establish forest conservation practices through management, reforestation, and utilization which lead to the sequestration of greenhouse gases, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 19, 2021

Mr. WESTERMAN (for himself, Mr. MCCARTHY, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. ARMSTRONG, Mr. BACON, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. BARR, Mr. BENTZ, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BURCHETT, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CARL, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Ms. CHENEY, Mr. COLE, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. CURTIS, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. FISCHBACH, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Ms. FOXX, Mr. FULCHER, Mr. GONZALEZ of Ohio, Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, Mr. GOSAR, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Ms. HERRELL, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. HILL, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mrs. KIM of California, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. LATTA, Mrs. LESKO, Mr. LUCAS, Ms. MACE, Ms. MALLIOTAKIS, Mr. MANN, Mr. MCCAUL, Mrs. RODGERS of Washington, Mr. MEIJER, Mr. MEUSER, Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS, Mr. MOORE of Utah, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. NUNES, Mr. OBERNOLTE, Mr. OWENS, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. STAUBER, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. STEWART, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. TIFFANY, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. YOUNG, and Mr. RESCHENTHALER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, Natural Resources, Ways and Means, Science, Space, and Technology, and Education and Labor, 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

A BILL

To establish forest conservation practices through management, reforestation, and utilization which lead to the sequestration of greenhouse gases, 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; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 "Trillion Trees Act".

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Definitions.

TITLE I—CARBON SEQUESTRATION THROUGH REFORESTATION ACTIVITIES

Subtitle A—Reforestation Goals

Sec. 101. National forest carbon stock targets.
Sec. 102. Trillion Trees Task Force.
Sec. 103. Philanthropic Reforestation Advisory Council.
Sec. 104. Trillion Trees Challenge Fund.
Sec. 105. Renewable resource assessment update and lifecycle analysis.
Sec. 106. Forest inventory and analysis.
Sec. 107. National Forest Foundation activities.

Subtitle B—Regeneration

Sec. 111. Reforestation programs.
Sec. 112. Reforestation trust fund.
Sec. 113. Solving shortages for seedlings.
Sec. 114. Healthy forest reserve program.
Sec. 115. Forestry education and workforce development grant program.
Sec. 116. Civilian Conservation Centers reforestation activities.
Sec. 117. Forest technology enhancements for conservation and habitat improvement.

Subtitle C—Urban Forests

Sec. 121. Urban and community forestry assistance.
Sec. 122. Civilian Conservation Center urban forestry demonstration program.

Sec. 123. Memorandum of understanding to coordinate urban forestry programs.

Subtitle D—International Forests

Sec. 131. Sense of Congress.
Sec. 132. International Forest Foundation.
Sec. 133. International engagement.
Sec. 134. Global climate change program.
Sec. 135. International forestry cooperation.
Sec. 136. Modifications to authorities relating to tropical forests.

TITLE II—CARBON SEQUESTRATION THROUGH IMPROVED FOREST MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Sec. 201. Land use planning; supplements to programmatic environmental impact statements.
Sec. 202. Forest carbon stock on State and private forests.
Sec. 203. Good neighbor authority.
Sec. 204. Research and development programs.

TITLE III—MARKET INCENTIVES FOR CARBON SEQUESTRATION

Sec. 301. Biochar demonstration project and grant program.
Sec. 302. Sustainable building and residence credit.
Sec. 303. Clarification of research and development program for cellulosic biochemical and bioplastics.
Sec. 304. Tribal and Alaska Native biomass demonstration project extension.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) AFFORESTATION.—The term ''afforestation'' means a project or activity to establish a forest or stand of native trees in an ecosystem where there is not a forest or tree cover, consistent with the best available science.

(2) FOREST CARBON FLUX.—The term ''forest carbon flux'' means the net annual change in carbon residing within forest carbon pools and in forest carbon stock.

(3) FOREST CARBON POOLS.—The term ''forest carbon pools'' means the individual, nonoverlapping

categories where forest carbon resides and includes—

(A) aboveground biomass, belowground biomass, dead wood, litter, and mineral and organic soils in forest ecosystems, woodlands, and trees outside forests including urban trees; and

(B) harvested wood products (in use or in solid waste disposal sites).

(4) FOREST CARBON STOCK.—The term ''forest carbon stock'' means the absolute quantity of carbon stored within all forest carbon pools.

(5) FOREST PLAN.—The term ''forest plan'' means—

(A) a land use plan prepared by the Bureau of Land Management for public lands pursuant to section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1712); or

(B) a land and resource management plan prepared by the Forest Service for a unit of the National Forest System pursuant to section 6 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604).

(6) FOREST MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY.—The term ''forest management activity'' means a project or activity carried out by the Secretary concerned on National Forest System lands or public lands consistent with the forest plan covering the lands.

(7) NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—The term ''National Forest System'' has the meaning given that term in section 11(a) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1609(a)).

(8) PUBLIC LANDS.—The term ''public lands'' has the meaning given that term in section 103 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702).

(9) REFORESTATION.—The term ''reforestation'' means the act of renewing tree cover by establishing young trees through natural regeneration, natural regeneration with site preparation, or planting.

(10) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Agriculture.

(11) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—The term ''Secretary concerned'' means—

(A) the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to National Forest System lands; and

(B) the Secretary of the Interior, with respect to public lands.

(12) SECRETARIES.—The term "Secretaries" means the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Interior.

TITLE I—CARBON SEQUESTRATION THROUGH REFORESTATION ACTIVITIES

Subtitle A—Reforestation Goals

SEC. 101. NATIONAL FOREST CARBON STOCK TARGETS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall set targets for increased forest carbon stock for the purposes of sequestering and storing carbon while meeting other resource management objectives. Such targets shall—

(1) be based on the best available scientific information;

(2) consider both natural and artificial regeneration, with an emphasis on the regeneration of native species;

(3) be established at levels, consistent with other statutory management purposes on Federal lands, which represent the optimal feasible and sustainable increase in the forest carbon stock private, State, Tribal, and Federal landowners can achieve

by January 1, 2030, and every 10 years thereafter through January 1, 2100;

(4) be informed by the report provided by the Trillion Trees Task Force established in section 102;

(5) incorporate data from the forest inventory and analysis program under section 3(e) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1642(e)) and other applicable Federal agency data;

(6) be consistent with multiple use and sustained yield requirements, policies, and objectives on National Forest, State, Tribal, and other public or private land;

(7) be consistent with other benefits related to forest function and health including soil health and productivity, wildlife habitat and biodiversity, improved air and water quality, job creation, outdoor recreation, and forest products and byproducts;

(8) be established at levels that account for—

(A) long-term and short-term carbon sequestration and storage;

(B) forest carbon flux; and

(C) assessments of existing forested acres, considering variations in landscape;

(9) incorporate input from State, Tribal, and local stakeholders and members of the public; and

(10) be published in the Federal Register, together with a statement of the basis and justification for such targets.

(b) NATURAL REGENERATION.—In this subsection, the term ''natural regeneration'' means the establishment of a tree or tree age class from natural seedling, sprouting, or suckering, in accordance with the management objectives of an applicable forest plan.

(c) CLARIFICATION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to establish any requirements with respect to private landowners.

SEC. 102. TRILLION TREES TASK FORCE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall establish the Trillion Trees Task Force (in this section referred to as the ''task force'') to assist the Secretary with meeting the targets and purposes established under section 101(a).

(b) DUTIES OF THE TASK FORCE.—

(1) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date the task force is established under subsection (a), the task force shall submit to the Secretary a report that includes—

(A) recommendations for the national forest carbon stock targets established under section 101;

(B) plant growth targets, including long-term growth targets, required to achieve the national forest carbon stock targets established under section 101, taking into account—

(i) forest carbon flux;

(ii) multiple use and sustained yield requirements, policies, and objectives;

(iii) natural regeneration;

(iv) adverse natural and anthropogenic disturbances; and

(v) other factors impacting domestic forestlands; and

(C) program and policy recommendations designed to achieve the national forest carbon stock targets established under section 101, while—

(i) still maintaining sustainable levels of board feet harvested from public lands;

(ii) promoting forest products markets, including for new and innovative forest products and byproducts; and

(iii) improving the natural regeneration of public and private forests (with an emphasis on the regeneration of native species) through active forest management.

(2) OVERSIGHT.—Following the submission of the report described in paragraph (1), the task force shall provide continued oversight of the implementation of the national forest carbon stock targets, and provide the Secretary with—

(A) yearly reports on the progress made towards achieving the national forest carbon stock targets established under section 101; and

(B) ongoing program and policy recommendations designed to achieve the national forest carbon stock targets established under section 101.

(3) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—The task force shall—

(A) submit to Congress a copy of the report under paragraph (1); and

(B) not later than 2 years after the report under paragraph (1) is submitted to the Secretary and Congress, and every 5 years thereafter, submit a report to Congress on the imple-

mentation of, and progress towards meeting, the targets set under section 101.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) APPOINTMENT.—The task force shall consist of 15 ex officio members and 15 discretionary members.

(A) EX OFFICIO MEMBERS.—The President shall appoint 15 representatives from the executive branch.

(B) DISCRETIONARY MEMBERS.—The Secretary shall appoint 1 discretionary member from each of the following:

(i) A State land management agency.

(ii) A private forest landowner with total land holdings of greater than 1,000,000 acres.

(iii) A private forest landowner with total land holdings of less than 1,000,000 acres.

(iv) A family forest landowner.

(v) A pulp or paper manufacturer which receives wood fiber directly or indirectly from Federal timber for a portion of their fiber supply.

(vi) A sawmill or engineered wood producer which relies on the sale of Federal timber for at least 25 percent of their fiber supply.

(vii) An energy company, cooperative, pellet fuel producer, or utility which provides customers with energy at least partially derived from the combustion of wood biomass.

(viii) A land conservation nonprofit with previous experience in collaborative forestland restoration projects greater than 100,000 acres.

(ix) A Tribal land management agency or resource management organization with previous experience managing Tribal timberland.

(x) A wildlife conservation nonprofit with previous experience in collaborative forestland restoration projects greater than 100,000 acres.

(xi) An entity with experience in wildlife habitat restoration projects less than 100,000 acres.

(xii) An urban or community resource conservation organization, with previous experience in urban and community reforestation projects.

(xiii) An organization with previous experience in projects of any size that increase public access or outdoor recreation opportunities on National Forest System lands.

(xiv) A company or organization with experience in sustainable buildings or mass timber construction.

(xv) An academic or scientific institution with experience researching forest carbon stock in domestic forests.

(2) DISCRETIONARY MEMBER TERMS.—

(A) APPOINTMENT AND REMOVAL.—Each discretionary member appointed to the task force under paragraph (1)(B) may be appointed and removed at the discretion of the Secretary.

(B) VACANCY.—A discretionary member that is removed under subparagraph (A) shall be replaced not later than 6 months after such removal.

(3) QUORUM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A quorum shall consist of 10 ex officio members and 10 discretionary members of the task force.

(B) DECISIONS.—Decisions of the task force shall be made by majority vote, a quorum being present.

(4) PRESERVATION OF PUBLIC ADVISORY STATUS.—No individual may be appointed to the task force as a discretionary member under paragraph (1)(B) while serving as an officer or employee of the Federal Government.

(5) PAY AND EXPENSES.—

(A) COMPENSATION.—

(i) FEDERAL EMPLOYEE MEMBERS.—All members of the task force who are officers or employees of the United States shall serve without compensation in addition to that received for their services as officers or employees of the United States.

(ii) NON-FEDERAL EMPLOYEE MEMBERS.—All members of the task force not described in clause (i) shall serve without compensation.

(B) REIMBURSEMENT.—A member of the task force may be reimbursed for travel and

lodging incurred while attending a meeting of the task force or any other meeting of members approved for reimbursement by the task force in the same amounts and under the same conditions as Federal employees under section 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

(C) EXPENSES.—The expenses of the task force that the Secretary determines to be reasonable and appropriate shall be paid by the Secretary.

(6) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT, TECHNICAL SERVICES, AND STAFF SUPPORT.—The Secretary shall make personnel of the Department of Agriculture available to the task force for administrative support, technical services, and staff support that the Secretary determines necessary to carry out this section.

(d) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the task force.

SEC. 103. PHILANTHROPIC REFORESTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby established the Philanthropic Reforestation Advisory Council (in this

1 section referred to as the ''Advisory Council'') to advise
2 the Secretary on—
3 (1) increasing private charitable investment in
4 reforestation and afforestation activities; and
5 (2) tracking private charitable reforestation and
6 afforestation pledges and metrics.
7 (b) DUTIES OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL.—
8 (1) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the
9 date of the enactment of this section, the Advisory
10 Council shall submit to the Secretary a report that
11 includes recommendations for—
12 (A) increasing and encouraging private
13 charitable investments in reforestation and
14 afforestation activities; and
15 (B) developing a platform to track private
16 charitable tree planting pledges and metrics.
17 (2) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall con-
18 sult with the Advisory Council when developing the
19 list of projects to be funded from the Trillion Trees
20 Challenge Fund established under section 104.
21 (3) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—The Advisory
22 Council shall annually submit to Congress—
23 (A) a copy of the report under paragraph
24 (1); and

(B) a list of projects the Advisory Council recommended be funded under paragraph (2) and whether or not those projects were funded.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) APPOINTMENT.—The Advisory Council shall consist of 2 ex officio members and 15 discretionary members.

(A) EX OFFICIO MEMBERS.—The ex officio members of the Advisory Council, or their designees, are—

(i) the Secretary of Agriculture; and

(ii) the Secretary of the Interior.

(B) DISCRETIONARY MEMBERS.—The Secretary shall appoint discretionary members from each of the following:

(i) One from each of not more than 5 companies or corporations that have made public charitable tree planting pledges.

(ii) One from each of not more than 5 philanthropic organizations with experience in financing reforestation and afforestation activities.

(iii) One from each of not more than 5 non-profit organizations with experience in reforestation and afforestation activities.

(2) DISCRETIONARY MEMBER TERMS.—Each discretionary member appointed to the Advisory Council under paragraph (1)(B) may be appointed and removed at the discretion of the Secretary.

(3) QUORUM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A quorum shall consist of 12 members of the Advisory Council.

(B) DECISIONS.—Decisions of the Advisory Council shall be made by majority vote, a quorum being present.

(4) PRESERVATION OF PUBLIC ADVISORY STATUS.—No individual may be appointed to the Advisory Council as a discretionary member under paragraph (1)(B) while serving as an officer or employee of the Federal Government.

(5) PAY AND EXPENSES.—

(A) COMPENSATION.—

(i) FEDERAL EMPLOYEE MEMBERS.—All members of the Advisory Council who are officers or employees of the United States shall serve without compensation in addition to that received for their services as officers or employees of the United States.

(ii) NON-FEDERAL EMPLOYEE MEMBERS.—All members of the Advisory Council not described in clause (i) shall serve without compensation.

(B) REIMBURSEMENT.—A member of the Advisory Council may be reimbursed for travel and lodging incurred while attending a meeting of the Advisory Council or any other meeting of members approved for reimbursement by the Advisory Council in the same amounts and under the same conditions as Federal employees under section 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

(C) EXPENSES.—The expenses of the Advisory Council that the Secretary determines to be reasonable and appropriate shall be paid by the Secretary.

(6) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT, TECHNICAL SERVICES, AND STAFF SUPPORT.—The Secretary shall make personnel of the Department of Agriculture available to the Advisory Council for administrative support, technical services, and staff support that the Secretary determines necessary to carry out this section.

(7) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to Advisory Council.

SEC. 104. TRILLION TREES CHALLENGE FUND.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is established in the Treasury a fund to be known as the ''Trillion Trees Challenge Fund''.

(2) DEPOSITS.—For each of fiscal years 2021 through 2030, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, $10,000,000, which shall be deposited into the Trillion Trees Challenge Fund and remain available until expended.

(3) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts deposited into the Trillion Trees Challenge Fund—

(A) shall be used by the Secretary to make grants, in consultation with the Philanthropic Reforestation Advisory Council, to eligible entities to carry out eligible projects described in subsection (b)(1); and

(B) may only be used if matched by the eligible entity carrying out the eligible project, on at least a 1-to-1 basis, by non-Federal funds.

(4) PUBLIC DONATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of making grants under this section, the Secretary may accept cash or in-kind donations.

(B) CREDITS TO FUND.—Any cash donation accepted pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall be credited to, and form a part of, the Fund.

(b) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible project described in this paragraph is an activity carried out by an eligible entity related to reforestation or conserving, managing, maintaining, and monitoring trees on State, Tribal, municipal, or private lands for the purpose of increasing forest carbon stock.

(2) LIST.—The Secretary shall—

(A) annually develop a list of eligible projects to be funded from the Trillion Trees Challenge Fund, in consultation with the Philanthropic Reforestation Advisory Council; and

(B) submit the list developed pursuant to subparagraph (A) to—

(i) the Committees on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate; and

(ii) the Committees on Agriculture and Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; and

(C) publish such list annually in the Federal Register.

(3) UPDATES.—The Secretary may add an eligible project to the list described in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2) and submit such addition in accordance with subparagraph (B) of such paragraph.

(4) PROPOSALS.—To be eligible to receive funding under this section, an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary a proposal at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(c) SUMMARY TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall include in the budget materials submitted to Congress in support of the President's annual budget request (submitted to Congress pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code) for each fiscal year a summary of the status and funding of eligible projects under this section.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term "eligible entity" means—

(A) a State, local, or Tribal government;

(B) a non-profit organization or educational institution;

(C) an individual; or

(D) other non-Federal entities, as determined by the Secretary.

(2) PHILANTHROPIC REFORESTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL.—The term ''Philanthropic Reforestation Advisory Council'' means to the Advisory Council established under section 103 of the Trillion Trees Act.

SEC. 105. RENEWABLE RESOURCE ASSESSMENT UPDATE AND LIFECYCLE ANALYSIS.

(a) RENEWABLE RESOURCE ASSESSMENT.—Section 3 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1601) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (5), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) by striking paragraph (6) and inserting the following:

''(6) an analysis of the rural and urban forestry opportunities to mitigate the buildup of atmospheric carbon, reduce the risk of global climate change, capture and store atmospheric carbon, and optimize

forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) in domestic forests; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(7) an analysis of the forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) potential of domestic forests based upon the lifecycle analysis established under section 105(c) of the Trillion Trees Act.'';

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) the potential to increase forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) through the utilization of harvested wood products, including recommendations to Congress for actions which would lead to increased forest carbon stock through the utilization of such materials.''; and

(3) in the first subsection (d), by inserting ''and other stakeholders'' after ''agencies''.

(b) RENEWABLE RESOURCE PROGRAM.—Section 4 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1602) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence—

(A) by inserting ''Nation's forests, including the'' before ''National Forest System'';

(B) by inserting ''and Congress'' after ''transmitted to the President''; and

(C) by inserting ''and development programs'' after ''for research'';

(2) by striking the ''The Program shall include, but not be limited to'' and inserting ''The Program shall be prepared and transmitted to the President and Congress not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of the Trillion Trees Act and every 2 years thereafter, and shall include, but not be limited to'';

(3) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

''(1) an inventory of specific investment needs and opportunities for both public and private program investments that—

''(A) differentiates between—

"(i) activities which are of a capital nature and those which are of an operational nature; and

"(ii) investments required to support existing policies and programs and those required to create and implement new policies and programs; and

"(B) identifies—

"(i) Federal and State policies that, if left unchanged in the succeeding 50 years, would create undesirable impacts on forests and communities; and

"(ii) alternatives to the policies described in clause (i) that if implemented in the 10 succeeding years would mitigate such undesirable impacts;";

(4) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by inserting "and policy options" after "Program outputs";

(B) by inserting "or State governments" after "Federal Government";

(5) in paragraph (3), by inserting "and implementation of identified policy options" after "Program opportunities";

(6) in paragraph (5)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting ''and policy options'' before ''which'';

(B) in subparagraph (B), by inserting ''and services'' after ''products'';

(C) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''state national goals'' and inserting ''State national goals that the policy options are intended to achieve and'';

(D) in subparagraph (E), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(E) in subparagraph (F)—

(i) by inserting ''the health and resiliency of forests, forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act), and'' before ''forest and rangeland'' ; and

(ii) by striking the period and inserting ''; and''; and

(F) by adding at the end the following:

''(G) account for the effects of trees in urban and community areas in addition to forests in rural areas.''.

(c) LIFECYCLE ANALYSIS.—

(1) LIFECYCLE STORAGE MODEL.—As a part of the assessment established under section 3 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1601) the Secretary shall develop interdisciplinary computational models using all available data to—

(A) evaluate the lifecycle forest carbon stock potential associated with domestic forestland; and

(B) provide projections, scenario planning, and policy options associated with such models.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the model under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consider—

(A) the best available science;

(B) data collected through the forest inventory and analysis program under section 3(e) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1642(e));

(C) forest carbon stock and the rate of carbon storage and sequestration in forest carbon pools;

(D) the net carbon storage and sequestration of active forest management;

(E) the rate of carbon storage and sequestration in varying forests based on the climate the forest is located in, the average age of stands, and rate of tree mortality;

(F) the net amount of carbon released through catastrophic wildfire, disease and insect infestations, and other disturbances that result in tree mortality;

(G) the net carbon stored and sequestered through the manufacture of harvested wood products;

(H) the net carbon stored and sequestered through a sustainable cycle of harvest and regeneration;

(I) forest carbon flux; and

(J) other factors as determined by the Secretary.

(3) VALIDATION PROGRAM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out a program for validation and independent testing of the lifecycle models developed under paragraph (1).

(B) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the validation program under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall—

(i) regularly perform retrospective assessments comparing model predictions to field data on the carbon stored in forests; and

(ii) require independent evaluation and comparison of lifecycle models developed under paragraph (1) against existing models, and enable empirical testing of hypotheses regarding the net effects on land and atmospheric carbon stocks and other greenhouse gas impacts.

(4) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 2 years thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(A) the findings of the analysis conducted using the model developed under paragraph (1);

(B) recent trends and current forest carbon stock, forest carbon pools, and forest carbon flux as well as projections of forest carbon stock, forest carbon pools, and forest carbon flux for the succeeding 50 years; and

(C) scenario planning for Federal, State, Tribal, local, and private landowners that ana-

lyzes different policy options and their associated effects on lifecycle forest carbon stock.

SEC. 106. FOREST INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS.

(a) 5-YEAR REPORTS.—Section 3(e)(3) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1642(e)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (C), by inserting '', forest carbon,'' after ''forest health conditions and trends'';

(3) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period and inserting ''paragraph; and''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(D) demonstrates the Agency's efforts to—

''(i) conduct a strategic national forest inventory by measuring a statistically designed consistent historical series of field plots in combination with advanced technology to improve data, information, and estimates of precision; and

''(ii) use advanced geospatial technologies to improve such area and volume estimates, especially for sub-State regions and smaller areas.''.

(b) MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING.—In preparing, publishing, and making available reports under section 3(e)(3) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1642(e)(3)), as amended by subsection (a), the Secretary may enter into memorandums of understanding with other Federal agencies or departments to improve the use and integration of advanced remote sensing and geospatial technologies in the forest inventory and analysis program under such section.

SEC. 107. NATIONAL FOREST FOUNDATION ACTIVITIES.

(a) ADDING FOREST CARBON STOCK TO THE PURPOSES OF THE NATIONAL FOREST FOUNDATION.—The National Forest Foundation Act (16 U.S.C. 583j et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 402(b)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) encourage, accept, and administer private gifts of money and of real and personal property for the benefit of, or in connection with, the targets for

optimizing forest carbon stock established under section 101 of the 'Trillion Trees Act'; and

"(5) carry out the National Medal for Forest Restoration under section 410.";

(2) in section 405—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking "410" and inserting "412"; and

(B) in subsection (b), by striking "410" and inserting "412";

(3) by redesignating section 410 as section 412; and

(4) by inserting after section 409 the following:

"SEC. 410. NATIONAL MEDAL FOR FOREST RESTORATION.

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Foundation shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, establish an award to be known as the 'National Medal for Forest Restoration' to recognize outstanding contributions in domestic reforestation (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) activities carried out by individuals, communities, nonprofit organizations, and corporations.

"(b) NUMBER OF AWARDS.—The Foundation shall award the National Medal for Forest Restoration at least once a year.

"(c) LEVELS OF AWARDS.—The Foundation shall, in consultation with Secretary of Agriculture, establish mul-

tiple levels of awards reflecting the considerations specified in subsection (e).

"(d) ADMINISTRATION OF AWARD.—The Foundation shall administer the awards under this section, including by—

"(1) developing a website and media presence to highlight recipients of such awards; and

"(2) tracking the contribution of such recipients towards the targets for increased forest carbon stock established under section 101 of the Trillion Trees Act.

"(e) CONSIDERATIONS.—In awarding the National Medal for Forest Restoration under this section to an entity described in subsection (a), the Foundation shall consider—

"(1) the number of acres planted or restored by such entity;

"(2) the total increase in forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) resulting from reforestation (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) activities of such entity;

"(3) the educational impact of the reforestation (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) activities of such entity; and

"(4) the total value of any donations by such entity to the Foundation.".

(b) FIFTH GRADE FORESTRY CHALLENGE.—The National Forest Foundation Act (16 U.S.C. 583j et seq.), as amended by subsection (a), is further amended by inserting after section 410 the following:

"SEC. 411. FIFTH GRADE FORESTRY CHALLENGE.

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Foundation shall establish an educational grant program, in consultation with the Secretary, to be known as the '5th Grade Forestry Challenge' to make grants to eligible recipients to—

"(1) provide 5th grade students with a seedling to plant;

"(2) educate students about forestry, forest management, active stewardship, and carbon storage; and

"(3) encourage, accept, and administer private gifts of money, technical expertise, and of real and personal property for the benefit of this program.

"(b) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS.—The following entities are eligible to receive a grant under this section:

"(1) A local educational agency.

"(2) A nonprofit entity that the Secretary determines has a demonstrated history of community

engagement and education on natural resource issues.

"(3) Other recipients as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

"(c) COORDINATION.—In carrying out the program required by this section, the Foundation may coordinate on an ongoing basis with appropriate Federal, State, Tribal, and local resource management departments, local educational agencies, nonprofit organizations, private citizens, and corporations to—

"(1) identify lands suitable for reforestation (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act);

"(2) encourage, accept, and administer private gifts of money, technical expertise, and of real and personal property for the benefit of such program;

"(3) manage and maintain reforested lands; and

"(4) further educate students and the public about forestry and forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act).

"(d) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 2 years after the date on which the Foundation establishes the grant program under this section, the Secretary shall submit to the relevant committees a report on the determination of the Secretary as to whether the grant program is

a financially effective means to educate students in the fields described in subsection (a)(2).

"(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

"(1) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The term 'local educational agency' has the meaning given that term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

"(2) RELEVANT COMMITTEES.—The term 'relevant committees' means—

"(A) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives;

"(B) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives;

"(C) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate; and

"(D) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.".

Subtitle B—Regeneration

SEC. 111. REFORESTATION PROGRAMS.

(a) NATIONAL FOREST COVER POLICY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1601), as amended by section 105, is further amended—

(A) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (f);

(B) by redesignating the second subsection (d) (relating to the policy of Congress regarding forested land in the National Forest System) as subsection (e); and

(C) in subsection (e), as so redesignated—

(i) in paragraph (2)—

(I) in the first sentence—

(aa) by striking ''eight years following the enactment of this subsection'' and inserting ''10 years following the date of enactment of the 'Trillion Trees Act' ''; and

(bb) by striking ''eight-year period'' and inserting ''10-year period'';

(II) in the second sentence, by striking ''such eight-year period'' and inserting ''the 10-year period''; and

(III) in the third sentence, by striking ''1978'' and inserting ''2021'';

(ii) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4);

(iii) in the first sentence of paragraph (4), as so redesignated, by striking "subsection (d)" and inserting "subsection"; and

(iv) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

"(3) REFORESTATION PRIORITIZATION.—

"(A) REFORESTATION PRIORITY.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary shall give priority to projects on the priority list described in clause (ii).

"(ii) RANKED PRIORITY LIST.—The Chief of the Forest Service shall, based on recommendations from regional foresters, create a ranked priority list of projects that—

"(I) primarily take place on priority land;

"(II) promote reforestation (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) on priority land;

"(III) deliver measurable progress and cost-effective results;

"(IV) increase forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) in a sustainable manner; and

"(V) provide additional benefits relating to forest function and health, soil health and productivity, wildlife habitat and biodiversity, improved air and water quality, job creation, enhanced outdoor recreation, and forest products and byproducts.

"(B) PRIORITY LAND DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term 'priority land' means National Forest System land that, due to an unplanned adverse disturbance (including a wildfire, ice storm, blowdown, flooding, insect infestation, disease, volcanic activity, or seismic event)—

"(i) does not meet the conditions for appropriate forest cover described in paragraph (1);

"(ii) requires reforestation (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) to

meet the objectives of an applicable forest plan; and

"(iii) is unlikely to experience natural regeneration without assistance.".

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) COOPERATIVE FORESTRY ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1978.—Section 9 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105) is amended in the matter following paragraph (5) of subsection (g)—

(i) by striking "section 3(d)" and inserting "subsection (e) of section 3"; and

(ii) by striking "1601(d)" and inserting "1601".

(B) REFORESTATION TRUST FUND.—Section 303 of the Act of October 14, 1980 (Public Law 96–451; 16 U.S.C. 1606a) is amended in subsection (d)(1)—

(i) by striking "section 3(d)" and inserting "subsection (e) of section 3"; and

(ii) by striking "1601(d)" and inserting "1601".

(C) STEWARDSHIP END RESULT CONTRACTING PROJECTS.—Section 604(c) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16

U.S.C. 6591c(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(8) Reforestation (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act), except the Chief shall give priority to reforestation projects in accordance with the priorities specified in subsection (e)(3)(A)(ii) of section 3 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1601).".

(b) TARGET YEAR FOR NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—Section 9 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1607) is amended by striking "2000" and inserting "2031".

SEC. 112. REFORESTATION TRUST FUND.

Section 303 of the Act of October 14, 1980 (Public Law 96–451; 16 U.S.C. 1606a) is amended in subsection (b)(2), by striking "$30,000,000" and inserting "$180,000,000".

SEC. 113. SOLVING SHORTAGES FOR SEEDLINGS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall develop and implement a national strategy to increase the capacity of Federal, State, Tribal, and private nurseries to address the nationwide shortage of tree seedlings.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) be based on the best available science and data; and

(2) identify and address—

(A) regional seedling shortages of bareroot and container tree seedlings;

(B) regional reforestation opportunities and the seedling supply necessary to fulfill such opportunities;

(C) opportunities to enhance seedling diversity and close gaps in seed inventories; and

(D) barriers to expanding, enhancing, or creating new infrastructure to increase nursery capacity.

(c) FEDERAL NURSERIES.—Section 2 of the Act of June 9, 1930 (16 U.S.C. 576a; commonly known as the ''Knutson-Vandenberg Act''), is amended by striking ''each fiscal year after year ending June 30, 1934, not to exceed $400,000,'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2021 through 2030, $25,000,000,''.

(d) LOAN PROGRAM FOR STATE, TRIBAL, AND PRIVATE NURSERIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out a loan program to make or guarantee qualified

nursery loans to eligible entities under this subsection.

(2) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a qualified nursery loan or loan guarantee under this subsection, an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require, including a plan to maintain the genetic and physical quality of seedlings of the eligible entity.

(3) PRIORITY.—In making qualified nursery loans or loan guarantees under this subsection, the Secretary shall give priority to eligible entities that—

(A) are small businesses, in particular small businesses located in rural areas;

(B) create or support jobs, particularly in rural areas; and

(C) serve regions with high demand for reforestation.

(4) QUALIFIED NURSERY PROJECT.—A loan or loan guarantee under this subsection may only be used to carry out a qualified nursery project to—

(A) develop, expand, enhance, or improve nursery capacity or infrastructure;

(B) establish nurseries; or

(C) develop or implement quality control measures at nurseries.

(5) LOAN AND LOAN GUARANTEE TERMS.—

(A) AMOUNT GUARANTEED.—The portion of a loan that the Secretary may guarantee under this subsection may not be greater than 80 percent of the principal amount of such loan.

(B) REPAYMENT.—The period of repayment for a loan made under this subsection shall not exceed 20 years.

(6) ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.—

(A) LIMITATION ON AUTHORITY.—The total amount of qualified nursery loans made or guaranteed under this subsection by the Secretary may not exceed $1,000,000,000.

(B) DISTRIBUTION.—The Secretary shall ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, that loans made or guaranteed under this subsection are distributed across diverse geographic regions.

(7) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ''eligible entity'' means—

(i) a State, Tribal, or local government; or

(ii) a domestic private, non-profit, or cooperative organization.

(B) NURSERY.—The term ''nursery'' means a State, Tribal, or local government or privately-owned facility that grows, stores, extracts, or monitors bareroot or container tree seedlings.

(C) QUALIFIED NURSERY LOAN.—The term ''qualified nursery loan'' means a low-interest loan, the proceeds of which are used to cover the costs to the borrower of carrying out a qualified nursery project described in paragraph (4).

SEC. 114. HEALTHY FOREST RESERVE PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Section 501(a) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6571(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(5) to promote the management and conservation of existing forests and regeneration of additional trees in pursuit of the targets for increased forest carbon stock established under section 101 of the Trillion Trees Act.".

(b) ENROLLMENT PRIORITY.—Section 502(f)(1) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6572) is amended to read as follows:

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall give priority to the enrollment of land that—

"(A) provides the greatest conservation benefit to—

"(i) primarily, species listed as endangered or threatened under section 4 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1533); and

"(ii) secondarily, species that—

"(I) are not listed as endangered or threatened under section 4 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1533); but

"(II)(aa) are candidates for such listing, State-listed species, or special concern species; or

"(bb) are deemed a species of greatest conservation need under a State wildlife action plan; or

"(B) promotes the restoration of marginal farmland or degraded forestland into healthy forest ecosystems.".

(c) RESTORATION PLANS.—Section 503(b)(4) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6573(b)) is amended to read as follows:

"(4) Practices to increase forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) over a period of at least 20 years, including through reforestation of degraded forestland and afforestation (as such terms are defined in such section) of marginal farmland.".

(d) COST SHARING.—Section 504 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6574) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(e) COST-SHARE PERMITTED.—In the case of land enrolled in the healthy forest reserve program for the purpose of promoting the restoration of marginal farmland or degraded forestland into healthy forest ecosystems, the Secretary of Agriculture may pay up to 75 percent for the cost of practices determined necessary for restoration or

afforestation (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) of such land.''.

SEC. 115. FORESTRY EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a competitive grant program to make grants to eligible institutions to carry out forestry education and workforce development programs to prepare students for careers in forestry.

(b) PROPOSAL.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this section, an eligible institution shall submit to the Secretary a proposal at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(c) EQUITABLE AWARDS.—For each fiscal year for which grants are awarded under this section, the amount of grant funds awarded to eligible institutions described in paragraph (1) of subsection (f) shall be equal to the amount of grant funds awarded to eligible institutions described in paragraphs (2) and (3) of such subsection.

(d) USE OF GRANT FUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Grants made under this section shall be used to—

(A) award scholarships to students enrolled in the eligible institution and pursuing degrees

in forestry, including students historically underrepresented in the field of forestry;

(B) expand, enhance, or improve forestry educational capacities of the eligible institution, including libraries, curriculum, faculty, and scientific instrumentation;

(C) recruit and retain—

(i) secondary school or undergraduate students to pursue certifications in forestry or acquire training in technical forestry skills, including students historically underrepresented in the field of forestry; or

(ii) undergraduate and graduate students to pursue degrees in forestry, including students historically underrepresented in the field of forestry;

(D) design and develop resources or programs that prepare students enrolled in the eligible institution for careers in forestry, including internship and apprenticeship programs;

(E) provide hands-on training and research opportunities for such students; or

(F) carry out any other activity the Secretary determines appropriate.

(2) CLARIFICATION OF FORESTRY EDUCATION.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the terms ''degrees in forestry'', ''certifications in forestry'', and ''training in technical forestry skills'' include degrees, certifications, and training in forestry, forest sciences, natural resources management, or other related educational disciplines.

(e) PAYMENT OF NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—As a condition of receiving a grant under this section, the Secretary shall require the recipient of the grant to provide funds or in-kind support from non-Federal sources in an amount that is specified by the Secretary and based on assessed institutional needs.

(f) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''eligible institution'' means—

(1) a land grant college or university, including an institution eligible to receive funding under—

(A) the Act of July 2, 1862;

(B) the Act of August 30, 1890, including Tuskegee University;

(C) Public Law 87–788 (commonly known as the ''McIntire-Stennis Act of 1962''); or

(D) the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note);

(2) a community college or area career and technical education school (as defined in section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2302)); or

(3) an institution of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)).

(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary $20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2030 to carry out this section.

SEC. 116. CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTERS REFORESTATION ACTIVITIES.

Section 147(d) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3197(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(4) REFORESTATION ACTIVITIES.—Enrollees in Civilian Conservation Centers may provide assistance in carrying out priority reforestation (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) projects in accordance with subsection (e)(3)(A)(ii) of section 3 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1601).".

SEC. 117. FOREST TECHNOLOGY ENHANCEMENTS FOR CONSERVATION AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PILOT PROGRAM.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, shall either establish a research, development, and testing pilot program or expand an applicable existing program to—

(1) assess new technologies, including unmanned aircraft system, geospatial, or remote sensing technologies, across all reforestation activities;

(2) accelerate the deployment and integration of such technologies into the operations of the Secretaries; and

(3) collaborate and cooperate with State, Tribal, and private geospatial information system organizations with respect to such technologies.

(b) EXPANDING USE OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretaries shall enter into an agreement to develop consistent protocols and plans for the use of unmanned aircraft system technologies for reforestation activities.

(c) DOMESTIC MANUFACTURE REQUIREMENT.—Any unmanned aircraft system technology or component of un-

manned aircraft system technology used under this section shall be made and manufactured in the United States.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as prohibiting the Secretary of Agriculture from using unmanned aircraft systems technologies in effect on the date of the enactment of this section.

(e) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''unmanned aircraft system'' has the meaning given the term in section 44801 of title 49, United States Code.

(f) SUNSET.—The authority to carry out this section shall terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this section.

Subtitle C—Urban Forests

SEC. 121. URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY ASSISTANCE.

(a) TREE CITY USA GRANT PROGRAM.—Section 9 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (h) and (i) as subsections (j) and (k), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (g) the following;

''(h) TREE CITY USA GRANT PROGRAM.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a grant program to be known as the 'Tree City USA Grant Program' to provide competitive grants to eligible entities to enhance and maintain urban forests.

"(2) APPLICATION.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to be awarded a grant under paragraph (1), an eligible entity shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require, including a proposal to enhance and maintain urban forests.

"(B) APPLICATION ASSISTANCE.—A nonprofit organization that partners with an eligible entity may submit an application under subparagraph (A) on behalf of such eligible entity.

"(3) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall give priority to eligible entities that submit proposals under paragraph (2)(A) that—

"(A) enhance, maintain, or improve access to urban forests in—

"(i) typically underserved areas; or

"(ii) areas with low tree or environmental equity;

"(B) further a statewide assessment or local government initiative to enhance and maintain urban forests;

"(C) include a plan to mitigate risks from insects, disease, and non-native invasive species; and

"(D) include a plan to monitor and maintain new and existing trees.

"(4) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may provide technical assistance to local governments to assist such local governments with—

"(A) becoming eligible entities; and

"(B) proposals under paragraph (2)(A).

"(5) MATCHING FUNDS.—An eligible entity that receives a grant under this subsection shall contribute an amount of non-Federal funds (in cash or in kind) that is at least equal to the amount of the Federal funds received.

"(6) PREMIER TREE CITY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of the Trillion Trees Act, and annually through 2030 thereafter, the Secretary shall designate as a 'Premier Tree City' one eligible entity awarded a grant under this

subsection to recognize the superior efforts of such eligible entity in enhancing and maintaining urban forests.

"(7) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In addition to the amounts authorized under subsection (k), there are authorized to be appropriated $1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2030 to carry out this subsection.

"(8) ELIGIBLE ENTITY DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term 'eligible entity' means a local government that—

"(A) serves an urban and community area; and

"(B) a tree planting non-profit organization recognizes as having—

"(i) a tree board or department;

"(ii) a tree care ordinance;

"(iii) a community forestry program with an annual budget of at least $2 per capita; and

"(iv) an Arbor Day observance and proclamation.".

(b) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR URBAN WOOD UTILIZATION.—Section 9 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105), as amended by

subsection (a), is further amended by inserting after subsection (h) the following:

"(i) PILOT PROJECT FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR URBAN WOOD UTILIZATION.—

"(1) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements with State and local governments, institutions of higher education, private or non-profit organizations, and other entities that support projects that create wood products from dead and fallen trees in urban and community areas.

"(2) PRIORITIZATION.—The Secretary shall prioritize entering into cooperative agreements that—

"(A) support local job creation;

"(B) are located in typically underserved areas or areas with low tree or environmental equity;

"(C) develop new uses for dead and fallen trees; and

"(D) improve urban forest health and resiliency.

"(3) TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may provide technical or financial assistance to entities that enter into a coop-

erative agreement under paragraph (1) to facilitate—

"(A) research on new uses for dead and fallen trees in urban and community areas; and

"(B) market expansion opportunities for products made from dead and fallen trees in urban and community areas.

"(4) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of the Trillion Trees Act, the Secretary shall provide a report to the relevant committees on—

"(A) the implementation of this subsection; and

"(B) recommendations to encourage economic development and job creation by creating new markets for wood products made from urban timber sources.

"(5) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

"(A) DEAD AND FALLEN TREES.—The term 'dead and fallen trees' means trees that—

"(i) are dying or have died;

"(ii) have partially or completely fallen over; or

"(iii) have been negatively impacted by insects, disease, or weather-related disturbances.

"(B) RELEVANT COMMITTEES.—The term 'relevant committees' means—

"(i) the Committees on Natural Resources and Agriculture of the House of Representatives; and

"(ii) the Committees on Energy and Natural Resources and Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.".

(c) PROGRAM OF EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CLARIFICATION FOR CARBON STORAGE.—Section 9(d)(3) of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105(d)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C), by striking "and" after the semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (D), by inserting "and" after the semicolon; and

(3) by inserting at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(E) identifying opportunities to increase carbon storage through afforestation (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) and

scientific urban and community forestry management;''.

(d) NATIONAL URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY ADVISORY COUNCIL.—Section 9(g) of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105(g)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(F) MEETINGS.—The Council established under this subsection shall meet not less than twice annually.''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(7) RENEWAL OF COUNCIL.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of the Trillion Trees Act, the Secretary shall renew the Council.

''(B) TERMINATION.—The Council shall not terminate except as provided by an Act of Congress.''.

(e) URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY ACTION PLAN CLARIFICATION FOR CARBON STORAGE.—Section 9(g)(3) of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of

1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105(g)(3)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(G) Recommendations for identifying opportunities to increase carbon storage through afforestation (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) and scientific urban and community forestry management.".

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Subsection (k) of section 9 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105), as redesignated by subsection (a), is amended—

(1) by striking "$30,000,000" and inserting "$50,000,000"; and

(2) by striking "fiscal years 1991 through 1995" and inserting "fiscal years 2021 through 2025".

SEC. 122. CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTER URBAN FORESTRY DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.

Section 147(d) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3197(d)), as amended by section 116, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

"(5) URBAN FORESTRY.—

"(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this

paragraph, the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Labor shall jointly establish Civilian Conservation Centers in urban and community areas (as defined in subsection (j) of section 9 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2105)).

"(B) FOCUS.—In addition to the training and skills required under paragraph (1), the Civilian Conservation Centers established pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall provide training on urban forestry issues, including urban forest conservation, management, maintenance, and monitoring.".

SEC. 123. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO COORDINATE URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAMS.

Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Labor, and Transportation and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to—

(1) identify strategies to increase equitable access to urban forests through existing programs and authorities;

(2) coordinate existing urban forestry programs;

(3) conduct research on the benefits of urban forests for air quality, heat island mitigation, energy burden reduction, and enhanced shading for heat-resilient housing and active transit; and

(4) conduct research on improving coordination between the agencies to address insects, disease, and non-native invasive species in urban and community areas.

Subtitle D—International Forests

SEC. 131. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Trillion Trees Initiative established by the World Economic Forum should be supported;

(2) under such Trillion Trees Initiative, countries, corporations, and individuals around the globe will contribute to conserving, restoring, and growing one trillion trees;

(3) one trillion new trees globally would sequester a significant amount of atmospheric carbon and constitute a pragmatic step towards addressing global carbon emissions; and

(4) under this Act, the United States will—

(A) take a leadership role in conserving, restoring, and growing one trillion trees globally;

(B) use the vast natural assets, robust forest products market, and technical expertise of the United States, to conserve, regenerate, manage, and utilize domestic forestland; and

(C) incentivize the use of sustainable building products to store carbon.

SEC. 132. INTERNATIONAL FOREST FOUNDATION.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development may enter into an agreement with a non-profit organization to establish an ''International Forest Foundation'' (in this section referred to as the ''Foundation''), which shall not be an agency or instrumentality of the United States Government.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Foundation shall be—

(1) to encourage, accept, and administer private gifts of money and of real and personal property for the benefit of, or in connection with, the activities and services carried out by the United States Agency for International Development to promote refor-

estation, afforestation, and the prevention of deforestation around the world;

(2) to use private funds to support, undertake, and conduct activities that further the goals established under section 101; and

(3) to undertake, conduct, and encourage educational, technical, and other assistance and other activities that support international goals to increase global carbon capture and storage through the promotion of healthy forests and responsible forest management.

(c) TRANSFER OF FUNDS; LIABILITY.—

(1) TRANSFER OF FUNDS.—The Administrator may authorize, pursuant to an agreement entered into in accordance with this section, the transfer of funds of the United States Agency for International Development to a nonprofit organization for the purpose of offsetting any administrative costs of the Foundation.

(2) LIABILITY.—The United States shall not be liable for any debts, defaults, acts, or omissions of the Foundation. The full faith and credit of the United States shall not extend to any obligations of the Foundation.

SEC. 133. INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development shall prioritize programs to support reforestation and afforestation, and to prevent deforestation, in developing countries and in regions that have experienced significant levels of deforestation or whose biodiversity, local economy, and stability would be significantly impacted by deforestation or loss of forest canopy cover around the world.

(b) COORDINATION.—In carrying out the programs prioritized in accordance with subsection (a), the Administrator shall, to the maximum extent practicable, make use of public-private partnerships to facilitate engagement by nonprofit organizations and industry partners.

SEC. 134. GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAM.

(a) FORESTRY INCLUDED.—Section 2402(c)(2) of the Global Climate Change Prevention Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6701(c)(2)) is amended by inserting ''and forestry'' after ''agriculture''.

(b) STUDY OF GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE, AGRICULTURE, AND FORESTRY.—Section 2403(b) of the Global Climate Change Prevention Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6702(b)) is amended—

(1) in the first proviso, by striking ''The Secretary shall conduct a study'' and inserting the following:

''The Secretary shall, not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Trillion Trees Act, conduct a study and submit a report to Congress'';

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(3) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) identify and address programs which could lead to increased forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) globally, healthy international forest ecosystems, and a globally sustainable forest products market.''.

(c) OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL FORESTRY.—Section 2405(c) of the Global Climate Change Prevention Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6704(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking the ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(4) identify and implement programs which lead to—

"(A) increased forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) globally;

"(B) healthy international forest ecosystems; and

"(C) a globally sustainable forest products market.".

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 2412 of the Global Climate Change Prevention Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6710) is amended by striking "1991 through 1997" and inserting "2021 through 2025".

SEC. 135. INTERNATIONAL FORESTRY COOPERATION.

Section 602(b)(1) of the International Forestry Cooperation Act of 1990 (16 U.S.C. 4501(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (G), by striking "and" at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (H), by inserting "and" at the end; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(I) activities that increase forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act), including reforestation and

afforestation (as such terms are defined in such section) programs.''.

SEC. 136. MODIFICATIONS TO AUTHORITIES RELATING TO TROPICAL FORESTS.

Section 118 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151p–1) is amended as follows:

(1) In subsection (a)(2), by inserting '', including by reducing global forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act)'' before the period at the end.

(2) In subsection (c)(1), by inserting '', reforestation (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act),'' after ''conservation''.

(3) In subsection (c)(2)(A), by inserting ''and impact on global carbon emissions'' after ''irreversible losses''.

(4) In subsection (c)(6), by inserting ''(including projects to increase forest carbon stock)'' after ''sustainable forestry projects and practices''.

(5) In subsection (c)(8), by inserting ''increasing forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act),'' after ''soil conservation,''.

(6) In subsection (f), by inserting ''and a study on the total carbon sequestered through increases in tropical forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2

of the Trillion Trees Act) globally as a result of programs, projects, and activities carried out under this section'' before the period at the end.

TITLE II—CARBON SEQUESTRATION THROUGH IMPROVED FOREST MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

SEC. 201. LAND USE PLANNING; SUPPLEMENTS TO PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS.

(a) PRIORITY AREAS.—

(1) AREAS IDENTIFIED.—The Secretary shall designate a landscape-level area on covered land as a priority area if—

(A) the Secretary has identified such area as having a high or very high risk of wildfire;

(B) the completion of covered projects in such area would reduce the risk of carbon emissions as a result of wildfire or tree mortality; and

(C) the area is covered by an existing programmatic environmental impact statement applicable to such covered projects.

(2) EFFECT OF IDENTIFICATION.—The Secretary shall prioritize review under section 102(2)(C)

of the National Environmental Policy Act of covered projects in a priority area over the completion of any other review under such section.

(3) DEADLINE FOR IDENTIFICATION.—The Secretary shall establish the priority areas required under paragraph (1)—

(A) in the case of priority areas for watershed protection projects, critical infrastructure protection projects, or wildlife habitat restoration projects, not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this section; and

(B) in the case of priority areas for wildland-urban interface protection projects, not later than 60 days after the programmatic environmental impact statement required under subsection (b) is completed.

(4) REVIEW AND MODIFICATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except with respect to areas subject to review under subparagraph (B), not later than 5 years after the date of the enactment of this section and not less than once every 5 years thereafter, the Secretary shall review the priority areas established under paragraph (1) and modify, add, or remove such priority areas.

(B) WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE PROTECTION PRIORITY AREAS.—Not later than 5 years after the date on which the programmatic environmental impact statement required by subsection (b) is complete and not less than once every 5 years thereafter, the Secretary shall review the priority areas established under paragraph (1) and covered by such statement and modify, add, or remove such priority areas.

(b) PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE PROTECTION PROJECTS.—Not later than 5 years after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall complete a programmatic environmental impact statement in accordance with section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)) for wildland-urban interface protection on public lands, including with respect to—

(1) lands classified as high or very high risk of wildfire; and

(2) areas with at-risk communities (as defined in section 101 of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511)).

(c) COMPLIANCE WITH THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The requirements of section 102(2)(C) of National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C) with respect to a major Federal action taken under this section shall be deemed to be met—

(A) for wildland-urban interface protection projects proposed after the date of completion of the programmatic environmental impact statement required by subsection (b), by supplementing such programmatic environmental impact statement and incorporating relevant additional regional analyses that have been completed by Federal agencies since such statement was finalized;

(B) for watershed protection projects, by supplementing the programmatic environmental impact statement entitled ''National Forest System Land Management Planning'' published in January 2012 and incorporating relevant additional regional analyses that have been completed by Federal agencies since such statement was finalized;

(C) for critical infrastructure protection projects, by supplementing the programmatic environmental impact statement entitled ''Des-

ignation of Energy Corridors on Federal Land in the 11 Western States (DOE/EIS–0386)'' published on November 28, 2008 and incorporating relevant additional regional analyses that have been completed by Federal agencies since such statement was finalized; and

(D) for wildlife habitat restoration projects, by supplementing the programmatic environmental impact statement entitled ''National Forest System Land Management Planning'' published in January 2012 and incorporating relevant additional regional analyses that have been completed by Federal agencies since such statement was finalized.

(2) COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION.—In developing a supplement under subparagraphs (A) through (D) of paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consult and coordinate with—

(A) appropriate State, Tribal, and local governments;

(B) transmission infrastructure and water infrastructure owners, operators, and developers; and

(C) other appropriate entities.

(d) ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW IN PRIORITY AREAS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Regional Forester determines that a proposed covered project has been sufficiently analyzed by a previously completed programmatic environmental impact statement, such statement shall be deemed to fulfill the requirements of section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)) with respect to such project. The applicable Regional Forester shall publish any such determinations on a publicly available website.

(2) ADDITIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW.—If the Regional Forester determines that a proposed covered project has not been sufficiently analyzed under paragraph (1) and additional environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) is necessary, the applicable Regional Forester shall rely on analysis in previously completed environmental reviews under such Act in analyzing the potential impacts of the proposed covered project.

(e) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than February 1 of the first fiscal year beginning after the date of the enactment of this section, and each February 1

thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the relevant committees a report that includes—

(1) a description, with respect to the preceding year, of the progress of covered projects in priority areas established under this section; and

(2) projections for how such covered projects will reduce the risk and severity of carbon emissions from wildfires and tree mortality.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED LAND.—The term ''covered land'' means National Forest System lands that are not excluded from forest management activities as a result of—

(A) an applicable forest plan;

(B) inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System;

(C) inclusion within a National or State-specific inventoried roadless area established by the Secretary, unless—

(i) the forest management activity to be carried out is consistent with the forest plan applicable to the area; and

(ii) the Secretary, or their designee, determines the forest management activity

is allowed under the roadless rule governing such lands; or

(D) any other Federal law.

(2) COVERED PROJECTS.—The term ''covered projects'' means critical infrastructure protection projects, watershed protection projects, wildland-urban interface protection projects, and wildlife habitat restoration projects.

(3) CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION PROJECT.—The term ''critical infrastructure protection project'' means a forest or rangeland management project with the primary objective of—

(A) reducing the risk of wildfire ignition within or adjacent to—

(i) a utility infrastructure right-of-way; or

(ii) public transportation infrastructure;

(B) protecting public infrastructure from wildfire; or

(C) removing hazard trees and or other hazardous fuels from a utility infrastructure right-of-way.

(4) RELEVANT COMMITTEES.—The term ''relevant committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives; and

(D) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

(5) WATERSHED PROTECTION PROJECT.—The term ''watershed protection project'' means a forest or rangeland management project with the objective of—

(A) protecting a municipal or Tribal water source from damage or destruction caused by wildfire;

(B) improving, maintaining, or restoring water quality or yield; or

(C) any combination of the purposes specified in subparagraphs (A) through (B).

(6) WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE PROTECTION PROJECT.—The term ''wildland-urban interface protection project'' means a forest or rangeland management project which takes place within the boundaries of, or adjacent to, an at-risk community (as

1 defined in section 101 of the Healthy Forests Res-
2 toration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511)).
3 (7) WILDLIFE HABITAT RESTORATION
4 PROJECT.—The term ''wildlife habitat restoration
5 project'' means a forest or rangeland management
6 project with the primary objective of—
7 (A) protecting, improving, maintaining, or
8 restoring wildlife habitat; or
9 (B) protecting, improving, maintaining, re-
10 storing, or enhancing management with respect
11 to critical habitat (as defined in section 4 of the
12 Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C.
13 1532)).
14 **SEC. 202. FOREST CARBON STOCK ON STATE AND PRIVATE**
15 **FORESTS.**
16 (a) ADDING INCREASING FOREST CARBON STOCK AS
17 A PRIORITY.—Section 2(b) of the Cooperative Forestry
18 Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2101) is amended—
19 (1) by redesignating subparagraphs (6) through
20 (10) as subparagraphs (7) through (11), respec-
21 tively; and
22 (2) by inserting after paragraph (5) the fol-
23 lowing:
24 ''(6) the encouragement of afforestation (as de-
25 fined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act), refor-

estation, management, and related optimizations of forest carbon stock (as such terms are defined in such section) for climate and other ecological benefits;''.

(b) SUPPORT FOR STATE ASSESSMENTS AND STRATEGIES FOR FOREST RESOURCES WHEN CONSIDERING CARBON EMISSIONS.—Section 2A(a)(1) of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2101a(a)(1)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraph (C) and (D) as subparagraphs (D) and (E), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following:

''(C) the current amount of forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act and incorporating data from the forest inventory and analysis program under section 3(e)) on State lands and opportunities for increased forest carbon stock;''.

(c) INCREASING FOREST CARBON STOCK THROUGH THE FOREST STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM.—Section 5(d)(1) of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2103a(d)) is amended by inserting ''carbon sequestration and storage'' before ''and the aesthetic''.

(d) INCREASING FOREST CARBON STOCK THROUGH THE COMMUNITY FOREST AND OPEN SPACE CONSERVATION PROGRAM.—Section 7A(c)(1)(B)(ii) of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2103d(c)(1)(B)(ii)) is amended by inserting " increasing forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) and promoting," after "including".

(e) INCREASING FOREST CARBON STOCK THROUGH THE PROMOTION OF FOREST HEALTH.—Section 8(a) of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2104(a)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (4) through (6) as paragraphs (5) through (7); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

"(4) protect or enhance forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act) on healthy forestland;".

(f) INCREASING FOREST CARBON STOCK THROUGH THE REDUCTION OF CATASTROPHIC WILDFIRE.—Section 10A(b)(1) of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2106c(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C), by striking "and" at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period and inserting ''and'' at the end; and

(3) by inserting at the end the following:

''(E) to educate the public about the carbon stored in healthy forests and carbon emitted through wildfire and forest decline.''.

(g) INCREASING FOREST CARBON STOCK THROUGH THE STATE AND PRIVATE FOREST LANDSCAPE-SCALE RESTORATION.—Section 13A of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2109a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (6), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (7) as paragraph (8); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (6) the following:

''(7) to improve the potential to increase forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act); and''; and

(2) in subsection (l), by amending paragraph (3) to read as follows:

''(3) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Fund $25,000,000 for each fiscal year beginning with the

first full fiscal year after the date of the enactment of the Trillion Trees Act through fiscal year 2025, to remain available until expended.''.

SEC. 203. GOOD NEIGHBOR AUTHORITY.

Section 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(4)(A)—

(A) in clause (ii), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) by redesignating clause (iii) as clause (iv);

(C) by inserting after clause (ii) the following:

''(iii) activities to increase forest carbon stock (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act), including reforestation (as defined in such section) activities;'';

(D) in clause (iv), as so redesignated, by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

(E) by adding at the end the following:

''(v) any combination of activities specified in clauses (i) through (iv).'';

(2) in subsection (b)(1), by adding at the end of the following:

"(C) REFORESTATION PRIORITY.—With respect to forest, rangeland, and watershed restoration services described in subsection (a)(4)(A)(iii), the Secretary of Agriculture may enter into good neighbor agreements under this section in accordance with the priorities specified in subsection (e)(3)(A)(ii) of section 3 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1601)."; and

(3) in subsection (b)(2), by amending subparagraph (C) to read as follows:

"(C) TREATMENT OF REVENUE.—Funds received from the sale of timber by a Governor of a State under a good neighbor agreement shall be retained and used by the Governor—

"(i) to carry out authorized restoration services under such good neighbor agreement; and

"(ii) if funds are remaining after carrying out the services under clause (i), to carry out authorized restoration services within the State under other good neighbor agreements.".

SEC. 204. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

Section 3 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1642) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by adding at the end the following:

"(6) Renewable resource assessment research shall also include, as appropriate, research activities related to the sequestration of carbon, including the increased carbon storage through afforestation (as defined in section 2 of the Trillion Trees Act), reforestation (as defined in such section), forest and rangeland management, and the utilization of wood and other materials derived from forest and rangeland renewable resources to store carbon in building materials, industrial and consumer products."; and

(2) in subsection (d)(2), by adding at the end the following:

"(F) Carbon sequestration.".

TITLE III—MARKET INCENTIVES FOR CARBON SEQUESTRATION

SEC. 301. BIOCHAR DEMONSTRATION PROJECT AND GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretaries shall establish a program to enter into partnerships with eligible entities to carry out demonstration projects to support the development and commercialization of biochar in accordance with this subsection.

(B) LOCATION OF DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—The Secretaries shall, to the maximum extent practicable, establish at least one biochar demonstration project in each Forest Service region.

(2) PROPOSALS.—To be eligible to enter into a partnership to carry out a biochar demonstration project under paragraph (1)(A), an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretaries a proposal at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretaries may require.

(3) PRIORITY.—In selecting proposals under paragraph (2), the Secretaries shall give priority to partnering with eligible entities that submit proposals to carry out biochar demonstration projects that—

(A) have the most carbon sequestration potential;

(B) will create new jobs and contribute to local economies, particularly in rural areas;

(C) will demonstrate—

(i) new and innovative uses of biochar;

(ii) viable markets for cost-effective biochar-based products;

(iii) the ecosystem services of biochar;

(iv) the benefits of biochar to restore forest heath and resiliency, including for forest soils and watersheds; or

(v) any combination of purposes specified in clauses (i) through (iv);

(D) are located in local markets that have the greatest need for the biochar production units due to—

(i) nearby lands identified as having high or very high or extreme risk of wildfire;

(ii) availability of sufficient quantities of feedstocks; or

(iii) a high level of demand for biochar or other commercial byproducts of biochar; or

(E) any combination of purposes specified in subparagraphs (A) through (D).

(4) USE OF FUNDS.—In carrying out the program established under paragraph (1)(A), the Secretaries may enter into partnerships and provide funding to carry out demonstration projects that—

(A) acquire and test various feedstocks and their efficacy;

(B) develop and optimize commercially and technologically viable biochar production units, including mobile and permanent units;

(C) demonstrate the production of biochar from forest residues and the use of biochar to restore forest health and resiliency;

(D) build, expand, or establish biochar facilities;

(E) conduct research on new and innovative uses of biochar or demonstrate cost-effective market opportunities for biochar and biochar-based products;

(F) carry out any other activities the Secretaries determine appropriate; or

(G) any combination of the purposes specified in subparagraphs (A) through (F).

(5) FEEDSTOCK REQUIREMENTS.—To the maximum extent practicable, a biochar demonstration project under this subsection shall, with respect to

the feedstock used under such project, derive at least 50 percent of such feedstock from forest thinning and management activities, including mill residues, conducted on National Forest System lands.

(6) REVIEW OF BIOCHAR DEMONSTRATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries shall conduct regionally-specific research, including economic analyses and life-cycle assessments, on the biochar produced from the demonstration projects under this subsection, including—

(i) the effects of such biochar on—

(I) forest health and resiliency;

(II) carbon capture and sequestration, including increasing soil carbon in the short-term and long-term;

(III) productivity, reduced input costs, and water retention in agricultural practices;

(IV) soil and grassland health for grazing activities, including grazing activities on Federal land;

(V) environmental remediation activities, including abandoned mine land remediation; and

(VI) other ecosystem services of biochar;

(ii) the efficacy of biochar as a co-product of biofuels or in biochemicals; and

(iii) whether biochar can effectively be used to produce any other technologically and commercially viable outcome.

(B) COORDINATION.—The Secretaries shall, to the maximum extent practicable, provide data, analysis, and other relevant information collected under subparagraph (A) to eligible institutions conducting research and development activities on biochar pursuant to receiving a grant under subsection (b).

(7) LIMITATION ON FUNDING FOR ESTABLISHING BIOCHAR FACILITIES.—In the case of an eligible entity that enters in to a partnership to carry out a biochar demonstration project under this subsection and seeks to establish a biochar facility under such demonstration project, the Secretaries may not provide funding to such eligible entity in an amount greater than 35 percent of the capital cost of establishing such biochar facility.

(b) BIOCHAR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall establish an applied biochar research and development grant program to make competitive grants to eligible institutions to carry out the activities described in paragraph (3).

(2) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection, an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary a proposal at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(3) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible institution that receives a grant under this subsection shall use the grant funds to conduct applied research on—

(A) the effect of biochar on forest health and resiliency, accounting for variations in biochar, soil, climate, and other factors;

(B) the effect of biochar on soil health and water retention, accounting for variations in biochar, soil, climate, and other factors;

(C) the long-term carbon sequestration potential of biochar;

(D) the best management practices of biochar and biochar based-products to—

(i) maximize carbon sequestration benefits; and

(ii) maximize the commercial viability and application of such products in forestry, agriculture, environmental remediation, water quality improvement, and other uses;

(E) the regional uses of biochar to increase productivity and profitability, including—

(i) uses in agriculture and environmental remediation; and

(ii) use as a co-product in fuel production;

(F) new and innovative uses from biochar byproducts; and

(G) opportunities to expand markets for biochar and create jobs, particularly in rural areas.

(c) REPORTS.—

(1) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretaries shall submit a report to Congress that—

(A) includes policy and program recommendations to improve the widespread use of biochar;

(B) identifies the areas of research needed to advance biochar commercialization; and

(C) identifies barriers to further biochar commercialization, including permitting and siting considerations.

(2) PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL BUDGET REQUEST.—Beginning 2 years after the date of the enactment of this section and annually until the date described in subsection (d), the Secretaries shall include in the budget materials submitted to Congress in support of the President's annual budget request (submitted to Congress pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code) for each fiscal year a report on the status of the demonstration projects carried out under subsection (a) and the research and development grants carried out under subsection (b).

(d) SUNSET.—The authority to carry out this section shall terminate on the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of this section.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) BIOCHAR.—The term "biochar" means carbonized biomass produced by converting feedstock through reductive thermal processing for non-fuel uses.

(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term "eligible entity" means—

(A) State, local, and Tribal governments;

(B) eligible institutions; and

(C) private, non-private, or cooperative entities.

(3) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term "eligible institution" means land-grant colleges and universities, including institutions eligible for funding under the—

(A) Act of July 2, 1862;

(B) Act of August 30, 1890, including Tuskegee University;

(C) Public Law 87–788 (commonly known as the "McIntire-Stennis Act of 1962"); or

(D) Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note).

(4) FEEDSTOCK.—The term "feedstock" means excess biomass in the form of plant matter or materials that serves as the raw material for the production of biochar.

(5) SECRETARIES.—The term "Secretaries" means—

(A) the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service; and

(B) the Secretary of Energy, acting through the Director of the Office of Science.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated $50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2023 to carry out this section.

SEC. 302. SUSTAINABLE BUILDING AND RESIDENCE CREDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart B of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"SEC. 30E. SUSTAINABLE BUILDING AND RESIDENCE CREDIT.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—There shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed by this chapter for the taxable year an amount equal to the sustainability percentage of—

"(1) the taxpayer's purchase price of a qualifying building or residence, and

"(2) the taxpayer's remodeling price of a building or structure described in subsection (c)(3)(B).

"(b) SUSTAINABILITY PERCENTAGE.—For purposes of this section:

"(1) IN GENERAL.—

"(A) PURCHASE PRICE.—The sustainability percentage with respect to the purchase

price of any qualifying building or residence shall be a percentage equal to the lesser of—

"(i) the percentage by which the sustainability score for such qualifying building or residence exceeds the average sustainability score for the class to which such building or residence belongs, or

"(ii) 25 percent.

"(B) REMODELING PRICE.—The sustainability percentage with respect to the remodeling price of a building or structure shall be a percentage equal to the lesser of—

"(i) the percentage by which, after remodeling, the sustainability score for such building or structure exceeds the average sustainability score for the class to which such building or structure belongs, or

"(ii) 12.5 percent.

"(2) SUSTAINABILITY SCORING.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary (in consultation with the Secretary of Energy) shall establish—

"(i) a certification process for determining a sustainability score with respect

to any building for purposes of the credit allowed under this section, and

"(ii) an average sustainability score for different classes of buildings for purposes of the comparison under subsection (b)(1)(A)(i) or subsection (b)(1)(B)(i).

"(B) FACTORS FOR SCORE.—Such score shall at least take into account the following factors:

"(i) The net carbon emitted during the production and delivery of materials used in construction of the building.

"(ii) The net carbon emitted during the operation of the building on a yearly basis.

"(iii) The amount of carbon retained by the building, taking into account building construction materials and processes and continuing use or disposal of carbon in connection with the use of the building.

"(iv) The climate in which the building is located.

"(C) AVERAGE SUSTAINABILITY.—The classes for which average sustainability scores

are determined shall at least take into account the following distinguishing characteristics:

"(i) Residential and commercial buildings.

"(ii) Multi-family and single-family residential.

"(iii) The size, volume, and intended use of the building.

"(D) UPDATES.—The Secretary (in consultation with the Secretary of Energy) shall update the sustainability scoring and the sustainability score averages established under subparagraph (A) not less frequently than once every 5 calendar years.

"(E) ADVISORY BOARD.—The Secretary shall establish a volunteer board that advises the Secretary on the sustainability score development and updates. Such board shall be appointed at the discretion of the Secretary and shall include experts in relevant fields, including energy, construction, transportation, agriculture, and labor.

"(c) OTHER DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL RULES.—

"(1) PURCHASE PRICE.—The term 'purchase price' means so much of the adjusted basis of the property as is not attributable to land.

"(2) REMODELING PRICE.—The term 'remodeling price' means the price of remodeling or expansion of a property, as defined by the Secretary after consultation with the Secretary of Energy.

"(3) QUALIFYING BUILDING OR RESIDENCE.—The term 'qualifying building or residence' means, with respect to a taxpayer—

"(A) any dwelling unit first used as a residence by the taxpayer, or

"(B) any other building or structure of a character subject to the allowance for depreciation and first placed in service by the taxpayer.

"(4) CONSTRUCTION.—Any qualifying building or residence constructed by the taxpayer shall be treated as purchased by the taxpayer on the date the taxpayer first occupies the residence, or places such building in service, as the case may be.

"(5) TRANSFER OF CREDIT.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—If a taxpayer elects the application of this paragraph for any taxable year, the amount of credit determined under this section for such year which would

(but for this paragraph) be allowable to the taxpayer shall be allowable to the person designated by the taxpayer. The person so designated shall be treated as the taxpayer for purposes of this title.

"(B) TREATMENT OF AMOUNTS PAID FOR ASSIGNMENT.—If any amount is paid to the person who assigns the credit determined under this section, then no portion of such amount shall be includible in such person's gross income.

"(6) BASIS ADJUSTMENT.—For purposes of this subtitle, if a credit is allowed under this section with respect to any qualified building or residence, the basis of such building or residence shall be reduced by the amount of the credit so allowed.

"(7) APPLICATION WITHOUT CREDITS.—

"(A) BUSINESS CREDIT TREATED AS PART OF GENERAL BUSINESS CREDIT.—So much of the credit which would be allowed under subsection (a) for any taxable year (determined without regard to this paragraph) that is attributable to property of a character subject to an allowance for depreciation shall be treated as a

1 credit listed in section 38(b) for such taxable
2 year (and not allowed under subsection (a)).
3 "(B) PERSONAL CREDIT.—For purposes of
4 this title, the credit allowed under subsection
5 (a) for any taxable year (determined after ap-
6 plication of subparagraph (A)) shall be treated
7 as a credit allowable under subpart A for such
8 taxable year.
9 "(8) CARBON STORAGE CERTIFICATION.—
10 Under the certification process established under
11 subsection (b)(2)(A), the Secretaries shall addition-
12 ally establish a process for certifying to the taxpayer
13 the amount of carbon dioxide stored by a building or
14 residence as determined under (b)(2)(B)(iii).".
15 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
16 for subpart B of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1
17 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the fol-
18 lowing new item:

"Sec. 30E. Sustainable building and residence credit.".

19 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
20 this section shall apply to property purchased after De-
21 cember 31, 2020.

SEC. 303. CLARIFICATION OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR CELLULOSIC BIOCHEMICAL AND BIOPLASTICS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the Research and Development deputy area and the State and Private Forestry deputy area of the Forest Service, shall conduct performance-driven research and development and provide for education and technical assistance for the purpose of facilitating the use of cellulosic biochemical and bioplastics products in the United States.

(b) ACTIVITIES.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) after collaboration with the forest products industry, conservation organizations, and institutions of higher education, conduct research and development and provide for education and technical assistance at the Forest Products Laboratory or through the State and Private Forestry deputy area that meets measurable performance goals for the achievement of the priorities listed in subsection (c); and

(2) after coordination and collaboration with the entities referred to in paragraph (1), make competitive grants to institutions of higher education for such institutions to conduct research and development and carry out educational programs and provide technical assistance.

(c) PRIORITIES.—In awarding grants under subsection (b)(2), the Secretary shall give priority to applications from institutions of higher education proposing projects—

(1) to address ways to improve the commercialization of cellulosic biochemical and bioplastics products;

(2) for the conduct of applied research, including projects designed—

(A) to bring products from benchtop to production scale; and

(B) for end-of-life reuse, recycling, and disposal of the project;

(3) which, based upon the lifecycle analysis of forest carbon stock developed under section 105(c), will lead to an increase in forest carbon stock through the extraction of raw materials through the manufacture of biochemical and bioplastics products; or

(4) to address one or more other research areas identified by the Secretary, in consultation with conservation organizations, institutions of higher education, and the forest products industry.

(d) TIMEFRAME.—To the maximum extent practicable, the measurable performance goals for the research

and development, education, and technical assistance under subsection (a) shall be achievable within 5 years.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CELLULOSIC BIOCHEMICAL PRODUCT.—The term ''cellulosic biochemical product'' means any biochemical, including bioethanol and its derivatives, that is derived from wood or plant cellulose fiber.

(2) CELLULOSIC BIOPLASTICS PRODUCT.—The term ''cellulosic bioplastics product'' means any bioplastic that is derived from wood or plant cellulose fiber.

(3) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term ''institution of higher education'' has the meaning given such term in of sections 101 and 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 and 1002).

SEC. 304. TRIBAL AND ALASKA NATIVE BIOMASS DEMONSTRATION PROJECT EXTENSION.

(a) TRIBAL BIOMASS.—Section 3(a) of the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 (25 U.S.C. 3104 note) is amended by striking ''fiscal years 2017 through 2021'' and inserting ''fiscal years 2021 through 2025''.

(b) ALASKA NATIVE BIOMASS.—Section 202(c)(2) of the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act Amendments of 2017 (25 U.S.C. 3104 note)

1 is amended by striking ''fiscal years 2017 through 2021''
2 and inserting ''fiscal years 2021 through 2025''.

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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2698

To extend the jurisdiction of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to include oversight of markets which set reference prices for aluminum premiums, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 20, 2021

Mr. LAWSON of Florida (for himself and Mr. BUCK) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

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A BILL

To extend the jurisdiction of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to include oversight of markets which set reference prices for aluminum premiums, and for other purposes.

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 ''Aluminum Pricing Examination Act'' or the ''APEX Act''.

SEC. 2. JURISDICTION OF THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION OVER MARKETS WHICH SET OR REPORT REFERENCE PRICES FOR ALUMINUM PREMIUMS.

Section 2(a)(1) of the Commodity Exchange Act (7 U.S.C. 2(a)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(J)(i) The Commission shall have jurisdiction over the markets, including the process, oversight, transparency, and manner in which reference prices for aluminum premiums are set or reported, and whether the mechanism for setting such reference prices is fair and transparent. However, nothing in this Act shall be construed to grant the Commission the authority to set or control prices for aluminum premiums.

"(ii)(I) The Commission shall consult with the Attorney General on any relevant information, allegations of anticompetitive conduct, or marketplace analysis in the setting or reporting of such a reference price.

"(II) The Commission shall afford the Attorney General an opportunity to review any regulation or guideline proposed by the Commission in carrying out this subparagraph to ensure that the regulation or guideline is consistent with the goals and purposes of the antitrust laws.

"(III) The Attorney General may cooperate with, and share relevant information with, the Commission, with re-

1 spect to the setting of such a reference price, and shall
2 review any such proposed regulation or guideline to ensure
3 that the regulation or guideline is in accordance with the
4 goals and purposes of the antitrust laws.
5 "(IV) The Attorney General shall transmit to the
6 Commission the views of the Attorney General on any such
7 proposed regulation or guideline.".

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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2837

To amend the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 to repeal a certain disqualification to receive benefits under title IV of the Social Security Act and benefits under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008; and to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to provide that incarcerated individuals who are scheduled to be released from an institution within 30 days shall be considered to be a household for purposes of such Act.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 26, 2021

Mr. COHEN (for himself, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mrs. HAYES, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. COOPER, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HORSFORD, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. NORTON, Mr. RUSH, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. TRONE, Ms. SCANLON, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. WELCH, and Ms. DEAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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 amend the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 to repeal a certain disqualification to receive benefits under title IV of the Social Security Act and benefits under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008; and to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to provide that incarcerated individuals who are scheduled to be released from an institution within

30 days shall be considered to be a household for purposes of such Act.

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 "Making Essentials Available and Lawful (MEAL) Act of 2021".

SEC. 2. TANF ASSISTANCE AND SNAP BENEFITS.

(a) REPEAL OF BAN ON ASSISTANCE.—Section 115 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (21 U.S.C. 862a) is repealed.

(b) EFFECT ON STATE ELECTIONS TO OPT OUT OR LIMIT PERIOD OF PROHIBITION.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

(A) the term "State" has the meaning given the term in section 115(e) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (21 U.S.C. 862a(e)) (as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act); and

(B) the term "TANF assistance or SNAP benefits" means assistance or benefits referred to in section 115(a) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act).

(2) EFFECT ON STATE POLICIES.—Any law enacted by a State under the authority under subparagraph (A) or (B) of subsection (d)(1) of section 115 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (21 U.S.C. 862a), and any State law, policy, or regulation that imposes conditions on eligibility for the supplemental nutrition assistance program and temporary assistance for needy families program based on an individual's conviction of an offense related to a controlled substance, shall have no force or effect.

SEC. 3. MODIFICATION OF DEFINITION OF HOUSEHOLD FOR THE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING SNAP BENEFITS.

Section 3(m)(5) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012(m)(5)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(H) Incarcerated individuals who are scheduled to be released from an institution within 30 days.".

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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3100

To amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to expand the eligibility of students to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program, establish college student food insecurity demonstration programs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 11, 2021

Mrs. HAYES (for herself, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, and Mrs. TORRES of California) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, 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 amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to expand the eligibility of students to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program, establish college student food insecurity demonstration programs, and for other purposes.

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Student Food Security Act of 2021".

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Sec. 101. Eligibility of students to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program.
Sec. 102. Communication of information on student eligibility for nutrition assistance programs.
Sec. 103. Demonstration program.
Sec. 104. Effective date.

TITLE II—REDUCING STUDENT FOOD INSECURITY

Sec. 201. Data sharing.
Sec. 202. Questions on food and housing insecurity in national postsecondary student aid study.
Sec. 203. Grants to address student basic needs.

TITLE I—STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

SEC. 101. ELIGIBILITY OF STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITION OF HOUSEHOLD.—Section 3(m)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012(m)(4)) is amended—

(1) by striking "(4) In no event" and inserting the following:

"(4) INSTITUTION OR BOARDING HOUSE.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), in no event"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(B) STUDENTS.—An individual (including any dependents of the individual) may constitute a household if the individual is a student and resident of an institution of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)).".

(b) ELIGIBILITY OF STUDENTS.—Section 6 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by inserting "**QUALIFICATIONS AND**" after "**ELIGIBILITY**";

(2) in subsection (d)(2)(C)—

(A) by inserting "who is" after "student"; and

(B) by striking "(except" and all that follows through "section)" and inserting "and meets the requirements for eligibility under subsection (e)"; and

(3) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in subparagraph (B), by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) as subclauses (I) and (II), respectively, and indenting appropriately; and

(ii) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) through (D) as clauses (i) through (iv), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(B) in paragraph (5), by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(C) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (8) as subparagraphs (A) through (H), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(D) in subparagraph (D) (as so redesignated), by striking ''20'' and inserting ''10'';

(E) in subparagraph (E)(ii) (as so redesignated), by striking ''paragraph (4)'' and inserting ''subparagraph (D)'';

(F) in subparagraph (G) (as so redesignated), by striking ''or'' at the end after the semicolon;

(G) in subparagraph (H) (as so redesignated), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(H) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) (as so redesignated), by striking ''(e) No individual'' and all that follows through ''individual—'' and inserting the following:

"(e) QUALIFICATIONS FOR STUDENTS.—A student enrolled in any recognized school, training program, or institution of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)) shall be eligible to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program if—

"(1) the student satisfies the other requirements of this section; and

"(2) the student—"; and

(I) in paragraph (2) (as so designated), by adding at the end the following:

"(I) is eligible to participate in a State or federally financed work study program, including the program authorized under part C of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087–51 et seq.);

"(J)(i) is not an independent student (as defined in section 480(d) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087vv(d))); and

"(ii)(I) has an expected family contribution or student aid index of not more than $0, as determined in accordance with part F of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087kk et seq.); or

"(II) meets the financial eligibility criteria for receiving a maximum Federal Pell Grant under subpart 1 of part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a et seq.)—

"(aa) regardless of whether the student has completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483 of that Act (20 U.S.C. 1090); and

"(bb) as determined by a State using the income of the student, as determined under—

"(AA) the supplemental nutrition assistance program or another Federal or State means-tested program; or

"(BB) another reasonable simplifying assumption; or

"(K)(i) is an independent student (as defined in section 480(d) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087vv(d))); and

"(ii) is a member of a household otherwise eligible to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program.".

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 6(d)(2)(C) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(2)(C)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''half time'' and inserting ''half-time''; and

(2) by inserting ''(as determined by the school, training program, or institution of higher education, as applicable)'' before ''(except''.

SEC. 102. COMMUNICATION OF INFORMATION ON STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COLLEGE STUDENT.—The term ''college student'' means a student enrolled in an institution of higher education.

(2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term ''institution of higher education'' has the meaning given the term in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002).

(3) PROGRAM.—The term ''program'' means the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.).

(4) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Agriculture.

(b) STRATEGIES REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the effective date of this title, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that describes the strategy to be used by the Secretary—

(1) to increase the awareness of State agencies and institutions of higher education about—

(A) college student food insecurity;

(B) the eligibility of college students for the program; and

(C) the procedures and resources available to college students who are not participating in the program to access benefits under the program;

(2) to identify—

(A) existing or potential informational, educational, policy, and psychological barriers to enrolling in the program and barriers to complying with program requirements;

(B) mitigation strategies with respect to those barriers; and

(C) opportunities for collaboration with the Department of Education and other relevant Federal agencies; and

(3) to update the State Outreach Plan Guidance under subsection (c).

(c) UPDATED STATE OUTREACH PLAN GUIDANCE.—Not later than 90 days after the Secretary submits to Congress a report under subsection (b), the Secretary shall publish an updated State Outreach Plan Guidance that—

(1) describes existing data on college student food insecurity;

(2) describes the manner in which college students can access the supplemental nutrition assistance program;

(3) recommends outreach activities to address college student food insecurity and encourages States to conduct those and other outreach activities;

(4) provides a template for a State to submit information to the Secretary describing the outreach activities being carried out by the State to address college student food insecurity; and

(5) contains updated guidance based on the contents of that report.

SEC. 103. DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.

Section 17 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2026) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(o) COLLEGE STUDENT FOOD INSECURITY DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.—

"(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

"(A) COLLEGE STUDENT.—The term 'college student' means a student enrolled in an institution of higher education.

"(B) DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.—The term 'demonstration program' means the demonstration program established under paragraph (2).

"(C) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term 'institution of higher education'—

"(i) has the meaning given the term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001); and

"(ii) includes a postsecondary vocational institution (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)).

"(2) DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.—Pursuant to subsection (b), the Secretary, in collaboration with the Secretary of Education, shall establish a demonstration program under which the Secretary shall carry out demonstration projects in accordance with paragraph (3)—

"(A) to decrease student food insecurity at institutions of higher education; and

"(B) to reduce barriers to college students fully utilizing supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits at institutions of higher education.

"(3) DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—To carry out the demonstration program, the Secretary shall carry out demonstration projects that test the following new supplemental nutrition assistance program delivery methods:

"(A) Allowing a college student receiving supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits—

"(i) to use those benefits to purchase prepared foods from a campus dining hall, on-campus store, or other on-campus merchant or provider that typically sells prepared meals and participates in the student meal program at the institution of higher education at which the student is enrolled; and

"(ii) to be exempt from requirements to purchase a campus meal plan as part of

the attendance of the college student at the institution of higher education.

"(B) Allowing a college student to use an EBT card or a campus-specific card at any of the locations described in subparagraph (A)(i) or a retailer authorized under section 9.

"(4) PROJECT LIMIT.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out not more than 10 demonstration projects under the demonstration program simultaneously.

"(B) INSTITUTIONS.—The Secretary shall carry out not more than 1 demonstration project under the demonstration program at any single institution of higher education.

"(5) PRIORITY.—In selecting an institution of higher education at which to carry out a demonstration project, the Secretary shall give priority to an institution of higher education—

"(A) at which not less than 25 percent of enrolled students are students that are eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant under subpart 1 of part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a et seq.); or

"(B) that is described in section 371(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q(a)).

"(6) PROJECT ADMINISTRATION.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish criteria and parameters for selecting, operating, monitoring, and terminating each demonstration project under the demonstration program.

"(B) PRICES CHARGED.—The Secretary shall ensure that prices charged by food providers participating in a demonstration project under the demonstration program are comparable to prices charged by those food providers prior to participation.

"(7) PROJECT TERMINATION.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall ensure that the termination of a demonstration project under the demonstration program shall not cause sudden adverse changes, including a reduction of institutional financial aid or the elimination of benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program, for students participating in the demonstration project.

"(8) PROGRAM TERMINATION.—The demonstration program shall terminate on the date that is 10 years after the date on which the demonstration program is established.

"(9) EVALUATION.—For the duration of the demonstration program, the Secretary shall, in collaboration with the Director of the Institute of Education Sciences, conduct an annual evaluation of each demonstration project carried out under the demonstration program during the year covered by the evaluation, including an analysis of the extent to which the project is meeting the desired outcomes, which include reduction in food insecurity and improved academic performance.

"(10) REPORT.—For the duration of the demonstration program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committees on Agriculture and Education and Labor of the House of Representatives an annual report that includes—

"(A) a description of each demonstration project carried out under the demonstration program during the year covered by the report;

"(B) the evaluation conducted under paragraph (9); and

"(C) recommendations for legislation to improve the supplemental nutrition assistance program to better serve college students.

"(11) WAIVER AND MODIFICATION AUTHORITY.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Secretary may, as may be necessary solely to carry out the demonstration program—

"(i) waive any provision under this Act, including—

"(I) the requirement relating to local sales tax under section 4(a);

"(II) requirements relating to the issuance and use of supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits under section 7; and

"(III) requirements for approval of retail food stores under section 9; and

"(ii) modify the definitions under this Act for the purposes of the demonstration program, including the definition of—

"(I) the term 'food' under section 3(k);

"(II) the term 'household' under section 3(m); and

"(III) the term 'retail food store' under section 3(o).

"(B) LIMITATION.—The Secretary may not waive a provision or modify a definition under subparagraph (A) if the waiver or modification will—

"(i) cause increased difficulty for any household to apply for or access supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits; or

"(ii) reduce the value of those benefits for any household.

"(12) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary such sums as are necessary to carry out this subsection.".

SEC. 104. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This title and the amendments made by this title shall take effect on the date that is 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

TITLE II—REDUCING STUDENT FOOD INSECURITY

SEC. 201. DATA SHARING.

(a) AGREEMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Education, in coordination with the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the head of any other applicable Federal or State agency, shall develop and implement an agreement to—

(1) securely share data among the respective Federal agencies of such Secretaries in order to, notwithstanding section 483(a)(3)(E) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1090(a)(3)(E)), identify students who have applied for Federal financial aid and who are enrolled at institutions of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)) who may be eligible for Federally funded programs to support basic needs through—

(A) the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), a nutrition assistance program carried out under

1 section 19 of such Act (7 U.S.C. 2028), or a
2 nutrition assistance program carried out by the
3 Secretary of Agriculture in the Northern Mar-
4 iana Islands;
5 (B) the supplemental security income pro-
6 gram under title XVI of the Social Security Act
7 (42 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.);
8 (C) the program of block grants to States
9 for temporary assistance for needy families
10 under part A of title IV of the Social Security
11 Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.);
12 (D) the special supplemental nutrition pro-
13 gram for women, infants, and children estab-
14 lished by section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act
15 of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786);
16 (E) the Medicaid program under title XIX
17 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et
18 seq.);
19 (F) Federal housing assistance programs,
20 including tenant-based assistance under section
21 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937
22 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)), and public housing, as
23 defined in section 3(b)(1) of such Act (42
24 U.S.C. 1437a(b)(1));

(G) Federal child care assistance programs, including assistance under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.) and the Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program under section 419N of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070e);

(H) the free and reduced price school lunch program established under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.);

(I) refundable credit for coverage under a qualified health plan under section 36B of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

(J) the Earned Income Tax Credit under section 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

(K) the Child Tax Credit under section 24 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; or

(L) any other Federally funded program determined by the Secretary to be appropriate; and

(2) coordinate efforts to provide assistance to institutions of higher education to facilitate the en-

1 rollment of eligible students in the programs listed
2 in paragraph (1).
3 (b) INFORMATION ON FEDERALLY FUNDED PRO-
4 GRAMS TO SUPPORT BASIC NEEDS.—
5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 483 of the Higher
6 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1090) is amended
7 by adding at the end the following:
8 "(i) INFORMATION ON FEDERALLY FUNDED PRO-
9 GRAMS TO SUPPORT BASIC NEEDS.—
10 "(1) IN GENERAL.—For each year for which a
11 student described in paragraph (3) submits an appli-
12 cation for Federal student financial aid, the Sec-
13 retary shall send, in written and electronic form, to
14 such student information regarding potential eligi-
15 bility for assistance under, and application process
16 for—
17 "(A) the supplemental nutrition assistance
18 program under the Food and Nutrition Act of
19 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.);
20 "(B) the supplemental security income pro-
21 gram under title XVI of the Social Security Act
22 (42 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.);
23 "(C) the program of block grants to States
24 for temporary assistance for needy families

1 under part A of title IV of the Social Security
2 Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.);
3 ''(D) the special supplemental nutrition
4 program for women, infants, and children es-
5 tablished by section 17 of the Child Nutrition
6 Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786);
7 ''(E) the Medicaid program under title
8 XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396
9 et seq.);
10 ''(F) Federal housing assistance programs,
11 including tenant-based assistance under section
12 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937
13 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)), and public housing, as
14 defined in section 3(b)(1) of such Act (42
15 U.S.C. 1437a(b)(1));
16 ''(G) Federal child care assistance pro-
17 grams, including assistance under the Child
18 Care and Development Block Grant Act of
19 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.) and the Child
20 Care Access Means Parents in School Program
21 under section 419N of the Higher Education
22 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070e);
23 ''(H) the free and reduced price school
24 lunch program established under the Richard

1 B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42
2 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.);
3 "(I) refundable credit for coverage under a
4 qualified health plan under section 36B of the
5 Internal Revenue Code of 1986;
6 "(J) the Earned Income Tax Credit under
7 section 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of
8 1986;
9 "(K) the Child Tax Credit under section
10 24 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; or
11 "(L) any other Federally funded program
12 determined by the Secretary to be appropriate.
13 "(2) NOTIFICATION.—The notification de-
14 scribed in paragraph (1) shall include the appro-
15 priate State or Federal resources to which to apply
16 for benefits under each of the programs listed in
17 paragraph (1).
18 "(3) STUDENTS.—A student is described in this
19 paragraph if the student, as a result of information
20 submitted on the application for Federal student fi-
21 nancial aid, has been determined by the Secretary
22 (in consultation with the heads of applicable Federal
23 agencies) to be potentially eligible for the benefit
24 programs described in paragraph (1).".

(2) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary of Education shall consult with the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the head of any other applicable Federal or State agency, in designing the written and electronic communication regarding potential eligibility for assistance under, and application process for, the programs listed in paragraph (1) of section 483(i) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1090(i)).

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE AND SUNSET.—This subsection and the amendment made by this subsection is effective beginning on the date that is 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act and ending on June 30, 2023.

(c) FURTHER INFORMATION ON FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT BASIC NEEDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 483 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended by section 702 of the FAFSA Simplification Act (title VII of division FF of Public Law 116–260), is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)(2)(E)—

(i) in clause (i), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(ii) in clause (ii), by striking the period at the end and inserting "; and"; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

"(iii) an authorization under subparagraph (D) and disclosing the information as described in clause (ii), the Secretary shall provide the applicant with notification of the appropriate Federal or State resources necessary to apply for Federal and State programs that support basic needs."; and

(B) in subsection (c)(3)—

(i) by striking "may" and inserting "shall"; and

(ii) by inserting ", and shall consult with the heads of applicable Federal agencies in designing the written and electronic communication regarding potential eligibility for assistance under such programs" after "may be eligible".

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by paragraph (1) shall take effect as if included in section 702 of the FAFSA Simplification Act (title VII of division FF of Public Law 116–260) and sub-

ject to the effective date of section 701(b) of such Act.

(d) REPORT.—The Secretary of Education, in coordination with the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the head of any other applicable Federal or State agency, shall prepare and submit to Congress a report that presents summary statistics on students who have applied for Federal financial aid and who are enrolled at institutions of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)) and are experiencing student food insecurity and housing insecurity, disaggregated by race and ethnicity, income quintile, status as a first generation college student, Federal Pell Grant eligibility status, disability status, status as a student parent, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), and other subgroups as determined by such heads of agencies.

SEC. 202. QUESTIONS ON FOOD AND HOUSING INSECURITY IN NATIONAL POSTSECONDARY STUDENT AID STUDY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Education shall permanently add validated questions that measure food

and housing insecurity and homelessness to the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 203. GRANTS TO ADDRESS STUDENT BASIC NEEDS.

Title VIII of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1161a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"PART BB—GRANTS TO ADDRESS STUDENT BASIC NEEDS

"SEC. 899. GRANTS TO ADDRESS STUDENT BASIC NEEDS.

"(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) COMMUNITY COLLEGE.—The term 'community college' means a public institution of higher education at which the highest degree that is predominantly awarded to students is an associate degree, including a 2-year Tribal College or University (as defined in section 316).

"(2) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term 'eligible institution' means an institution of higher education as defined in section 101 or 102(a)(1)(B).

"(3) FOOD INSECURITY.—The term 'food insecurity' means limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, or the ability to

1 acquire such foods in a socially acceptable manner.
2 The most extreme form is often accompanied by
3 physiological sensations of hunger.

4 "(4) HOUSING INSECURITY.—The term 'hous-
5 ing insecurity' means limited or uncertain avail-
6 ability of, or access to, stable, safe, adequate, and
7 affordable housing and neighborhoods. This shall in-
8 clude living in emergency or transitional shelters,
9 motels, hotels, trailer parks, cars, parks, public
10 spaces, or abandoned buildings, and those sharing
11 the housing of other persons due to loss of housing,
12 economic hardship, or a similar reason.

13 "(b) PLANNING AND COORDINATION GRANTS.—

14 "(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
15 planning and coordination grants, on a competitive
16 basis, to eligible institutions to enable the eligible in-
17 stitutions to conduct research and planning to re-
18 duce incidences of student food insecurity and hous-
19 ing insecurity, and to coordinate a response to these
20 challenges, by carrying out the activities described in
21 paragraph (2).

22 "(2) ACTIVITIES.—An eligible institution receiv-
23 ing a grant under this subsection shall use grant
24 funds to carry out the following:

"(A) Establish a student food and housing security steering committee that will be responsible for creating and approving the strategy described in subparagraph (C), and that will be comprised of relevant campus stakeholders, including—

"(i) students who have experienced food insecurity or housing insecurity;

"(ii) student government representatives;

"(iii) institutional staff representing the areas of student financial aid, housing, dining, student affairs, academic advising, equity support services, accessibility services, campus security, legal services, and health and well-being services (including counseling or psychological services);

"(iv) faculty;

"(v) relevant administrators, including local human services administrators; and

"(vi) community-based organizations.

"(B) Conduct research regarding—

"(i) the level of student food insecurity and housing insecurity at the institution, disaggregated by race and ethnicity,

1 income quintile, status as a first-genera-
2 tion college student (as defined in section
3 402A(h)), Federal Pell Grant eligibility
4 status, disability status, status as a stu-
5 dent parent, sex (including sexual orienta-
6 tion and gender identity), or other sub-
7 group as determined by the institution;
8 "(ii) the presence of institutional bar-
9 riers and current institutional interventions
10 to address such barriers;
11 "(iii) the presence of administrative
12 barriers for students in applying, certifying
13 eligibility, and renewing applications for
14 means-tested benefits, and interventions to
15 address such barriers;
16 "(iv) the resources available to ad-
17 dress student food insecurity and housing
18 insecurity, both on campus and off cam-
19 pus; and
20 "(v) opportunities for coordination
21 and collaboration between the institution
22 and government or community-based orga-
23 nizations, including—
24 "(I) the local or State office that
25 administers benefits through the sup-

1 plemental nutrition assistance pro-
2 gram (SNAP) and SNAP employment
3 and training programs under the
4 Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7
5 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) or the temporary
6 assistance for needy families program
7 (TANF) and subsidized programs
8 that meet the work requirements
9 under part A of title IV of the Social
10 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.);
11 "(II) organizations that partici-
12 pate in the Federal work-study pro-
13 gram under part C of title IV; or
14 "(III) low-income housing assist-
15 ance organizations, including those as-
16 sisting with tenant-based assistance
17 under section 8(o) of the United
18 States Housing Act of 1937 (42
19 U.S.C. 1437f(o)), and public housing,
20 as defined in section 3(b)(1) of such
21 Act (42 U.S.C. 1437a(b)(1)).
22 "(C) Create a strategy that describes how
23 the institution will—

"(i) seek to address student food insecurity and housing insecurity through on-campus and off-campus providers; and

"(ii) incorporate the research conducted under subparagraph (B), including with respect to the subgroups identified under clause (i) of subparagraph (B), into the strategy.

"(D) Implement the strategy described in subparagraph (C), including by—

"(i) conducting outreach to students to reduce stigma, educate, and encourage students to participate in programs and receive services (including programs and services provided through grant funding) to reduce student food insecurity and housing insecurity;

"(ii) educating students about public assistance programs (including State and local public assistance programs, and the supplemental nutrition assistance program under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), Federal housing assistance programs, and other income-based Federal assistance programs), sup-

1 porting students' applications for those
2 programs, and providing case management
3 and training for students to maximize the
4 public assistance that students receive to
5 reduce student food insecurity and housing
6 insecurity;
7 "(iii) coordinating and collaborating
8 with government or community-based orga-
9 nizations, such as the local office that ad-
10 ministers benefits through the supple-
11 mental nutrition assistance program under
12 the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7
13 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) or a low-income hous-
14 ing assistance organization;
15 "(iv) hiring and training personnel to
16 build infrastructure and implement pro-
17 gramming to reduce student food insecu-
18 rity and housing insecurity at the eligible
19 institution; and
20 "(v) carrying out other matters deter-
21 mined appropriate by the Secretary.
22 "(3) GRANT AMOUNTS; DURATION.—
23 "(A) AMOUNT.—A grant under this sub-
24 section shall be in an amount not to exceed
25 $5,000,000.

"(B) DURATION.—A grant under this subsection shall be for a period of not more than 5 years.

"(4) REPORT.—The Secretary shall prepare and submit to Congress a report that describes—

"(A) the impact of the grant under this subsection on reducing student food insecurity and housing insecurity, disaggregated by race and ethnicity, income quintile, status as a first-generation college student (as defined in section 402A(h)), Federal Pell Grant eligibility status, disability status, status as a student parent, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), and other subgroup as determined by the institution;

"(B) best practices for reducing student food insecurity and housing insecurity, including by identifying institutional and administrative barriers and intervening to address such barriers;

"(C) the obstacles faced by grant recipients;

"(D) State or Federal policy barriers to reducing student food insecurity and housing insecurity at institutions of higher education; and

"(E) information on postsecondary outcomes at the institutions receiving a grant under this section, including—

"(i) the postsecondary attainment rates of students, including the units of postsecondary study completed as a percentage of such units attempted;

"(ii) the transfer rates of students from community colleges to 4-year institutions of higher education;

"(iii) the retention rates of students, either in the institution of higher education at which the student was first enrolled or in another institution; and

"(iv) the persistence rates of such students in higher education.

"(5) BEST PRACTICES.—The Secretary shall disseminate to eligible institutions and relevant government and community-based organizations information about best practices, as described in paragraph (4)(B).

"(c) RESERVATION; PRIORITY; EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.—

"(1) RESERVATION.—In awarding grants under subsection (b), the Secretary shall reserve an

amount equal to not less than 33 percent of the total amount available for grants under those subsections for grant awards to community colleges.

"(2) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under subsection (b), the Secretary shall give priority to the following:

"(A) Eligible institutions with respect to which not less than 25 percent of enrolled students are students that are eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant under subpart 1 of part A of title IV.

"(B) Eligible institutions that are described in section 371(a).

"(3) EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.—In awarding grants under subsection (b), the Secretary shall ensure an equitable distribution of grant awards to eligible institutions in States based on State population.

"(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $1,000,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2032.".

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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3211

To require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 13, 2021

Mr. NEGUSE (for himself, Mr. ARMSTRONG, and Ms. SPANBERGER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, 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

---

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership program, and for other purposes.

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 ''Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership Act of 2021''.

SEC. 2. JOINT CHIEFS LANDSCAPE RESTORATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CHIEFS.—The term ''Chiefs'' means the Chief of the Forest Service and the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

(2) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITY.—The term ''eligible activity'' means an activity—

(A) to reduce the risk of wildfire;

(B) to protect water quality and supply; or

(C) to improve wildlife habitat for at-risk species.

(3) PROGRAM.—The term ''program'' means the Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership program established under subsection (b)(1).

(4) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Agriculture.

(5) WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE.—The term ''wildland-urban interface'' has the meaning given the term in section 101 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511).

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership program to improve the health and resilience of forest landscapes across National Forest System land and State, Tribal, and private land.

(2) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary shall administer the program by coordinating eligible activities conducted on National Forest System land and State, Tribal, or private land across a forest landscape to improve the health and resilience of the forest landscape by—

(A) assisting producers and landowners in implementing eligible activities on eligible private or Tribal land using the applicable programs and authorities administered by the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service under title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.), not including the conservation reserve program established under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D of that title (16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.); and

(B) conducting eligible activities on National Forest System land or assisting landowners in implementing eligible activities on State, Tribal, or private land using the applicable programs and authorities administered by the Chief of the Forest Service.

(c) SELECTION OF ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—The appropriate Regional Forester and State Conservationist

shall jointly submit to the Chiefs on an annual basis proposals for eligible activities under the program.

(d) EVALUATION CRITERIA.—In evaluating and selecting proposals submitted under subsection (c), the Chiefs shall consider—

(1) criteria including whether the proposal—

(A) reduces wildfire risk in a municipal watershed or the wildland-urban interface;

(B) was developed through a collaborative process with participation from diverse stakeholders;

(C) increases forest workforce capacity or forest business infrastructure and development;

(D) leverages existing authorities and non-Federal funding;

(E) provides measurable outcomes; or

(F) supports established State and regional priorities; and

(2) such other criteria relating to the merits of the proposals as the Chiefs determine to be appropriate.

(e) OUTREACH.—The Secretary shall provide—

(1) public notice on the websites of the Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service describing—

(A) the solicitation of proposals under subsection (c); and

(B) the criteria for selecting proposals in accordance with subsection (d); and

(2) information relating to the program and activities funded under the program to States, Indian Tribes, units of local government, and private landowners.

(f) EXCLUSIONS.—An eligible activity may not be carried out under the program—

(1) in a wilderness area or designated wilderness study area;

(2) in an inventoried roadless area;

(3) on any Federal land on which, by Act of Congress or Presidential proclamation, the removal of vegetation is restricted or prohibited; or

(4) in an area in which the eligible activity would be inconsistent with the applicable land and resource management plan.

(g) ACCOUNTABILITY.—

(1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report providing recommendations to Congress relating to the program, including a review of—

(A) funding mechanisms for the program;

(B) staff capacity to carry out the program;

(C) privacy laws applicable to the program;

(D) data collection under the program;

(E) monitoring and outcomes under the program; and

(F) such other matters as the Secretary considers to be appropriate.

(2) ANNUAL REPORTS.—The Chiefs shall annually submit to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a report describing projects for which funding is provided under the program, including the status and outcomes of those projects.

(h) FUNDING.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In addition to amounts otherwise available to the Secretary to carry out the program, there is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out the program $90,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2030.

(2) DURATION OF AVAILABILITY.—Funds made available under paragraph (1) shall remain available until expended.

(3) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—Of the funds made available under paragraph (1)—

(A) not less than 40 percent shall be allocated to carry out eligible activities through the Natural Resources Conservation Service;

(B) not less than 40 percent shall be allocated to carry out eligible activities through the Forest Service; and

(C) the remaining funds shall be allocated by the Chiefs to the Natural Resources Conservation Service or the Forest Service—

(i) to carry out eligible activities; or

(ii) for other purposes, such as technical assistance, project development, or local capacity building.

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H.R. 3369, Broadband for Rural America Act

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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3369

To codify the ReConnect Program, to expand rural broadband assistance, and to improve the administration and accountability of the broadband programs at the Department of Agriculture.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 20, 2021

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mrs. FISCHBACH, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. JACOBS of New York, Mr. HAGEDORN, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. BALDERSON, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. ALLEN, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. ROUZER, Ms. LETLOW, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, Mrs. CAMMACK, Mr. MANN, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. FEENSTRA, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. BACON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, 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

---

A BILL

To codify the ReConnect Program, to expand rural broadband assistance, and to improve the administration and accountability of the broadband programs at the Department of Agriculture.

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Broadband for Rural America Act''.

SEC. 2. STREAMLINING DUPLICATIVE BROADBAND AUTHORITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 601 of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 950bb) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking ''**ACCESS TO BROADBAND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS**'' and inserting ''**RECONNECT RURAL BROADBAND PROGRAM**'';

(2) by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following:

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT; PURPOSE.—The Secretary shall establish a program, which shall be known as the 'ReConnect Rural Broadband Program', to provide grants, loans, and loan guarantees to finance the costs of the construction, improvement, and acquisition of facilities and equipment for broadband service in rural areas.'';

(3) in subsection (b), by striking paragraph (2) and redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (2);

(4) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

''(2) PRIORITY.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—In providing assistance under this section the Secretary shall—

"(i) give the highest priority to applications for projects to provide broadband service to unserved rural communities that do not have any residential broadband service of at least—

"(I) a 10-Mbps downstream transmission capacity; and

"(II) a 1-Mbps upstream transmission capacity;

"(ii) give priority to applicants for projects which propose to serve communities—

"(I) with a population of less than 10,000 permanent residents;

"(II) that are experiencing outmigration and have adopted a strategic community investment plan under section 379H(d) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act that includes considerations for improving and expanding broadband service;

"(III) with a high percentage of low income families or persons (as defined in section 501(b) of the Housing Act of 1949 (42 U.S.C. 1471(b)); or

"(IV) that are isolated from other significant population centers.

"(B) ADDITIONAL PRIORITY FOR ADVANCED PROJECTS.—After giving priority to the applications described in subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall then give priority to applications for projects which propose to provide—

"(i) the maximum level of broadband service to the greatest proportion of rural premises in the proposed service area identified in the application;

"(ii) rapid and expanded deployment of fixed and mobile broadband on cropland and ranchland within a service territory that is not supported by funds from the 5G Fund for Rural America established by the Federal Communications Commission in the Report and Order in the matter of Establishing a 5G Fund for Rural America (FCC 20–150; adopted October 27, 2020),

for use in various applications of precision agriculture.

"(C) ADDITIONAL PRIORITY FOR COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS.—The Secretary shall further prioritize projects based on the number of community stakeholders served, including—

"(i) State, local, and tribal government entities;

"(ii) nonprofit institutions;

"(iii) community anchor institutions, such as—

"(I) public libraries;

"(II) elementary schools and secondary schools (as defined in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801));

"(III) institutions of higher education;

"(IV) health care facilities; or

"(V) other essential community facilities;

"(iv) rural businesses; or

"(v) philanthropic organizations.

"(D) ADMINISTRATION.—In implementing this section, the Secretary shall—

"(i) provide equal consideration to all eligible entities, including those that have not previously received assistance under this title; and

"(ii) with respect to 2 or more applications that are given the same priority under this paragraph, give priority to an application that is proposing to serve the highest number of households without sufficient broadband service."; and

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by striking "GRANT AMOUNTS" and inserting "ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANT AWARDS"; and

(ii) by striking subparagraph (E) and inserting the following:

"(E) APPLICATIONS.—

"(i) GRANT-ONLY APPLICATIONS.—The Secretary shall establish an application process that permits an application for a grant-only award.

"(ii) COMBINED APPLICATIONS.—The Secretary shall establish an application process that permits—

"(I) a single application for a grant and a loan under title I or II, or this title, that is associated with the grant; and

"(II) provides a single decision to award the grant and the loan.";

(5) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking "subparagraphs (B) and (C)" and inserting "subparagraph (B)";

(II) by striking "submitted—" and all that follows through "(i)" and inserting "submitted"; and

(III) by striking "; and" and all that follows through "providers"; and

(ii) by striking subparagraph (C); and

(B) in paragraph (3)(B)(iii), by striking subclause (II) and inserting the following:

"(II) demonstrated on the maps required to be created under section

802(c) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 642(c)), if address level data is available.''; and

(6) by striking subsection (j) and inserting the following:

''(j) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section, to remain available until expended—

''(1) $350,000,000 for fiscal year 2021;

''(2) $3,500,000,000 for fiscal year 2022; and

''(3) $3,500,000,000 for fiscal year 2023.''.

(b) SUNSET.—The authorities provided by section 779 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115–141) shall have no force or effect after June 30, 2022.

(c) TRANSITION RULES.—

(1) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Not more than 1 percent of the unobligated balances of amounts made available as of June 1, 2021, to carry out the pilot program described in section 779 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115–141) may be used for the costs of transitioning from the pilot program to the program under section 601 of the

Rural Electrification Act of 1936, as amended by this Act.

(2) CONSOLIDATION OF FUNDS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The unobligated balances of all amounts made available on or before June 30, 2022, to carry out the pilot program described in section 779 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115–141) that are in excess of the amount described in subparagraph (B) of this paragraph are hereby transferred to and merged with amounts made available to carry out the program authorized under section 601 of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936.

(B) UNFUNDED APPROVALS.—The amount described in this subparagraph is the amount required to fully fund each project approved as of June 30, 2022, under the pilot program described in such section 779 for which amounts were not obligated or partially obligated as of such date.

SEC. 3. EXPANDING MIDDLE-MILE INFRASTRUCTURE IN RURAL AMERICA.

Section 602(g) of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 950bb–1(g)) is amended by striking

"$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2018" and inserting "$150,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021".

SEC. 4. FOSTERING BROADBAND TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION.

Section 603(e) of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 950bb–2(e)) is amended by striking "$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019" and inserting "$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021".

SEC. 5. BROADBAND PROGRAM OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

Section 701 of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 950cc) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(2)(A), by inserting "(which data shall include maps required to be created under section 802(c) of the Communications Act of 1934)" before "and the Administrator"; and

(2) in subsection (e)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking "program level amounts available pursuant to" and inserting "the"; and

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (3) as paragraphs (2) through (4), respectively, and inserting before paragraph (2) (as so redesignated) the following:

"(1) administrative costs for carrying out such title;".

SEC. 6. AMENDMENTS TO FEDERAL BROADBAND PROGRAM COORDINATION REQUIREMENTS.

Section 6212 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (7 U.S.C. 950bb–6) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (a);

(2) by redesignating subsections (b) through (d) as subsections (d) through (f), respectively; and

(3) by inserting before subsection (d) (as so redesignated) the following:

"(a) ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION.—The Secretary shall consult with the Commission to assist in the verification of eligibility of the broadband loan and grant programs of the Department of Agriculture. In providing assistance under the preceding sentence, the Commission shall make available the broadband assessment and mapping capabilities of the Commission.

"(b) INFORMATION-SHARING.—

"(1) The Secretary shall semiannually submit to the Assistant Secretary and the Commission complete, reliable, and precise information (in a manner consistent with how information is submitted under section 802 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 642)) which identifies the areas for which

broadband service has been deployed under a loan or grant program of the Department of Agriculture.

"(2) The Assistant Secretary shall semiannually submit to the Secretary complete, reliable, and precise information (in a manner consistent with how information is submitted under section 802 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 642)) which identifies the areas for which broadband service has been deployed under any assistance provided by the Assistant Secretary, unless the Assistant Secretary has submitted the information to the Commission and the information is incorporated into the maps required to be created under section 802(c) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 642(c)) and is shared with the Secretary under paragraph (3) of this subsection.

"(3) On request of the Secretary, the Commission shall provide to the Secretary the maps required to be created under section 802(c) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 642(c)).

"(c) CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN USDA AND NTIA.—

"(1) BY USDA.—The Secretary shall consult with the Assistant Secretary before providing broadband assistance for a project to serve an area

with respect to which another entity is receiving assistance under any broadband assistance program administered by the Assistant Secretary.

"(2) BY NTIA.—The Assistant Secretary shall consult with the Secretary before offering or providing broadband assistance for a project to serve an area with respect to which another entity has received broadband assistance under a loan or grant program of the Department of Agriculture.".

○

H.R. 5680, Saving Workers by Eliminating Economic Tampering and Ensuring Reliability Act (SWEETER Act)

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117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5680

To repeal the sugar program under the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 and certain other programs relating to sugar, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 22, 2021

Mr. PERRY (for himself, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. TIFFANY, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania, Mr. SMUCKER, Mrs. WAGNER, and Mr. MAST) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

---

A BILL

To repeal the sugar program under the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 and certain other programs relating to sugar, and for other purposes.

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 "Saving Workers by Eliminating Economic Tampering and Ensuring Reliability Act" or the "SWEETER Act".

SEC. 2. REPEAL OF SUGAR PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 156 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7272) is repealed.

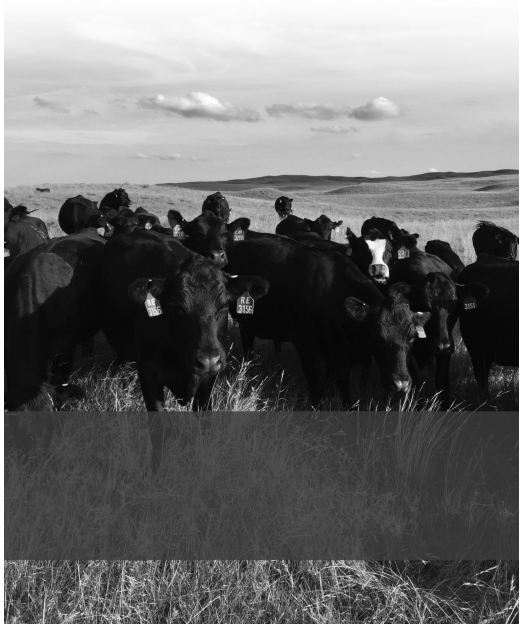
(b) FLEXIBLE MARKETING ALLOTMENTS FOR SUGAR AND TARIFF RATE QUOTAS.—Part VII of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 (7 U.S.C. 1359aa et seq.) is repealed.

(c) FEEDSTOCK FLEXIBILITY PROGRAM.—Section 9010 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8110) is repealed.

○

SUBMITTED REPORT BY HON. DUSTY JOHNSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM SOUTH DAKOTA

Boxed Beef & Fed Cattle Price Spread Investigation Report



[Beef cattle standing in a field.]

July 22, 2020

Table of Contents

I. Introduction
II. Summary of Market Impacts of the Tyson Holcomb Fire
III. General Beef Industry Market Conditions Pre-Fire
IV. Plant Closure and Initial Market Reactions
V. Summary of Market Impacts of the COVID–19 Pandemic
VI. General Beef Industry Market Conditions Pre-Pandemic
VII. Market Reactions
VIII. Continued Vigilance
IX. Figure 1 and Figure 2

Average Weekly Negotiated Price—All Cattle Dressed Basis
Weekly Choice Beef Cutout

X. Figure 3 and Figure 4

Negotiated Choice Cutout/Cattle Price Spread
Fed Cattle—% Weekly Negotiated Cash Sales

XI. Figure 5 and Figure 6

Weekly Est. Federally Inspected Beef Production
Weekly Slaughtered Cattle Purchase Type Breakdown

XII. Other Considerations

a. Price Reporting and Transparency

b. Risk Management Solutions
c. Small Processor and Cooperative Opportunities
d. P&S Act Updates and Enforcement

XIII. Conclusion

Appendix: Price Discovery through Livestock Mandatory Reporting
Appendix References

Introduction

The markets and processing systems responsible for the production and sale of U.S. beef were disrupted by two separate events in 2019 and 2020. The first occurred when the Tyson Fresh Meats (Tyson) beef packing plant in Holcomb, Kansas closed for 4 months following a fire at the facility on August 9, 2019, which disrupted processing systems and markets. The second occurred as COVID–19 spread throughout the U.S. in 2020, which resulted in further and more significant market disruptions.

In the weeks and months after both events, the difference—or spread—between the Choice boxed beef cutout values and dressed fed cattle prices rose to records levels. In response to the rising spreads, the Secretary of Agriculture directed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) to investigate the fed cattle and beef market impacts from the Tyson fire and then expand the investigation to include the COVID–19 impacts. The purpose of the investigation is to examine whether any regulated entities violated the Packers and Stockyards Act by taking advantage of the situation through price manipulation, collusion, restrictions of competition, or other unfair practices.

This report, prepared by AMS in coordination with USDA's Office of the Chief Economist, first summarizes market conditions, fed cattle prices, boxed beef values, and the spread before and after the fire and plant closure at the Tyson Holcomb plant. The report then summarizes market conditions, fed cattle prices, boxed beef values, and the spread before and during the COVID–19 pandemic. It does not examine potential violations of the Packers and Stockyards Act. The investigation into potential violations is ongoing, and therefore, AMS has limited ability to publicly report the full scope and status of the investigation.

Summary of Market Impacts of the Tyson Holcomb Fire

The closure of the Tyson beef packing plant in Holcomb, Kansas, following the August 9, 2019 fire at the facility, disrupted the markets and processing systems responsible for the production and sale of U.S. beef. The plant accounted for approximately five to six percent of the nation's beef processing capacity. The largest difference—or spread—between the dressed fed cattle price and the Choice boxed beef cutout value (since the inception of Mandatory Price Reporting[1] in 2001) was recorded at $67.17/cwt. after the Tyson Holcomb fire. That record was later exceeded following the COVID–19 pandemic in 2020 discussed later in this report.

This report's analysis takes into consideration: trends and conditions in these markets before the fire; seasonal demand for beef heading into the Labor Day holiday weekend; packers, cattle sellers, and beef buyers' responses to the plant closure; and the impacts on dressed fed cattle prices and Choice boxed beef cutout values. Key observations from this analysis include the following:

1. The timing of the fire in early August coincided with the seasonal increase in boxed beef demand leading up to the Labor Day holiday weekend. Typically, many retailers make pricing and promotional decisions several weeks in advance of the Labor Day holiday.
2. Futures prices for fed cattle decreased significantly in the days immediately after the fire. Fed cattle markets then followed with price decreases.
3. Shortly after the fire, packers increased their processing volume primarily through the addition of Saturday slaughter shifts.
4. There was a marked drop in the number and percentage of negotiated cash sales of fed cattle immediately after the fire.
5. The plant closure appeared to affect the spread between boxed beef values and fed cattle prices. The spread between the two peaked at a then-record high of $67.17/cwt. the week ending August 24, while the same week in 2016–2018

[1] *https://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/mmr/lmr.*

averaged a spread of $27.66/cwt., leaving a difference of $39.51/cwt. or 143 percent.[2]

General Beef Industry Market Conditions Pre-Fire

USDA *Market News* collects industry data from a number of data sources on boxed beef cutout values, fed cattle prices, and calculates the spread between boxed beef cutout values and fed cattle prices. AMS also collects data on the percentage of fed cattle purchase types and beef production. These data are shown in *Figures 1* through *6,* and the sources of the data are footnoted in this report.

In the weeks prior to the fire, market conditions were stable, roughly in line with seasonal trends expected in cattle and beef markets. The *Cattle on Feed* report estimated 11.5 million head of cattle on feed on July 1, 2019, the highest July inventory since 1996. The ratio of heifers to steers steadily increased from 2018 to 2019, resulting in lighter overall carcass weights. The lighter carcass weights reduced projections for overall beef production despite the increased inventory of cattle on feed.

Fed cattle prices moved lower before partially recovering from June to July 2019, while beef prices declined over the same period (*Figures 1* and *2*). Based on historical data, the beef price decline was to be expected, as July typically sees a reduction in boxed beef demand following the Independence Day holiday before it rebounds through August as Labor Day approaches. Conditions prior to the fire appeared consistent with this expectation, and the negotiated Choice cutout value ended July down three percent from the previous month.

With cattle prices increasing in July and beef prices decreasing, the spread between the dressed weight prices paid for fed cattle and Choice cutout values narrowed to $31.04/cwt. by the end of the month (*Figure 3*).

Plant Closure and Initial Market Reactions

The fire occurred mid-evening on a Friday when many cattle and beef marketing institutions had closed for the weekend. At the time of the fire, industry estimates indicated the Holcomb plant was harvesting approximately 30,000 head of fed cattle each week, accounting for five to six percent of the weekly U.S. fed cattle slaughter totals. Tyson indicated that due to the excessive damage, including a partial roof collapse, the plant would be closed for an unknown period of time.

Impact on Production

USDA *Market News* collects packer self-reported estimates of daily fed cattle slaughter and releases that report every weekday.[3] Immediately following the fire, packers reported that slaughter numbers for every day of the first week post fire would be lower compared to the previous week, suggesting a reduction in slaughter capacity post fire. Estimates indicating additional Saturday shifts for August 17 were not available until the afternoon of Friday, August 16.

Actual slaughter numbers collected by USDA's Food Safety Inspection Service were not available until August 29, but largely confirmed *Market News* estimates from the first post-fire week. The significant Saturday production—an increase of about 21,000 head—made up some of the actual weekday loss in slaughter, resulting in actual total steer and heifer slaughter numbers being only 1,000 head lower than week leading up to the fire.

Despite the loss of the Holcomb plant, the total number of fed cattle harvested during the first three post-fire weeks actually outpaced that of the three weeks prior to the fire by approximately 5,000 head. This should not be unexpected as rising boxed beef prices and the higher price spread provided an incentive to packers to increase production. In the weeks after the fire, Tyson appears to have shipped a significant portion of the cattle it would have previously processed at the Holcomb plant to its other plants.

Impact on Price

In the weeks before Labor Day, retailers typically have their featuring plans and circulars in place targeting anticipated holiday beef demand. During this time, they move to purchase sufficient product to cover their planned holiday promotions. This

[2] The difference between the weekly average negotiated Choice boxed beef cutout value and the weekly average negotiated price for steers and heifers sourced from the *National Weekly Direct Slaughter Cattle—Negotiated Purchases* (*https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/ams_2481.pdf*) report using an average of the dressed basis and live basis prices where the live basis price is converted to a dressed basis by dividing by an average steer/heifer dressing percentage of 63%. This places cattle prices on a dressed basis for comparison to the Choice beef cutout.

[3] Sourced from the *Estimated Daily Livestock Slaughter Under Federal Inspection* (*https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/sj_ls710.txt*) report.

process was already underway when the fire occurred. Immediately after the fire, beef buyers moved aggressively to procure sufficient product to fulfill their supply needs as the initial information available to market participants indicated the supply of boxed beef may decrease. During the first two weeks post-fire, boxed beef prices trended significantly higher before slowing as needs were covered and a clearer understanding of the plant's closure on the marketplace was gained.

Of note, a comparison of advertised prices for beef by major supermarket chains to consumers for Labor Day 2019 indicates virtually no change from similar ad pricing in 2018. As Labor Day passed, beef demand slowed, and the impacts of the beef supply shock dissipated. With additional market information and increased slaughter, the Choice boxed beef cutout value declined steadily. The boxed beef cutout value returned to pre-fire levels toward the end of September but remained above 2016–2018 levels.

The weekly average Choice boxed beef cutout value for the week of the plant fire stood at $216.04/cwt., one percent above the $213.09/cwt. average for the last week of July. During the first post-fire week, the weekly average Choice cutout value rose to $230.43/cwt. a 6.7 percent increase from the previous week. The Choice cutout continued to rise into the second post-fire week, to $239.87/cwt. an 11 percent total increase from the week of the fire. Beginning the third week post-fire, the Choice cutout value began to decline, continuing to a low of $212.58/cwt. in the first week of October, an 11 percent decline from its high during the second week post-fire (*Figure 2*).[4]

Cattle futures trading on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) is widely followed by cattle market participants as an indicator of future prices for cattle. CME limits the amount that the price of a live cattle futures contract may change in a day. The August live cattle futures contract hit the lower limit of the trading value on the Monday following the fire and again on Tuesday. During the week following the fire, October contracts posted daily declines culminating in a nine percent decline by week's end. Through the remainder of August, October contracts were lower than August contracts suggesting that the futures market expected prices to be lower in October.[5]

The weekly average fed cattle negotiated cash dressed price during the week leading up to the fire was $180/cwt. on a dressed weight basis, one percent below the $181.81/cwt. average for the final week of July. Following the declines in fed cattle futures prices, the price of fed cattle declined six percent to $169.81/cwt. during the first post-fire week, but gained just under two percent in the second post-fire week to $172.70/cwt. Negotiated fed cattle prices declined to a low point of $159.06/cwt. for the week ending September 14 (*Figure 1*).[6]

During the week leading up to the fire, 74,000 head of fed cattle were traded on a negotiated cash basis.[7] The first week following the fire, only 53,750 head were traded on a negotiated basis, a 27 percent decrease from the prior week. Some sales during that period shifted to formula trading. In the same week that negotiated sales fell, there was a 15,000 head increase in formula trading. There was a marked drop in the number and percentage of negotiated cash fed cattle purchases immediately after the fire (*Figures 4* and *6*).

For the week leading up to the plant fire, the spread between the negotiated dressed fed cattle price and the Choice boxed beef value was $36.03/cwt. In the first week post-fire, with declines in fed cattle prices and sharp increases in Choice boxed beef values, the spread widened 68 percent to $60.62/cwt. The spread continued to widen in the second week after the fire, increasing another 11 percent to reach a high of $67.17/cwt. (*Figure 3*), which at the time, was the largest spread between the price of fed cattle and the price of boxed beef since the inception of Mandatory Price Reporting in 2001. After the third week post-fire, the spread narrowed to $41.77/cwt., a 38 percent decrease from its post-fire high.

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[4] Weekly average negotiated Choice boxed beef cutout value on a carcass basis in dollars/cwt. sourced from the *National Weekly Boxed Beef Cutout and Boxed Beef Cuts—Negotiated Sales* (*https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/ams_2461.pdf*) report.

[5] *https://www.cmegroup.com/trading/agricultural/livestock/live-cattle.html.*

[6] The weekly average negotiated price for steers and heifers on a dressed basis sourced from the *National Weekly Direct Slaughter Cattle—Negotiated Purchases* (*https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/ams_2481.pdf*) report using an average of the dressed basis and live basis prices where the live basis price is converted to a dressed basis by dividing by an average steer/heifer dressing percentage of 63%.

[7] The percentage of weekly purchase types (negotiated cash, formula net, forward contract, and negotiated grid) sourced from the *National Weekly Direct Slaughter Cattle—Formulated and Forward Contract—Domestic* (*https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/ams_2478.pdf*) and the *National Weekly Direct Slaughter Cattle—Negotiated Purchases* (*https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/ams_2481.pdf*) reports.

Summary of Market Impacts of the COVID–19 Pandemic

COVID–19 in the United States has significantly disrupted the markets and processing systems responsible for the production and sale of U.S. beef. By the last week of April, disruptions in beef production peaked when nearly 40 percent of the nation's beef processing capacity was idled due to COVID–19 illnesses among packing plant employees. During this COVID–19 pandemic, the largest difference—or spread—between the Choice boxed beef cutout value and dressed fed cattle prices since the inception of Mandatory Price Reporting in 2001 was recorded at just over $279/cwt.

This report summarizes market conditions before and during the pandemic and its impacts on fed cattle prices and boxed beef values, utilizing data covering the period January 1 through June 6, 2020. Key observations from this analysis include:

1. The market reactions to the pandemic during the month of March were characterized by sudden changes in beef demand. Consumers increased purchases of fresh beef at grocery stores, and food service demand declined as restaurants ceased on-site dining.
2. Boxed beef cutout values increased and fed cattle prices were volatile in March as packers operated near full capacity. From the middle of March to early April, the spread between boxed beef values and fed cattle prices increased from $34/cwt. to $66/cwt. The spread averaged just under $21/cwt. during 2016–2018.
3. During April and May, there were significant beef supply disruptions as large numbers of plant workers contracted COVID–19. Plant closures and slowdowns negatively impacted beef production and packer demand for fed cattle. This reduced demand for cattle may have contributed to lower fed cattle prices.
4. An additional surge in consumer retail demand occurred in April when consumers appeared to react to the possibility of beef shortages in grocery stores. The supply disruptions and additional surge in demand may have contributed to a sharp increase in beef values. At the same time, packers purchased fewer cattle as plant closures and slowdowns increased. From early April until the second week of May, the spread grew from $66/cwt. to over $279/cwt., a 323 percent increase.
5. In May, restaurants and other sections of the economy gradually reopened and beef demand began to move back towards a more normal mix between food service and retail grocery demand. May also saw an easing in plant closures and slowdowns. Boxed beef cutout values peaked in the second week of May at $459/cwt. but declined to $298/cwt. by the first week of June. Fed cattle prices rose from a 2020 low of $154/cwt. in late April to $179/cwt. during the first week of June. The spread narrowed from $279/cwt. in the middle of May to $119/cwt. by the beginning of June. It is too early to determine if spread will continue to narrow.

General Beef Industry Market Conditions Pre-Pandemic

USDA *Market News* collects industry data from a number of data sources on boxed beef cutout values, fed cattle prices, and calculates the spread between boxed beef cutout values and fed cattle prices. AMS also collects data on the percentage of fed cattle purchase types and beef production. These data are shown in *Figures 1* through *6*.

The Tyson Fresh Meats (Tyson) beef packing plant in Holcomb, Kansas resumed processing live cattle in early December 2019 likely alleviating concerns about tight slaughter capacity and allowing for a return to seasonal patterns for cattle prices and boxed beef values in early 2020 (*Figures 1* and *2*). Live and futures cattle prices remained stable in January before tracking lower into February and mid-March (*Figure 1*). Beef production outpaced 2019 levels (*Figure 5*) and boxed beef values moved slightly lower from February into March (*Figure 2*). The spread between Choice boxed beef cutout values and fed cattle prices was relatively stable and averaged $17.44/cwt. from January until the middle of March (*Figure 3*).

Market Reactions

The World Health Organization declared a COVID–19 pandemic on March 11, 2020, and a state of emergency was declared in the entirety of the U.S. on March 13. Restrictions on travel and social gatherings ensued. Beef production, prices, and the spread were likely impacted by sudden changes in beef demand patterns during the rest of March as consumers increased retail beef demand by apparently stockpiling retail beef, while food service demand declined dramatically as restaurants shifted to take-out and delivery only.

Supply disruptions followed in April and May as large numbers of plant workers became ill from COVID–19 and plants experienced closures and production declines. News of the supply disruptions may have spurred an additional surge in retail beef demand as consumers may have become concerned about beef shortages and again stockpiled beef. Currently, fewer plant closures and less severe slowdowns appear to be easing the supply disruptions. The gradual reopening of restaurants across the U.S. to in-person dining is currently prompting a shift back to food service demand from retail demand.

Impact on Production, Prices, and Spreads—Changes in Beef Demand (March)

The sudden changes in beef demand began in the middle of March as public concerns about the pandemic increased and consumers appear to have begun stocking up on retail beef as public health orders closed restaurants to in-person dining. USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) acquires proprietary retail scanner data from Information Resources, Inc. (IRI), a market research firm. The IRI scanner data show that consumers increased their weekly retail purchases of beef by approximately 66 and 77 percent for the weeks ending March 15 and March 22, respectively, compared to the same weeks in 2019.

Packers met this increased retail demand by increasing processing volumes (*Figure 5*), including the addition of Saturday shifts. Actual slaughter numbers collected by USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service and reported by AMS *Market News* show that actual slaughter during the third week of March was over 660,000 head of cattle, and in the last week of March, actual slaughter exceeded 684,000 head, 3.8 percent and 10.7 percent higher than the same weeks in 2019, respectively. Despite the production increase, shortages of retail beef for sale in grocery stores existed as packers reportedly were not able to shift beef production and packaging quickly from food service to retail grocery products.

The weekly average Choice boxed beef cutout value rose from $207/cwt. in the middle of March to over $255/cwt. at the beginning of April, an increase of approximately 23 percent (*Figure 2*). Packers increased their beef production by increasing purchases of fed cattle, possibly contributing to an increase in fed cattle prices. From mid-March to early April, dressed fed cattle prices increased from $173/cwt. to $189/cwt., an increase of just over nine percent (*Figure 1*). Futures prices of fed cattle, however, declined over the same time period. One possible reason for the decline is that the length and severity of the pandemic and the markets' responses to its effects are uncertain, which increases the risk of buying futures contracts. The nearby weekly average futures price was over $109/cwt. for the week ending March 6. By the first week of April, the futures price declined to $95.90/cwt.

Rising boxed beef cutout values and fluctuating fed cattle prices increased the spread during March. From mid-March to the beginning of April, the spread increased by approximately 94 percent, from approximately $34/cwt. to $66/cwt. The spread averaged just under $21/cwt. during 2016–2018 (*Figure 3*). Beef packers were able to respond to higher spreads by running plants at higher capacities in March. Also, in March, packing plant employees had not yet been severely impacted by COVID–19, a situation that changed in April.

Impact on Production, Prices, and Spreads—Supply Disruptions (April–May)

Beginning in late March and early April, a large number of plant workers contracted COVID–19. By mid-April, plant closures and slowdowns from COVID–19 illnesses led to dramatic declines in beef production and fed cattle demand. Plant closures and slowdowns increased through the month and peaked at the end of April. The President invoked the Defense Production Act on April 28 and ordered meat processors to remain open. Plant closures and slowdowns eased throughout May.

During the last full week of March, beef production was 68 million pounds higher than the same week in 2019, but was 180 million pounds lower than the same week in 2019 by the last week of April, a year-over-year decrease of 34 percent (*Figure 5*).[8] Actual slaughter data collected by USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service and reported by AMS *Market News* show that weekly slaughter decreased from over 684,000 head at the end of March to under 439,000 at the end of April, a decrease of 36 percent.

An additional surge in retail beef demand occurred in April when consumers appeared to react to the possibility of beef shortages in grocery stores. IRI scanner data show that consumers increased their retail purchases of beef from the corresponding weeks during 2019 by approximately 29 percent and 44 percent for the

[8] Sourced from the *Weekly Actual Slaughter Under Federal Inspection* (*https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/sj_ls711.txt*) report.

weeks ending April 19 and April 26, respectively. Grocery stores responded to shortages by rationing sales and cutting promotions.

The beef supply disruption and the additional beef demand surge contributed to further increases in boxed beef values. The weekly average Choice boxed beef cutout value rose from approximately $255/cwt. at the beginning of April to over $459/cwt. by the second week of May, an increase of approximately 80 percent (*Figure 2*).

After the plant closures and slowdowns, packers purchased fewer fed cattle, which likely contributed to decreased fed cattle prices. From the beginning of April until the beginning of May, dressed fed cattle prices decreased from $189/cwt. to $154/cwt., a decrease of over 18 percent (*Figure 1*) and a low price so far for 2020. As packer purchases of fed cattle declined, cattle began backing up in feedlots leading to higher carcass weights. The carcass weights of all grades of steers and heifers reported by AMS *Market News* showed that carcass weights averaged 914 pounds in the first week of April, peaked at 952 pounds in the third week of April, and declined to just above 900 pounds in late April into May. This is well above 2019 levels, which averaged 878 pounds in April.

The May USDA *Cattle on Feed* report shows that April marketings of fed cattle to packers were down 24.3 percent from 2019. This follows a 13.1 percent increase in March from 2019 as reported in the March USDA *Cattle on Feed* report. Feedlot placements by producers and feeders were 22 percent lower in April than in 2019.

The apparent changes in supply and demand in April and May occurred as the spread reached record highs. From the beginning of April until the third week of May, the spread rose from approximately $66/cwt. to just over $279/cwt., an increase of approximately 323 percent (*Figure 3*) and the largest spread between the price of fed cattle and the price of boxed beef since the inception of Mandatory Price Reporting in 2001.

Impact on Production, Prices, and Spreads—Gradual Reopening of the Economy

By the end of May, all 50 states were in some phase of reopening their economies, including restaurants to in-person dining. The gradual reopening of the economy, restaurants in particular, shows a trend for beef demand moving back towards a more normal mix between food service and retail grocery demand. The gradual reopening of the economy also occurred during a period of increased operating capacity due to reductions in plant closures and slowdowns. The plant disruptions peaked at the end of April and decreased throughout May.

In the second full week of May, boxed beef cutout values peaked at approximately $459/cwt. but declined to $298/cwt. by the first week of June (*Figure 2*). Dressed fed cattle prices increased from approximately $154/cwt., during the last of week of April to $179/cwt. in the first week of June, an increase of approximately 16 percent (*Figure 1*). The increase in fed cattle prices occurred at the same time as the recovery in the nearby cattle futures from $86.64/cwt. during the last week of April to $100.35/cwt. during the last week of May before declining again to $95.74 the first week of June.

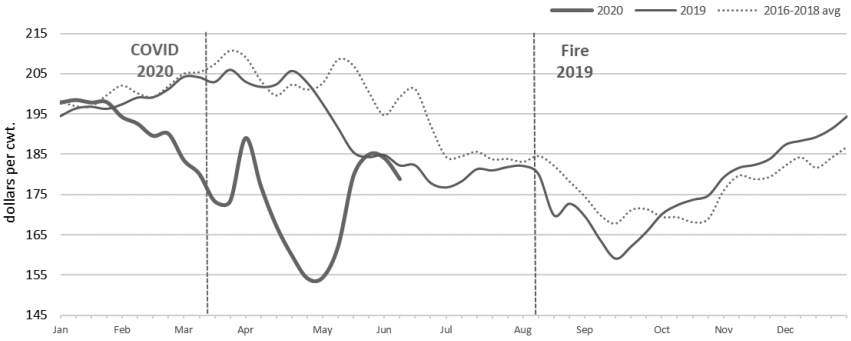
As beef values declined and fed cattle prices increased, the spread has narrowed. During the Afirst week of June, the spread narrowed to approximately $119/cwt., down from approximately $279/cwt. during the first and second weeks of May (*Figure 3*). This is a decrease of approximately 57 percent, but the spread is still high by historical standards. It is too early to determine if this trend will continue as uncertainty persists over the recovery of the supply situation at beef plants and the recovery of food service demand amid continued COVID–19 concerns and any continued effects.

Continued Vigilance

Findings thus far do not preclude the possibility that individual entities or groups of entities violated the Packers and Stockyards Act during the aftermath of the Tyson Holcomb fire and the COVID–19 pandemic. The investigation into potential violations under the Packers and Stockyards Act is continuing.

USDA does not solely own investigatory authority over anticompetitive practices in the meat packing industry and has been engaged in discussions with the Department of Justice (DOJ) regarding allegations of anticompetitive practices in the meat packing industry. Should USDA find a violation of the Packers and Stockyards Act, it is authorized to report the violation to DOJ for prosecution.

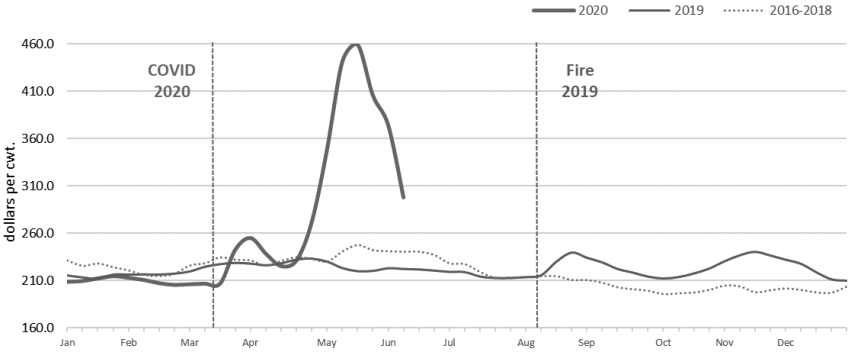
Figure 1. Average Weekly Negotiated Price—All Cattle Dressed Basis



Weekly average negotiated cash basis prices for all cattle on a dressed basis in dollars per cwt. comparing 2020 to 2019 and to the 2016–2018 average.

Source: USDA Agricultural Marketing Service.

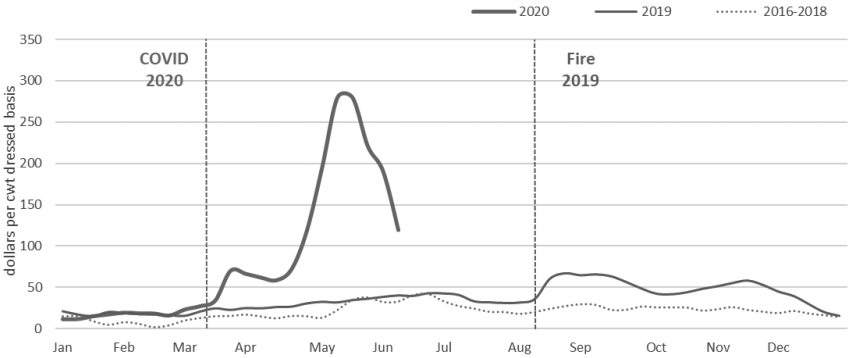
Figure 2. Weekly Choice Beef Cutout



Weekly average negotiated Choice boxed beef cutout value on a carcass basis in dollars per cwt. comparing 2020 to 2019 and to the 2016–2018 average.

Source: USDA Agricultural Marketing Service.

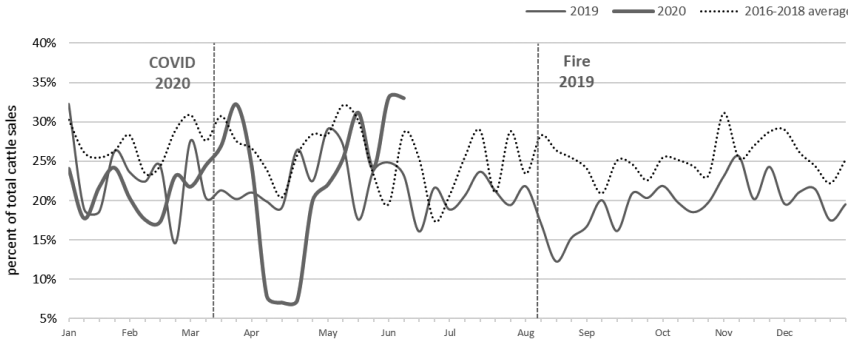
Figure 3. Negotiated Choice Cutout/Cattle Price Spread



The dollar difference between the weekly average negotiated dressed basis Choice boxed beef cutout value and the weekly average negotiated dressed basis price for live fed cattle.

Source: USDA Agricultural Marketing Service.

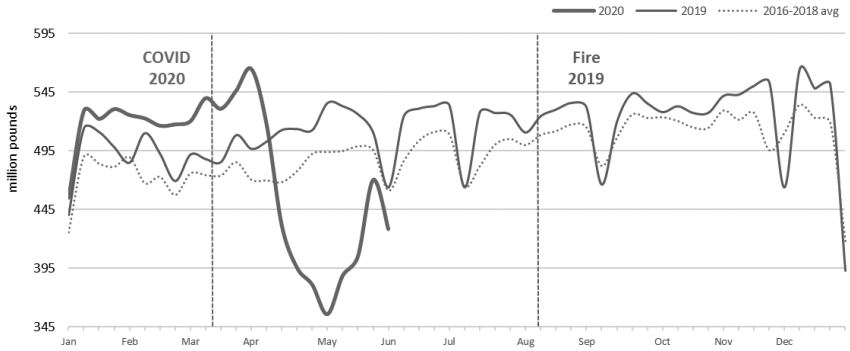
Figure 4. Fed Cattle—% Weekly Negotiated Cash Sales



Weekly average percentage of negotiated fed cattle cash sales of total fed cattle sales comparing 2020 to 2019 and to the 2016–2018 average and highlighting the immediate post-plant closure period.

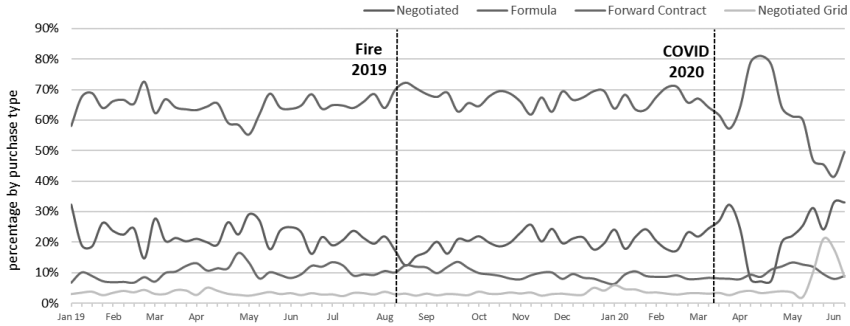
Source: USDA Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 5. Weekly Est. Federally Inspected Beef Production



Source: USDA Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 6. Weekly Slaughter Cattle Purchase Type Breakdown



Weekly average percentage by purchase type (negotiated cash, formula net, forward contract, and negotiated grid).

Source: USDA Agricultural Marketing Service.

Other Considerations

The preceding summary of market conditions is only one component of a larger discussion within the cattle, beef, and related industries that share a common nar-

rative about a highly concentrated meatpacking sector. At the core of many of these discussions is the desire by many market participants for improved price discovery, reinvigorated competition, and a more transparent relationship between the prices for live cattle and the resulting products.

Price Reporting and Transparency

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) strives to alleviate conjecture in the marketplace through its various market reporting programs, including Livestock Mandatory Reporting (LMR). LMR, in operation for nearly two decades, disseminates timely market information to the public at no cost to its users. As LMR has become a key source of information for many contracts and marketing agreements, it is incumbent upon AMS to further leverage that authority to assist in the marketing of America's cattle and beef—especially in ensuring an even playing field for all participants regardless of size or resource.

One of the underlying concerns about price discovery is the declining number of participants in the negotiated cash market. As the number of participants has diminished, confidentiality guidelines have resulted in periods when prices cannot be reported in certain regions (*e.g.,* Colorado), leading to concerns about price transparency. Last year, AMS commissioned economists at Kansas State and Iowa State Universities to evaluate the current 5-Area Cattle Reporting regions. Their findings pinpointed several ways to reduce the incidence of non-reporting in LMR due to an inability to meet confidentiality guidelines (See *Appendix*). A reduction in non-reporting will provide improved price discovery. Most notably, a combination or reshuffling of reporting regions—a change that could be made without legislative action—could ultimately expand the market data released to the public. However, there has not been industry consensus on such a recommendation to date.

On a daily and weekly basis, AMS disseminates estimated and actual slaughter information. through the *Estimated Daily Livestock Slaughter, and the Actual Weekly Livestock Slaughter, under Federal Inspection reports*[i]—giving the industry valued information on supply and volume. With a majority of packers covered by AMS through LMR, the accuracy of the estimated data report is high, usually under a 0.5% differential. The Actual Slaughter Under Federal Inspection report is released two weeks after the estimated totals allowing time for FSIS data collection and consolidation. Given the long history of the accuracy of the daily slaughter estimates, USDA is exploring the idea of no longer referring to the daily report as an "estimate" to encourage the market's immediate use of the information. The daily report would still be followed up with the confirmatory report using FSIS data and would continue to include the highly sought-after information in the current report regarding actual weights for cattle, steers, and heifers.

AMS has also explored a 14 day slaughter scheduled delivery submission requirement through LMR, a precedent currently in place for daily LMR swine reporting. An LMR cattle submission form change would be required, to allow the capture of the slaughter schedule. Under this scenario, beef packers could report daily the number of cattle scheduled to be delivered for slaughter each day for the next 14 calendar days. A 14 day cattle slaughter schedule exhibits two informative advantages over the current slaughter reports: (1) the data is available several hours earlier each day, and (2) scheduled delivery figures are provided for well beyond just the current slaughter day.

In light of steadily decreasing percentages of negotiated sales and continued market volatility, USDA is also aware of a variety of proposals by external stakeholders that would require packers to meet a minimum threshold of purchases via negotiated cash trade. Likewise, USDA is aware of the variety of concerns with these proposals and potential unintended consequences throughout the industry, especially if regional considerations are not adequately considered.

Such regional disparities might be addressed in part by tying the minimum purchase thresholds to regional reporting abilities. Under this approach, if an LMR region began to fail to meet confidentiality guidelines due to packers not procuring cattle on a negotiated cash basis, with the proper legislative authority, AMS could track and inform packers of the requirement to make an additional percentage of such purchases in the following week to allow for reporting. This would not place further reporting burden on packers as AMS *Market News* already receives data from beef packers on both a company and plant basis, broken down by purchase type, including negotiated cash sales. Computer programming could be implemented to more readily track negotiated cash sales as a percentage of company or plant purchases. If Congress did provide this additional authority, careful consideration must be given to the time period in which the purchase requirement would apply.

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[i] *https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/sj_ls710.txt.*

In an effort to promote price transparency, private and industry groups have long worked to develop an online platform to encourage the negotiated marketing of fed cattle. However, the platform has struggled to attain significant packer participation. Exercise of the new authorities contemplated above could support the effort by driving increased participation.

Beyond the scope of LMR, the concept of creating and compensating a pool of negotiated cash market traders has been explored by some in academia and industry. With further development and discussion, the idea may prove an innovative and flexible approach to solving the public good problem of a lack of reliable price discovery.

Risk Management Solutions

Small- and medium-sized producers could better position themselves to more effectively negotiate sales with packers and compete with large producers if they had better access to risk management training. For example, cattle feeders that hedged (sold a futures contract) when they placed cattle on feed prior to the pandemic were able to mitigate the steep decline in live cattle prices after the pandemic by closing their hedge (buying a futures contract at a lower price) at a profit. Small- and medium-sized producers could also benefit from products tailored specifically for operations of their size. USDA, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME), and relevant producer groups could partner to offer outreach and education opportunities and could also explore the alteration of existing futures contracts and the development of new contracts or derivatives specifically designed to level the playing field between large producers—who have greater access to information and capital—and small- and medium-sized producers. A straightforward example is reducing the number of pounds per CME feeder and live cattle contract, currently at 50,000 and 40,000 respectively, to a lower number of pounds to give small- and medium-sized producers additional flexibility in managing their risk through hedging strategies. New products like a boxed beef contract could also be considered that place commercial participants' interests in a more balanced position with those of speculators and managed money.

Additionally, USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) currently offers plans to protect against gross margin losses for fed cattle (Livestock Gross Margin) and price declines for feeder and fed cattle (Livestock Risk Protection). The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation Board of Directors (Board) recently approved changes for both of these products to make them more affordable and accessible to producers. Improved risk management products could allow small- and medium-sized producers to compete more effectively with large producers and weather market disruptions caused by events such as COVD–19 that have a disproportionate impact on small- and medium-sized producers.

Small Processor and Cooperative Opportunities

USDA further recognizes there are many discussions about reducing the burden for smaller meat processors, asserting that the high cost of compliance with Federal requirements are barriers to entry and/or survival. USDA's utmost goal through the Food Safety and Inspection Service's work is to protect food safety, and as a result, the agency has dedicated significant resources to outreach, education and technical assistance for these small businesses. Additionally, pursuant the 2018 Farm Bill, the Food Safety and Inspection Service is working with a third-party to review and improve upon the effectiveness of the agency's guidance and outreach to small and very small meat processors.

The current pandemic has also created a resurgence in demand for services provided by these small and very small processors, and for consumers who are interested in buying their meat more directly from the farm and ranch where it was raised. We understand the addition of direct-to-consumer options for beef producers, small processors, retailers, and others must be done in a way that does not compromise federal food safety standards or create disruption with our trading partners. USDA is committed to working with stakeholders to balance food safety with these growing consumer preferences and growing e-commerce platforms.

While USDA's Rural Development (RD) programs does not offer a loan or grant program specific to meat processors, a number of loan guarantee and grant programs administered by RD can provide assistance to small and very small meat processors looking to develop or expand their business. RD loan guarantees can be used by individuals, businesses, or cooperatives for: acquisition, conversion, enlargement, repair, modernization, development, purchase of equipment, leasehold improvements, machinery, supplies, or inventory.

The cooperative model (co-op) has long been an option for producer collaboration to enhance marketing power. Small scale application of the co-op model has also

proven successful in providing small producers access to processing services in limited instances. However, large scale co-op meat processing facilities have historically struggled to reach sustainable levels of profitability. USDA's Rural Cooperative Development Grant funds centers for co-op development across the country that can offer technical assistance in organizing and forming a co-op. USDA also maintains a library of educational resources on a wide range of co-op operation topics.

P&S Act Updates and Enforcement

In January, USDA issued a proposed rule to establish criteria the Secretary would consider when determining whether an undue or unreasonable preference or advantage has occurred in violation of the Packers and Stockyards Act (P&S Act). The proposed rule acknowledged current court precedent regarding the consideration of harm to competition when determining if a preference or advantage violates the Act, but also provided the Secretary four criteria for careful consideration and the option to consider additional factors as warranted. USDA is currently reviewing the 2,351 comments received in response to the proposal as it works to finalize the rule.

Beyond rulemaking, small- and medium-sized producers could also benefit from updates to the P&S Act designed to offset the impacts of operating in a concentrated industry, where the market power resides with large meatpackers. Smaller producers often find themselves to be price takers in the market for fed cattle and lack the volume of larger producers to negotiate unique and advantageous marketing agreements with large meatpackers.

In efforts to address this imbalance, there has been discussion of creating a beef contract library similar to the swine contract library USDA currently maintains pursuant to Section 222 of the P&S Act. Amending the P&S Act to develop a similar library for beef transactions could help increase price discovery in cattle markets and enhance access to market information for all market participants, regardless of size.

Interested stakeholders and legislators may also consider targeted amendments to the P&S Act that would provide USDA with investigative and enforcement tools on par with those of our Federal partners. For example, the ability to issue Civil Investigative Demands ("CIDs") with respect to unfair or deceptive acts or practices would bring USDA's authorities in line with those of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and DOJ. While subpoenas are useful, the additional authority to require written reports and answers to questions could be very beneficial in certain investigations. Amendments to elevate certain packer conduct to criminal violations and provide the Secretary with the tools necessary to carry out appropriate criminal investigations may also be ripe for consideration.

Conclusion

It is important that any proposals aimed at addressing these complex issues and others associated with the market disruptions caused by the Holcomb fire and COVID–19 receive careful consideration and thorough vetting given their potential to affect everyone whose livelihood depends on the sale of cattle, beef, or related products. USDA stands ready to assist stakeholders and policymakers as they continue to explore options to improve price discovery, level the playing field between producers and large meatpackers in negotiating prices and procurement methods, and to foster a more transparent relationship between the prices for live cattle and the resulting products.

Appendix: Price Discovery through Livestock Mandatory Reporting

Price discovery in the cattle markets has been a major concern for decades and a driving force behind the enactment of The Livestock Mandatory Reporting Act of 1999. Livestock Mandatory Reporting (LMR) applies to slaughter cattle, swine, sheep, boxed beef, lamb meat, and wholesale pork. LMR was implemented in 2001, reauthorized in 2006, 2010, and 2015. Currently, LMR is set to expire September 30, 2020.

Who and what is subject to Livestock Mandatory Reporting?

For cattle reporting, federally inspected packing plants that annually slaughter or process an average of 125,000 cattle are required to report information. Packers must report information of all transactions involving the purchases of slaughter cattle. Data on the prices and quantities of livestock and livestock products are reported on a daily and weekly basis. The cattle transaction types include:

- Negotiated purchase (spot market purchase): A price is determined through buyer and seller interaction, and the cattle are scheduled for delivery within 30 days of the agreement.

- Forward Contract purchase: An agreed upon price is scheduled ahead of slaughter, and a base price is tied to price quotes in the futures market.
- Negotiated Grid purchase: A base price is determined through buyer and seller interaction within 14 days of delivery, but the final net price includes premiums and discounts.
- Formula purchase: An advanced agreement of cattle delivery that does not utilize the purchase methods above.
- Packer-owned: Owned by the packer for more than 14 days.

Cattle data are aggregated to the national level as well as several regions: Texas-Oklahoma-New Mexico, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, Iowa-Minnesota, and 5-Area (composed of the five regions included in this list).

When is data excluded from reporting?

Data may not be published due to confidentiality issues. To publish an LMR report, the data must meet the 3/70/20 confidentiality guideline, which requires the following:

- At least three reporting entities need to provide data at least 50 percent of the time over the most recent 60-day time period.
- No single reporting entity may provide more than 70 percent of the data for a report over the most recent 60-day time period.
- No single reporting entity may be the sole reporting entity for an individual report more than 20 percent of the time over most recent 60-day time period.

Additionally, for daily purchases of slaughter steers and heifers, transaction lots with 10 head or less are excluded.

What is Livestock Mandatory Reporting's Impact on Price Discovery?

Several studies have taken place since the inception of LMR, evaluating its impact on livestock markets. A 2015 study by Matthews and colleagues analyzed the discovery of livestock market prices. The study concluded that LMR increased the flow of market information, leading to better informed markets. Boyer and Brorsen (2013) studied the impact of LMR on beef markets and concluded that if price uncertainty is reduced for packers, then cattle feeders benefit from increased competition by the packers. An earlier work of Azzam (2003) reported that LMR could assist with increasing competitiveness in livestock marketings. Last, the 2018 Report to Congress on Livestock Mandatory Reporting found that during the October 2013 Government Shutdown, livestock markets were deeply affected by the lack of LMR. For example, the CME Group suspended its feeder cattle index, and private sector economic analysis was stifled due to the lack of LMR during the shutdown (Agricultural Marketing Service, 2018).

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SUBMITTED REPORT BY HON. AL LAWSON, JR., A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM FLORIDA

Food Insecurity: Better Information Could Help Eligible College Students Access Federal Food Assistance Benefits

December 2018
GAO–19–95

GAO Highlights

Highlights of *GAO–19–95,*[1] a report to Congressional requesters.

Why GAO Did This Study

Increasing evidence indicates that some college students are experiencing food insecurity, which can negatively impact their academic success. However, college stu-

[1] *https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-19-95.*

dents are only eligible for SNAP in certain cases. Given the substantial Federal investment in higher education and the risk posed if students do not complete their degrees, GAO was asked to review food insecurity among college students.

This report examines (1) what is known about the extent of food insecurity among college students and their use of SNAP; (2) how selected colleges are addressing student food insecurity; and (3) the extent to which Federal programs assist students experiencing food insecurity. GAO reviewed relevant Federal laws and agency documents and studies on student food insecurity; analyzed 2016 Federal student data (the most recent available), and visited four states, selected based on actions taken to address student food insecurity, geographic diversity, and other factors. GAO interviewed researchers; officials from Education, FNS national and regional offices; and officials at 14 colleges, including students at eight of these colleges. GAO also emailed all state SNAP agencies about their efforts related to students.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that FNS (1) improve student eligibility information on its website and (2) share information on state SNAP agencies' approaches to help eligible students. FNS partially concurred, and plans to review its information. GAO continues to believe additional action is warranted, as discussed in the report.

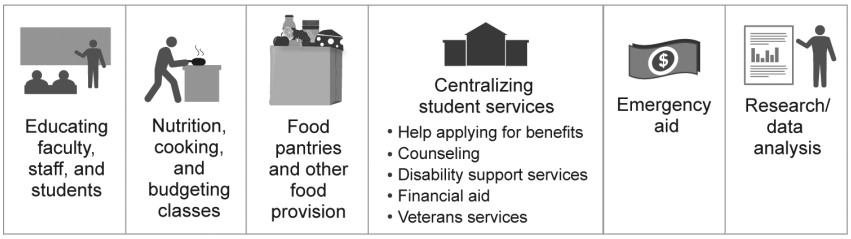
View *GAO–19–95.*[2] For more information, contact Kathryn Larin at (202) 512–7215 or *larink@gao.gov*.

What GAO Found

There is limited information about the national prevalence of food insecurity among college students. GAO reviewed 31 studies that identified a wide range of food insecurity rates among the students studied, but the studies did not provide national estimates. College students at risk of food insecurity may be eligible for benefits from the Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). However, GAO's analysis of Department of Education (Education) data shows that almost two million at-risk students who were potentially eligible for SNAP did not report receiving benefits in 2016. According to GAO's analysis, having a low income is the most common risk factor for food insecurity among college students. Among low-income students, most have one additional risk factor associated with food insecurity, such as being a first-generation student or a single parent.

The 14 selected colleges that GAO contacted were addressing student food insecurity in a number of ways. For example, all 14 were providing free food to students through on-campus food pantries, and most were offering emergency funds to help students pay for living expenses that might otherwise force them to choose between buying food or staying in school. Many of these colleges had centralized student services to better address their students' basic needs and provide other support, such as screening students for potential eligibility and helping them apply for Federal benefit programs like SNAP.

Selected Colleges' Initiatives to Address Student Food Insecurity



Source: Information from colleges GAO contacted. |GAO–19–95

Federal student aid generally does not cover all college costs for low-income students, and college students may have limited access to Federal food assistance programs such as SNAP because of program eligibility restrictions. Some state SNAP agencies reported that they are taking steps to help students access SNAP by conducting outreach to colleges and developing guidance. Nevertheless, at 9 of the 14 colleges GAO contacted, some college officials and students said that they were unfamiliar with or did not fully understand SNAP's student eligibility rules. Some college officials said that they would like information from FNS to better explain SNAP

[2] *https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-19-95*.

student rules, but FNS has not made such information easily accessible on its website. Further, college officials and state SNAP agencies noted that FNS does not share examples of actions taken by other states to help eligible students access SNAP. Clarification of SNAP student eligibility rules and enhanced information sharing about state efforts could help ensure that potentially eligible college students can access Federal food assistance programs.

Contents

Letter

Background

Information about the Prevalence of Food Insecurity among College Students Nationally is Limited and Many Potentially Eligible, At-Risk Students Do Not Receive SNAP

Selected Colleges Are Using a Range of Approaches to Address Student Food Insecurity

While SNAP Can Supplement Other Federal Aid for Some Low-Income Students, FNS Does Not Share Key Information to Help States Better Leverage SNAP to Assist Students

Conclusions

Recommendations for Executive Action

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

Appendix I: Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

Appendix II: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

Tables

Table 1: Prevalence of Risk Factors Associated with Food Insecurity among Low-Income U.S. College Undergraduate Students, by College Type in 2016

Table 2: Prevalence of Risk Factors Associated with Food Insecurity among Low-Income U.S. College Undergraduate Students in 2016

Table 3: Studies Included in GAO's Review That Estimate College Student Food Insecurity

Table 4: Risk Factors Identified by GAO Associated with Food Insecurity Among College Students

Table 5. Selected Risk Factors and Corresponding Variables in the 2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study Data Set

Table 6: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Eligibility Exemptions for College Students and Corresponding Variables in the 2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study Data Set

Table 7: List of 2 and 4 year Selected Colleges that GAO Contacted, by State

Figures

Figure 1: Percentages and Characteristics of Traditional and Nontraditional College Students in 2016

Figure 2: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Participation among Low-Income College Students At-Risk of Food Insecurity in 2016

Figure 3: Initiatives by Selected Colleges to Address Student Food Insecurity

Figure 4: Pictures of Food Pantries from GAO Site Visits to Selected Colleges

Abbreviations

Education	U.S. Department of Education
E&T	Employment and Training
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
FNS	Food and Nutrition Service
NPSAS	National Postsecondary Student Aid Study
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture

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December 21, 2018

The Honorable DEBBIE STABENOW,
Ranking Member,

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry,
United States Senate;

The Honorable PATTY MURRAY,
Ranking Member,
Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions,
United States Senate;

The Honorable EDWARD J. MARKEY,
United States Senate;

The Honorable ELIZABETH WARREN,
United States Senate.

In Fiscal Year 2017, the Federal Government spent over $122 billion in grants, loans, and work-study funds through Federal student aid programs to help make college accessible to students.[1] This substantial Federal investment in higher education is at risk if college students drop out because they cannot afford basic necessities like food. The Federal Government also spent $98 billion in Fiscal Year 2017 on nutrition assistance programs, including $68 billion on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the nation's largest nutrition assistance program, to combat food insecurity. College students enrolled at least half time, however, are generally not eligible for SNAP benefits unless they fall into certain categories designed to more narrowly target students in need of assistance. According to some studies, college students who experience food insecurity, which the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines as the condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food, may also experience decreased academic performance, symptoms of depression and anxiety, and other negative mental health indicators.[2] In light of the potential obstacles to college students' academic success posed by lack of access to adequate food, you asked us to review the issue of food insecurity among college students.

This report examines: (1) what is known about the extent of food insecurity among college students and their use of SNAP; (2) how selected colleges are addressing student food insecurity; and (3) the extent to which Federal programs assist college students experiencing food insecurity.

To determine what is known about the extent of food insecurity among college students, we conducted an in-depth review of studies. To be included, studies had to: (1) be based on research conducted in and published in the United States; (2) be published after 2007; and (3) contain original, direct estimates of food insecurity rates among college students. We identified 35 studies that met these criteria, but subsequently eliminated four of these from our in-depth review due to concerns about their methodological limitations. We reviewed and summarized the remaining 31 studies.

We also analyzed National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) data from the 2015–2016 academic year, the most recent year available, to estimate the prevalence of risk factors for food insecurity among college students. Nationally representative survey data that would support direct estimates of the prevalence of food insecurity among college students do not currently exist. However, the National Center for Education Statistics at the Department of Education (Education) regularly collects NPSAS data, which contain nationally representative, detailed demographic and financial data about college students.[3] We assessed the reliability of the NPSAS data by reviewing existing information about the data and the system that produced

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[1] For this report, we define Federal student aid programs as financial aid programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, Pub. L. No. 89–329, Title IV, 79 Stat. 1219 (codified at 20 U.S.C. § 1001 et seq.). These include the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan, the Federal Pell Grant, and the Federal Work-Study programs.

[2] See Suzanna M. Martinez, Edward A. Frongillo, Cindy Leung, and Lorrene Ritchie, "No Food for Thought: Food Insecurity is Related to Poor Mental Health and Lower Academic Performance among Students in California's Public University System," *Journal of Health Psychology* (June 25, 2018), accessed at *http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1359105318783028;* Maya E. Maroto, Anastasia Snelling, and Henry Linck, "Food Insecurity among Community College Students: Prevalence and Association with Grade Point Average," *Community College Journal of Research and Practice,* vol. 39, no. 6 (2015); Megan M. Patton-López, Daniel F. López-Cevallos, Doris I. Cancel-Tirado, and Leticia Vazquez, "Prevalence and Correlates of Food Insecurity among Students Attending a Midsize Rural University in Oregon," *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior,* vol. 46, no. 3 (2014); Meg Bruening, Stephanie Brennhofer, Irene van Woerden, Michael Todd, and Melissa Laska, "Factors Related to the High Rates of Food Insecurity among Diverse, Urban College Freshmen," *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics,* vol. 116, no. 9 (2016).

[3] NPSAS data are based on a nationally representative sample of college students. Data are collected from multiple sources, including school records and government databases, as well as student interviews.

them and by interviewing agency officials knowledgeable about the data. As a result, we determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report. We identified risk factors associated with food insecurity through a literature review and through interviews with academic researchers, college officials, state and Federal officials, and relevant policy organizations. We also analyzed NPSAS data to estimate SNAP participation among potentially eligible students.

To understand how selected colleges address student food insecurity, we conducted site visits in California, Kentucky, Massachusetts, and Michigan. We selected a geographically diverse group of states where colleges or state SNAP agencies were actively addressing food insecurity among college students. In selecting these states, we reviewed literature and asked researchers we interviewed about colleges and states that were actively addressing food insecurity on campus. In each state, we met with administrators, faculty, and students at selected 2 and 4 year public colleges and with officials from the state agencies that administer the SNAP program and other relevant organizations. Overall, we contacted 14 colleges—seven 2 year and seven 4 year colleges—that were actively addressing food insecurity among their students.[4] We also interviewed researchers and staff at policy organizations knowledgeable about SNAP and college student food insecurity.

To assess the extent to which Federal programs assist college students experiencing food insecurity, we reviewed relevant Federal laws, regulations, and agency guidance and program documents. We emailed the 51 state SNAP agency directors (all 50 states and the District of Columbia) to ask whether their state agency is taking any action to address college student food insecurity and received responses from 50 of them.[5] We interviewed state SNAP agency directors in our site visit states of California, Kentucky, Massachusetts, and Michigan, as well as in Washington because of its innovative partnerships with colleges. We also interviewed USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) officials at the national office as well as at four of the seven FNS regional offices.[6] We compared FNS's communication and information sharing activities against Federal internal control standards. Further details on our methodology are available in *appendix I.*

We conducted this performance audit from July 2017 to December 2018 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Background

The Federal Government, states, colleges, students and their families all play important roles in financing higher education costs.[7] Under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, the Federal Government offers students at all types of colleges financial assistance to help pay for their education, such as through the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Federal Direct Loan), the Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant), and the Federal Work-Study programs. Some of this aid is targeted toward students based on their financial need. For example, Education provided almost $27 billion in Pell Grants to low-income students in Fiscal Year 2017. States also provide funding to public colleges through state appropriations for operating expenses and grant programs that provide financial aid directly to students based on financial need, merit, or a combination of both. Despite the substantial Federal expenditure in higher education, rising college costs have outpaced Federal and state grant aid and, over time, have led to an increasing share of the cost being borne by students and their families. For example, over the past 30 years, the average in-state net price for a full-time undergraduate student at a public 4 year college—after taking into account all grant aid and education tax benefits—has nearly doubled, from about $8,000 in 1990–1991 to nearly $15,000 in 2017–2018. At public

[4] We visited 12 colleges as a part of our site visits and conducted telephone interviews with officials at 2 colleges in other states.

[5] Michigan's state SNAP agency did not respond to our email. However, we interviewed the Michigan state SNAP agency director during the course of our review and incorporated the state's actions to address student food insecurity into our report, as appropriate.

[6] We interviewed the four FNS regional offices that are responsible for oversight of our site visit states.

[7] For purposes of this report, "colleges" include 2 and 4 year degree-granting institutions as well as those that provide technical training in certificate programs of shorter duration. Unless otherwise noted, "college students" refers to undergraduates enrolled in one of these institutions.

2 year colleges, the net price for full-time students increased over the same time period from about $6,800 to $8,000.[8]

To plan for the cost of college, students and their families must consider the full cost of attendance, which includes not only tuition and fees, but also room and board and other miscellaneous expenses.[9] The Federal Government requires colleges to estimate and distribute information on the full cost of attendance to prospective and enrolled students. The amount of need-based Federal aid a student is eligible for is based, in part, upon the school's estimated cost of attendance.

Changes in College Student Demographics

National data show that, over the past several decades, an increasing percentage of students from low-income households are enrolling in college. According to NPSAS data, the percentage of all undergraduates who had a household income at or below 130 percent of the Federal poverty line increased from 28 percent in 1996 to 39 percent in 2016.[10] In addition, the percentage of college students receiving a Pell Grant has nearly doubled over roughly the same time period. For example, in 1999–2000, approximately 23 percent of college students received a Pell Grant, and in 2016, this figure was about 40 percent.[11] Some researchers have suggested that reductions in Federal and state funding of higher education relative to the increasing cost of college have coupled with these student demographics to increase the share of college costs borne by students, which can reduce the amount students have to support their basic needs, such as food and housing.[12]

A traditional college student is generally considered to be someone who is enrolled in college full time immediately after graduating from high school, is financially dependent on his or her parents, and either does not work during the school year or works part time.[13] However, these students represent a minority of students enrolled in college today. According to NPSAS data, about half of all undergraduate students enrolled in college in 2016 were considered financially independent from their parents. About 22 percent had dependent children themselves, and 14 percent were single parents. The average college student in 2016 was 26 years old and first enrolled at age 21. Sixty-four percent of college students in 2016 worked at least part time while enrolled, and ¼ worked full time. See *figure 1* for the percentages of traditional and nontraditional students in 2016 and for Education's list of traditional and nontraditional student characteristics.

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[8] Net price is the cost of college per student after all financial aid and education tax benefits are taken into account. This figure includes tuition, fees, room, and board (the cost of food). To increase transparency about college costs and help students make informed decisions about which college they can afford, the Federal Government requires all colleges that are authorized to disburse Federal financial aid to annually publish on their website a net price calculator. These figures are collected and published in Sandy Baum, Jennifer Ma, Matea Pender, and Meredith Welch, *Trends in Student Aid 2017* (New York: The College Board, October 2017).

[9] Room costs include an allowance for living expenses for students who do not live on campus. Miscellaneous expenses may include allowances for books, supplies, transportation, loan fees, and, if applicable, dependent care.

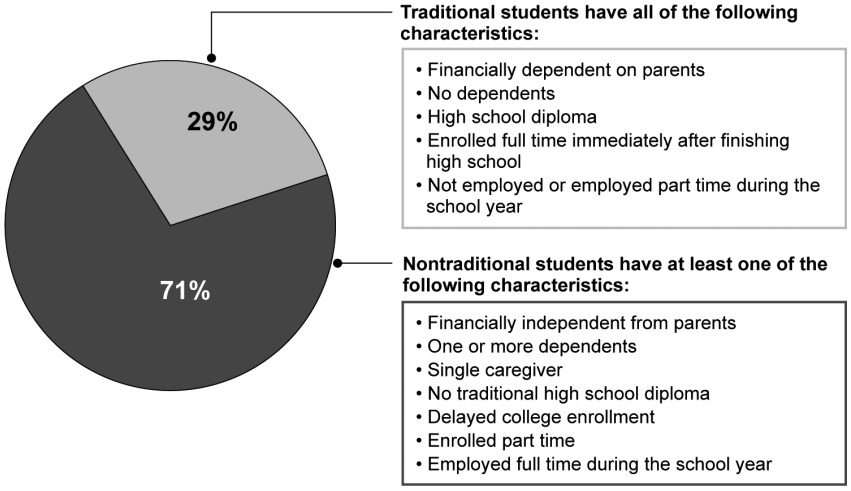
[10] These results are within a +/-1 percentage point margin of error. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *1995–1996 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:96);* and *2015–2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:16).*

[11] U.S. Department of Education, *National Center for Education Statistics, Trends in Pell Grant Receipt and the Characteristics of Pell Grant Recipients: Selected Years, 1999–2000 to 2011–2012,* NCES 2015–601 (Washington, D.C.: September 2015); and *2015–2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:16).*

[12] See, for example, Amy Ellen Duke-Benfield, *Bolstering Non-Traditional Student Success: A Comprehensive Student Aid System Using Financial Aid, Public Benefits, and Refundable Tax Credits* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Law and Social Policy, December 2015); Sara Goldrick-Rab, Katharine Broton, and Daniel Eisenberg, *Hungry to Learn: Addressing Food and Housing Insecurity among Undergraduates* (Madison: Wisconsin HOPE Lab, December 2015); Sara Goldrick-Rab, Jed Richardson, and Anthony Hernandez, *Hungry and Homeless in College: Results from a National Study of Basic Needs Insecurity in Higher Education* (Madison: Wisconsin HOPE Lab, March 2017).

[13] U.S. Department of Education, *National Center for Education Statistics, Findings from the Condition of Education, 2002: Nontraditional Undergraduates,* NCES 2002–012 (Washington, D.C.: 2002).

Figure 1: Percentages and Characteristics of Traditional and Nontraditional College Students in 2016



Source: GAO analysis of 2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study data from the U.S. Department of Education. |GAO–19–95.

Note: Categories of traditional and nontraditional students are based on the Department of Education's definition. All results are within a +/-2 percentage point margin of error.

Federal Food Assistance Programs Available to College Students

FNS oversees the states' administration of SNAP, the main Federal benefit program to address food insecurity for low-income households. In Fiscal Year 2017, the program provided benefits to about 42 million individuals in more than 20 million households. The purpose of the SNAP program is to safeguard the health and well-being of the nation's population by providing a monthly cash benefit to raise the purchasing power and nutrition level of low-income households. FNS is responsible for establishing program regulations and ensuring that state officials administer SNAP in compliance with program rules. Officials in seven FNS regional offices assist officials from the FNS national office in this oversight work. FNS shares information and policy guidance with state SNAP agencies in part through its regional offices, the FNS website, and annual conferences. The states, or in some cases counties within a state, administer SNAP by determining whether households meet the program's eligibility requirements, calculating monthly benefits for qualified households, issuing benefits to participants on an electronic benefits transfer card, and investigating and prosecuting recipient fraud. States are also allowed to establish some state-specific modifications in how they administer SNAP policy.[14]

Beyond SNAP, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is another Federal food assistance program available to eligible college students who are pregnant or postpartum.[15] FNS also oversees the WIC program, which is administered by state and local agencies through approximately 10,000 clinic sites.

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[14] SNAP's statutes, regulations, and waivers provide state SNAP agencies with various policy options. State SNAP agencies use this flexibility to adapt their programs to meet the needs of eligible, low-income households in their states. See U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, State Options Report, 14th Edition* (Washington, D.C.: May 31, 2018).

[15] WIC is designed to improve the health and nutritional well-being of pregnant and *postpartum* women, infants, and young children by providing nutritious supplemental foods, nutrition education, and referrals to health and social service programs. Pregnant and *postpartum* women and children up to age 5 are eligible if they are found to be at nutritional risk and have incomes below a certain threshold. WIC participants typically receive food benefits in the form of vouchers or coupons that they redeem at authorized retail vendors to obtain, at no cost, certain approved foods, including infant formula.

College Student Eligibility for SNAP

SNAP eligibility is largely based on a household's income and certain other characteristics.[16] However, in 1980 Federal law restricted college students who are enrolled at least half time from receiving SNAP benefits.[17] This law generally prevents traditional college students—who may appear to have a low income while attending college but receive financial support from their parents—from receiving SNAP benefits. Federal law establishes several exemptions to this restriction so that college students who are enrolled at least half time and have a legitimate need can access SNAP.[18] For example, assuming that they meet all other SNAP eligibility criteria, a full-time college student may be exempt from the college student restriction if they are:

- younger than age 18 or age 50 or older;
- a parent caring for a child under age 6;
- a parent caring for a child aged 6 to 11 who is unable to obtain childcare to attend school and work;
- a single parent caring for a child under 12 years old and enrolled full time;
- working a minimum of 20 hours per week at paid employment;
- participating in a state- or federally-financed work-study program;
- receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits;[19]
- not physically or mentally fit (*e.g.,* have a disability);[20] or
- enrolled in certain programs for the purpose of employment and training.[21]

FNS officials told us that states have flexibility regarding which programs may qualify a student for the exemption pertaining to enrollment in certain programs for the purpose of employment and training. These programs must be operated by a state or local government, target low-income households, and increase participants' employability. State SNAP agencies have discretion to determine which programs in their state qualify.[22] These employment and training programs may be operated at community colleges, among other community partners.

FNS officials said that in 2014 the agency expanded its focus on SNAP Employment & Training (E&T) program services, which are intended to help individuals in SNAP households acquire skills, training, and work experience that will increase their ability to obtain regular employment that will ultimately lead to greater self-sufficiency and reduce their reliance on SNAP.[23] State agencies have flexibility in designing SNAP E&T program services, and FNS encourages states to enter into partnerships with established providers, including community colleges, to deliver

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[16] In general, SNAP defines a household as persons living together who purchase food and prepare meals together for home consumption. Some people who live together are included in the same household even if they purchase and prepare meals separately, such as spouses and children under 22 living with their parents. Some Federal program benefits are included as income when determining a household's SNAP eligibility, while a household may deduct certain expenses from the income used to calculate their eligibility for SNAP, such as those for dependent care if the care enables a household member to work or enroll in training or education.

[17] Food Stamp Act Amendments of 1980, Pub. L. No. 96–249, Title I, § 139, 94 Stat. 357, 370. The statutory language restricts access to SNAP benefits for individuals enrolled half time or more in an institution of higher education. 7 U.S.C. § 2015(e). An individual is considered to be enrolled in an institution of higher education if the individual is enrolled in a business, technical, trade, or vocational school that normally requires a high school diploma or equivalency certificate for enrollment in the curriculum or if the individual is enrolled in a regular curriculum at a college or university that offers degree programs regardless of whether a high school diploma is required. For the purposes of discussing student access to SNAP benefits in this report, we will refer to these individuals as college students.

[18] Throughout this report we refer to these as student eligibility exemptions. Students who meet one of these student eligibility exemptions do not automatically qualify for SNAP—they must still apply for SNAP and meet the household income and asset limits, among other eligibility criteria, to be determined eligible to receive SNAP benefits.

[19] TANF is a block grant to states to help meet the needs of low-income families. The program emphasizes work and time-limited cash assistance and gives states wide discretion on how to use TANF funds, including for various noncash services.

[20] For ease of reference, in this report we use the term "disability" to refer to this student eligibility exemption.

[21] 7 U.S.C. § 2015(e)(3).

[22] 7 CFR § 273.5(b)(11)(iv). The law also states that programs must be at least equivalent to a state SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) program service.

[23] We recently reported on the performance of the SNAP E&T Program. See GAO, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: More Complete and Accurate Information Needed on Employment and Training Programs, *GAO–19–56* (*https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-19-56*) (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 20, 2018).

SNAP E&T program services.[24] For example, a SNAP recipient could train to become a Certified Nursing Assistant at a community college as part of a state's SNAP E&T program. In addition to providing employment and training services, state SNAP E&T programs are required to provide participants with necessary supportive services, such as transportation, childcare, and textbooks.

Information about the Prevalence of Food Insecurity among College Students Nationally is Limited and Many Potentially Eligible, At-Risk Students Do Not Receive SNAP

Studies Identify a Range of Food Insecurity Rates among Respondents, but Results Cannot Be Generalized to All Students

Our review of 31 studies provided some information regarding food insecurity among college students, but all of the studies have limitations and none provide estimates of food insecurity for this population in general.[25] Estimates of food insecurity among college students included in the studies we reviewed ranged from nine percent to well over 50 percent, with 22 of these of 31 studies estimating food insecurity rates of over 30 percent.[26] These results reflect the studies' different samples and methods, and the estimates from the studies included in our review are not generalizable to the college student population as a whole. None of these studies are based on a sufficiently large or diverse random sample of college students to constitute a representative study. The studies addressed the difficulty of sampling the college student population in different ways, including by extrapolating from household data, surveying students in a particular degree program or on a particular campus, or targeting particular, non-random sub-groups of the college student population. Most of the studies were also conducted on only one campus, although some studies gathered data from more than one campus.[27] Despite the limitations, these studies as a whole help shed some light on the range of food insecurity that exists among some groups of college students.

Of the 31 studies we reviewed, two used nationally representative household data sets, the Current Population Survey and the Survey of Income and Program Participation.[28] The study that used the Current Population Survey data from 2011–2015 found that an estimated:

- 11 percent of households with a student in a 4 year college experienced food insecurity,
- 14 percent of households with a student in vocational/technical education experienced food insecurity, and
- 17 percent of households with a student in a community college experienced food insecurity.[29]

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[24] A provision in the 2014 Farm Bill clarified that SNAP E&T program services must meet the criteria for a career or technical education program outlined in the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins Act). For the purposes of the Perkins Act, a career or technical education program is defined at 20 U.S.C. § 2302.

[25] We included studies that had been published in U.S. journals from January 2007 through August 2018, covered college students in the United States, and contained original, direct estimates of food insecurity among college students.

[26] USDA has developed three questionnaires containing 6, 10, and 18 questions, respectively, to measure household food insecurity. All but three of the studies in our review adapted the questions from either the 6, 10, or 18 question USDA questionnaire to measure food insecurity among individual students. Depending on how many questions respondents answer affirmatively, they were designated as being either food-secure, having low food security, or having very low food security. Those with either low or very low food security were termed "food-insecure."

[27] Of the 31 studies included in our review, eight had survey respondents from multiple college campuses or across university systems.

[28] The Current Population Survey, sponsored jointly by the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, is the primary source of labor force statistics for the population of the United States. Since 1995, the Current Population Survey has included a Food Security Supplement (FSS) that has collected information on the food security, food program participation, and food expenditures of U.S. households. FSS survey questions ask about the household as a whole and not about individuals within the household. The Survey of Income and Program Participation, sponsored by the U.S. Census Bureau, is the Federal Government's premier source of information for U.S. household income and program participation. The Survey of Income and Program Participation collects data for many topics, including: economic well-being, family dynamics, education, assets, health insurance, childcare, and food security.

[29] The authors found that the incidence of food insecurity for each of these groups was significantly different (at the .05 level) from the incidence of food insecurity for all adults not in that group. See Kristin Blagg, Craig Gundersen, Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach, and James P. Ziliak, *Assessing Food Insecurity on Campus: A National Look at Food Insecurity among America's College Students* (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, August 2017).

These national household surveys assess the food security of households with a college student member, but they do not directly survey college students and only measure food security at the household, and not the individual, level. For example, these household data may not capture a college student's food insecurity in situations where the student member of the household does not live at home for most of the year.[30]

The remaining 29 studies we reviewed collectively surveyed college students on approximately 200 campuses across multiple states, including two large state university systems, and produced a wide range of estimates of food insecurity. In most cases, the results can be characterized as applying only to the respondents of the survey.[31] The 29 studies based on campus surveys provide a range of food insecurity rates among respondents, from nine percent to over 50 percent.

- For example, a study first published in 2017 found that 15 percent of student respondents at one 4 year college experienced food insecurity, with an additional 16 percent of student respondents at that college estimated to be at-risk for food insecurity.[32]
- Two recent surveys of college systems in California found that 40 percent of respondents from University of California campuses and 42 percent of respondents from California State University campuses experienced food insecurity.[33]

Estimates of food insecurity rates in the studies we reviewed tended to be higher at 2 year than at 4 year colleges. Four studies examined only 2 year college students and three of these studies estimated food insecurity rates among respondents at 2 year colleges to be 40 percent or higher. Three studies looked at both 2 year and 4 year colleges and estimated food insecurity to be higher among students at 2 year colleges. For example, a large, multi-college study conducted in 2017 found that during the 30 days preceding the survey, 42 percent of community college students who responded and 36 percent of students at 4 year colleges who responded indicated they were food-insecure.[34] Further, the two studies that used national household data sets found that households with community college and vocational education student members had higher food insecurity levels than households with students at 4 year colleges.[35]

Federal Data Show Most Low-Income Students Had Multiple Risk Factors Associated with Food Insecurity in 2016

We identified and analyzed the prevalence of risk factors associated with food insecurity among students through our review of peer-reviewed publications on food insecurity and through interviews with academic researchers, college officials, state and Federal officials, and officials from relevant policy organizations.[36] In the stud-

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[30] Additionally, while these surveys are nationally representative overall, the number of households with college students in these surveys is relatively small, which limits the precision of these estimates.

[31] The inability to generalize beyond survey respondents occurs in these cases because even when a survey is sent to all students or to a random sample of students, the students who choose to respond may be non-random. For example, students with a particular interest in food insecurity or who want to report their own food insecurity may opt to participate in these surveys at higher rates than other students. As a result, the respondents may not fully represent the population sampled. Additionally, the response rates in many of the surveys used in the studies we reviewed were very low—in some cases ten percent or below.

[32] See Devon C. Payne-Sturges, Allison Tjaden, Kimberly M. Caldeira, Kathryn B. Vincent, and Amelia M. Arria, "Student Hunger on Campus: Food Insecurity among College Students and Implications for Academic Institutions," *American Journal of Health Promotion,* vol. 32, no. 2 (2018).

[33] See R.M. Crutchfield and J. Maguire, "California State University Office of the Chancellor Study of Student Basic Needs," retrieved from *http://www.calstate.edu/basicneeds;* and Suzanna M. Martinez, Karen Webb, Edward A. Frongillo, and Lorrene D. Ritchie, "Food Insecurity in California's Public University System: What Are the Risk Factors?," *Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition,* vol. 13, no. 1 (2017).

[34] Sara Goldrick-Rab, Jed Richardson, Joel Schneider, Anthony Hernandez, and Clare Cady, *Still Hungry and Homeless in College* (Madison: Wisconsin HOPE Lab, April 2018).

[35] See Blagg, Gundersen, Schanzenbach, and Ziliak, *Assessing Food Insecurity on Campus.* See also K. Broton, "The Evolution of Poverty in Higher Education: Material Hardship, Academic Success, and Policy Perspectives" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2017).

[36] We focused on risk factors associated with food insecurity because nationally representative data on food insecurity among college students do not exist. The risk factors we identified can be grouped into several broad categories: low-income indicators, housing issues, skills/resiliency factors, demographic characteristics, and "other stressors." For example, the academic studies we reviewed consistently identified having a low-income as a correlate of food insecurity. Our analysis focused on potential risk factors that had a corresponding variable in the 2016 NPSAS data set. We defined low income as a household income at or below 130 percent of the Federal

ies we reviewed and in our interviews with researchers, having a low income was consistently identified as a key risk factor for food insecurity. The other risk factors we included in our analysis are: being a first-generation college student, receiving SNAP, being a single parent, being disabled, being homeless or at risk of homelessness, and being a former foster youth.[37]

In our analysis, we focused on students with a household income at or below 130 percent of the Federal poverty line, which represents 39 percent of all undergraduates.[38] While having a low income is itself the most common risk factor for food insecurity among college students, our analysis found that the majority of low-income students also experience additional risk factors for food insecurity. The three most common risk factors for food insecurity among low-income students were being a first-generation college student; receiving SNAP (receiving SNAP can be considered a risk factor in that it may reduce, but not entirely eliminate, food insecurity); and being a single parent. Of the approximately 7.3 million low-income students, 31 percent were first-generation college students, 31 percent reported receiving SNAP, and 25 percent were single parents.[39] The prevalence of risk factors among low-income students was lower at 4 year colleges compared to other colleges. For example, about 21 percent of low-income 4 year college students were single parents in 2016 compared to about 42 percent of low-income students in less than 2 year programs. Low-income individuals enrolled in less than 2 year programs had the highest prevalence for almost all risk factors (see *table 1*).[40]

Table 1: Prevalence of Risk Factors Associated with Food Insecurity among Low-Income U.S. College Undergraduate Students, by College Type in 2016

Risk factor	Total		4 year schools		2 year schools		Less than 2 year schools	
	Number of students	Percent of low-income students	Number of students	Percent of low-income students	Number of students	Percent of low-income students	Number of students	Percent of low-income students
First generation [a]	**2,299,206**	**31%**	1,015,263	28%	1,188,889	34%	95,053	35%
Receiving SNAP [b]	**2,257,121**	**31%**	1,024,774	29%	1,128,133	33%	104,214	38%
Single parent	**1,815,655**	**25%**	756,885	21%	943,168	27%	115,602	42%
Disabled [c]	**1,591,962**	**22%**	757,267	21%	773,159	22%	61,536	22%
Homeless or at risk of homeless	**1,109,714**	**15%**	504,397	14%	548,235	16%	57,082	21%
Former foster youth [d]	**788,866**	**11%**	391,819	11%	371,419	11%	25,628	9%
Total Low-income students [e]	**7,339,571**	**100%**	**3,597,419**	**100%**	**3,466,862**	**100%**	**275,291**	**100%**

Source: GAO analysis of 2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study Data. (GAO–19–95.

Notes: All results are within a +/-5.5 percentage point margin of error. Percentages do not sum to 100 percent because students may have more than one risk factor.

[a] Being a first generation college student is determined based on whether the student reported that his/her parents attended college.

[b] Receipt of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits is self-reported and not cross-checked with Food Nutrition Service (FNS) enrollment data.

[c] Students self-report their disability status; this is not based on a Federal disability determination.

[d] The variable we used as a proxy for having been a former foster youth is indicated by being an orphan or ward of the court.

[e] Low income is defined as having a household income level at or below 130 percent of the Federal poverty level.

Twenty-nine percent of all U.S. undergraduates had a low income and experienced at least one additional risk factor for food insecurity, according to our analysis of 2016 NPSAS data—14 percent had a low income and one other risk factor and 15 percent had a low income and two or more additional risk factors associated with

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poverty line because this is the income threshold for SNAP benefits for households that do not include a member who is 60 years of age or older or disabled. For more information on how we identified risk factors associated with food insecurity, see *appendix I.*

[37] Receiving SNAP is a risk factor for food insecurity because while receiving SNAP benefits addresses food insecurity to some extent, studies show SNAP recipients still have higher food insecurity rates than the general population. For example, one study found that receiving SNAP for 6 months only reduced food insecurity by about 13 percent. In other words, receiving SNAP benefits may reduce food insecurity without completely eliminating it. See, for example, James Mabli, Jim Ohls, Lisa Dragoset, Laura Castner, and Betsy Santos, Measuring the Effect of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Participation on Food Security, a report prepared by Mathematica Policy Research at the request of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (August 2013).

[38] This analysis excludes foreign and international students.

[39] Risk factors associated with food insecurity frequently co-occur. Our analysis found the majority of low-income students who received SNAP also have one or more additional risk factors. Including SNAP receipt as a risk factor in our analysis did not substantially affect the total number of at-risk students.

[40] Our analysis does not estimate rates of food insecurity among students with these characteristics because the NPSAS does not include data on food insecurity. Instead, our analysis highlights low-income students who have at least one other risk factor associated with food insecurity. Education officials said they are planning to incorporate food insecurity questions into the next NPSAS data collection in 2020. See *appendix I* for information about how we selected and operationalized these risk factors.

food insecurity (see *table 2*). Risk factors associated with food insecurity are more prevalent among low-income students than among the general student population, with 75 percent of low-income students experiencing one or more additional risk factors. Students at 2 year colleges and those in less than 2 year programs were also more likely to have multiple risk factors.

Table 2: Prevalence of Risk Factors Associated with Food Insecurity among Low-Income U.S. College Undergraduate Students in 2016

Number of risk factors	Number of low-income undergraduates	Percent of all undergraduates		Percent of low-income undergraduates	
Low-income and 0 additional risk factors	1,858,253	10%		25%	
Low-income and 1 additional risk factor	2,586,454	14%	*29% of U.S. undergraduates are low-income and have 1 or more additional risk factors for food insecurity*	35%	*75% of low-income undergraduates have 1 or more additional risk factors for food insecurity*
Low-income and 2 or more additional risk factors	2,894,864	15%		39%	
Total low-income undergraduates	**7,339,571**	**39%**		**100%**	

Source: GAO analysis of 2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study Data |GAO–19–95.

Notes: All results are within a +/-1 percentage point margin of error. Sums have been rounded to the nearest whole percentage point. We included the following risk factors associated with food insecurity in addition to having a low income: being a first-generation college student, receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, being a single parent, being disabled, being homeless or at risk of homelessness, and being a former foster youth.

Fifty-Seven Percent of Potentially Eligible Low-Income Students with Food Insecurity Risk Factors in 2016 Did Not Participate in SNAP

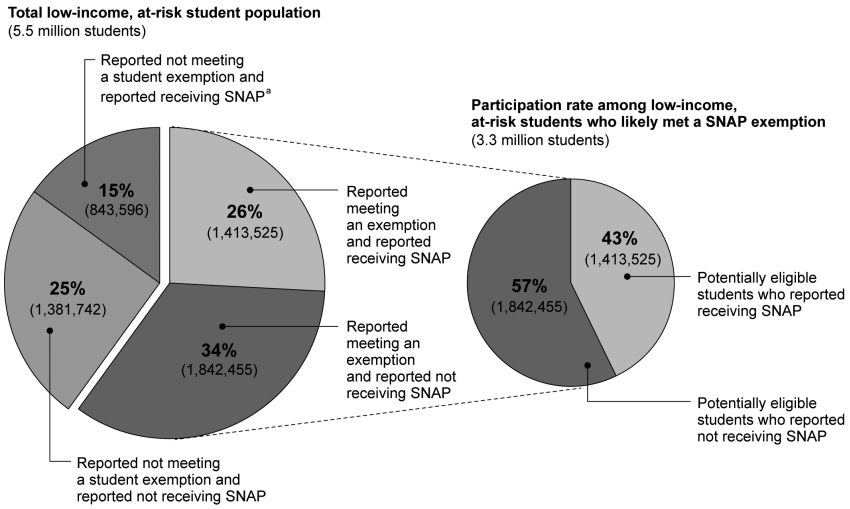
In our analysis of SNAP participation among students, we focused on low-income students with at least one additional risk factor for food insecurity because these students would likely meet the income threshold for SNAP eligibility and have an additional risk factor that could put them in need of food assistance.[41] Our analysis of 2016 NPSAS data identified about 5.5 million low-income students with at least one additional risk factor for food insecurity and found that about 59 percent of these students (3.3 million) reported being enrolled at least half time and meeting a SNAP student eligibility exemption. About 1.8 million of these low-income students with an additional risk factor reported meeting a student exemption and also that they were not receiving SNAP benefits.[42] In other words, among potentially SNAP eligible low-income students with at least one additional factor for food insecurity, 57 percent did not report participating in SNAP in 2016 (see *fig. 2*).[43]

[41] We identified potentially eligible students based on characteristics we identified in the NPSAS data, specifically, whether they had an income at or below 130 percent of the Federal poverty level and reported meeting one of the student exemptions we were able to capture in our analysis. Our analysis was not able to perfectly capture all the student eligibility exemptions. Some of the limitations of our analysis may have led to fewer students appearing to meet an eligibility exemption (specifically the exemption related to participation in other employment and training programs, for which there is no corresponding NPSAS variable), while others may have led to more students appearing to meet an eligibility exemption (specifically the exemptions related to disability and the availability of childcare, for which the NPSAS variable does not perfectly align with the SNAP student exemptions). A student who meets a SNAP exemption must still submit a SNAP application with household income and asset information; then the state SNAP agency reviews the application, interviews the applicant to gather additional relevant information, and determines eligibility for SNAP benefits. See appendix I for more information on how we identified students who potentially met a SNAP eligibility exemption using NPSAS data.

[42] The student or their parents report receipt of SNAP benefits on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Students are asked about their receipt of SNAP benefits again during the interview portion of the NPSAS. Most students we identified as not receiving SNAP were financially independent and could likely apply for SNAP as their own household; dependent students who are potentially eligible can only receive SNAP as part of their parents' household.

[43] The total SNAP participation rate among potentially eligible students with one additional risk factor was 43 percent. According to FNS, in Fiscal Year 2016, the national SNAP participation rate among all eligible persons was about 85 percent. See Karen Cunnyngham, *Trends in*

Figure 2: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Participation among Low-Income College Students At-Risk of Food Insecurity in 2016



Source: GAO analysis of 2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) data. GAO–19–95.

Notes: All results are within a +/-2 percentage point margin of error. We identified students potentially eligible for SNAP based on characteristics we identified in the NPSAS data related to SNAP eligibility-specifically, whether they had an income at or below 130 percent of the Federal poverty level and reported one of the characteristics we identified that correspond to the student exemptions we were able to capture in our analysis. Some of the limitations of our analysis may have led to fewer students appearing to meet an eligibility exemption (specifically the exemption related to participation in other employment and training programs, for which there is no corresponding NPSAS variable), while others may have led to more students appearing to meet an eligibility exemption (specifically the exemptions related to disability and the availability of childcare, for which the NPSAS variable does not perfectly align with the SNAP student exemption). We did not make any legal determination about actual SNAP eligibility for any individual. Risk factors associated with food insecurity include being disabled, homeless or housing insecure, a former foster youth, a single parent, the first-generation in a student's family to attend college, and receiving SNAP benefits. Participation in SNAP is self-reported through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and these data are used in the NPSAS.

[a] Students who did not meet an eligibility exemption but reported receiving SNAP (1) may be receiving SNAP as members of their parents' household, (2) may have attended college less than half time and therefore were not subject to the student SNAP restrictions, or (3) may have met one of the student exemptions we were unable to capture in our analysis.

About ¼ of the 5.5 million low-income students with at least one additional risk factor for food insecurity did not meet any of the student exemptions we could identify in the NPSAS data and reported that they did not receive SNAP benefits.[44]

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates: Fiscal Year 2010 to Fiscal Year 2016, a report prepared at the request of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (Washington, D.C.: Mathematica Policy Research, July 2018).

[44] In addition, 15 percent of low-income college students with one additional risk factor for food insecurity did not appear to meet one of the student exemptions, based on our analysis, but reported they received SNAP in 2016. This may be because they received SNAP through their parents' household, were enrolled less than half time and therefore not subject to student SNAP restrictions, or met one of the student exemptions we were unable to capture in our analysis. For example, the NPSAS data set does not contain data for the student eligibility exemp-

Continued

These students would likely be ineligible to participate in SNAP unless they begin meeting one of the student eligibility exemptions in the future, such as working 20 hours per week.

Selected Colleges Are Using a Range of Approaches to Address Student Food Insecurity

The 14 selected colleges we contacted are addressing student food insecurity in three main ways: by educating faculty, staff, and students; by providing students free food and emergency assistance; and by centralizing and coordinating their student services and helping students apply for Federal and state benefits. Officials at nine of these colleges said that they viewed student food insecurity as part of students' increasing inability to meet their basic needs as a result of the decreasing affordability of higher education or the high cost of living. This sentiment was echoed by selected students we spoke with during discussion groups (see text box).

Student Statements from GAO Site Visits at Selected Colleges

The reality is that I skip meals, often I don't eat lunch. I don't want to get lunch here on campus because it's too expensive. I get headaches, have trouble concentrating. I also have a disability that is worse if I don't eat.

My parents stopped supporting me once I left for college, so I'm on my own. So the amount of food I'm able to buy is less.

I did not have much money when I started school, and immediately had to choose whether to buy food or a $200 book for class. I chose to buy the book.

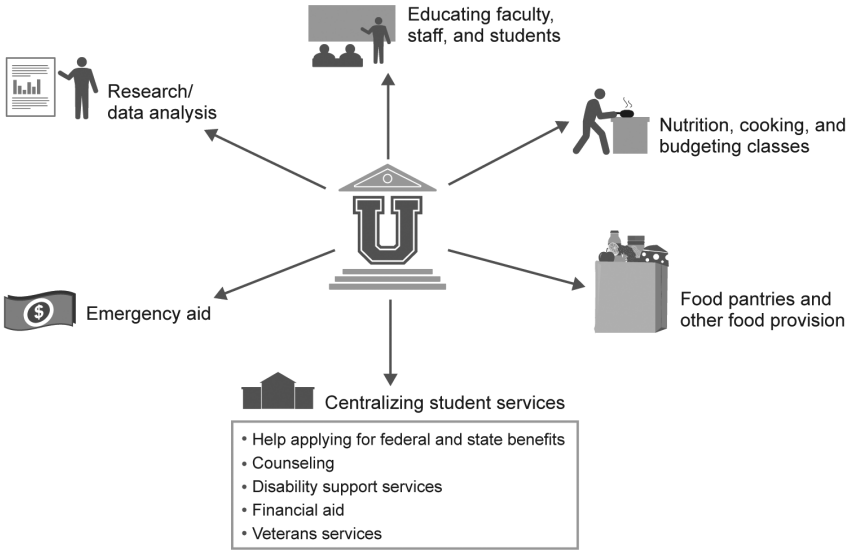
Sometimes I get home at the end of the day and I realize I haven't eaten all day. And then I realize my school work is not up to my actual ability—I definitely think not eating affects my grades. You can tell when you don't feel good that you can't do your best work.

Source: GAO discussion groups with students at selected colleges taking steps to address food insecurity among students. | GAO–19–95.

All of the colleges we contacted have implemented on-campus initiatives to combat students' food insecurity with the goal of improving their student outcomes, such as retention, completion, and loan repayment rates. As one community college official told us: "We have come to realize that we can't address retention and completion without addressing students' basic needs." See *figure 3* for the range of initiatives the 14 colleges we contacted were taking to address food insecurity among college students on their campuses.

tion "enrolled in certain programs aimed at employment," such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families employment and training programs. As a result, we may overestimate the number of students who did not meet an eligibility exemption.

Figure 3: Initiatives by Selected Colleges to Address Student Food Insecurity



Source: Information from 14 selected colleges GAO contacted. GAO–19–95.

Educating the campus community. Officials at several of the selected colleges told us that many administrators, faculty, staff, and students on their campus are unaware that students experience food insecurity, which hinders their college's efforts to address the issue (see text box). At all 14 colleges we contacted, officials said they are educating their campus community about available resources, both on campus and off, to address student food insecurity.

Student Statements from GAO Site Visits at Selected Colleges

Students may think: 'I'm educated, [SNAP] is not a program for me and therefore don't apply for [SNAP]. So many students, including graduate students, plan their evenings around events with free food—but the same people [who are] trying to figure out how to get free food every night also think they don't need [SNAP].'

One student said that a university housing staff member told him: 'You're a college student, you don't need SNAP.'

Source: GAO discussion groups with students at selected colleges taking steps to address food insecurity among students. GAO–19–95.

All of the 14 colleges we contacted also educate their students about the resources available to address food insecurity in a variety of ways, such as by providing information during student orientations, on flyers and pamphlets, or through social media and text messages. Eight of the 14 colleges we contacted hold trainings or distribute information to faculty and staff about the on-campus and community resources available to students. Nine of these colleges have created supplemental or for-credit courses on topics such as financial literacy or cooking and nutrition. For example, one college we visited runs a workshop for first-year students on writing a spending plan and a food budget. At several of the selected colleges, faculty members include blurbs about basic needs-related resources, such as campus food pantries, in their syllabi.

Providing food and emergency financial assistance. All of the 14 colleges we contacted address student food insecurity by providing students free food and most provide students emergency financial assistance. Nationwide, the College and University Food Bank Alliance has reported that at least 656 colleges have or were de-

veloping food pantries as of September 2018.[45] Each of the 14 colleges we contacted had a food pantry, with seven having started their pantry in the past 5 years.

According to college officials, individual faculty and staff members are often first to identify food insecurity as a campus concern and provide food to students. For example, officials at several of the colleges we contacted traced the origins of their college's food pantry to a drawer of food a faculty or staff member kept in their office for students, or to a professor who brought jars of peanut butter or bagels for any student who wanted one.

The college food pantries we visited varied in terms of their size and location, which can depend upon the space available on campus.[46] For example, some pantries we visited consisted of only a couple of shelves of non-perishable items, while others spanned multiple rooms containing refrigerators and freezers. Directors at four of the selected food pantries said that student need was great enough to support expanding the food pantry, but that they had been unable to expand because space on campus is at a premium (see text box).

Campus Food Pantry Coordinator Statement from GAO Site Visit at Selected College

Demand for the food pantry has increased tenfold in the last 2 years. We have far more demand than supply. We're trying to get additional delivery days for produce, because as soon as produce is stocked, it's gone the same day. The same is true for protein, especially frozen chicken.

Source: GAO interview. | GAO–19–95.

Several pantries also had separate sections providing students personal health items and clothing and offered auxiliary services, such as information about cooking, food budgeting, or SNAP enrollment (see *fig. 4* for pictures of some of the college food pantries at selected colleges).

Figure 4: Pictures of Food Pantries from GAO Site Visits to Selected Colleges

Sources: Photographs from colleges and GAO. | GAO–19–95.

Officials at 11 of the selected colleges we contacted said that a major barrier they face is overcoming the stigma some students associate with accepting help for their basic needs, such as using the food pantry (see text box). Concern about this stigma led at least three of the colleges we contacted to place their food pantry in a less-public area of campus to address students' privacy concerns. In contrast, three other colleges we contacted centrally located their food pantry to advertise its existence and normalize its use. One college president we spoke with said that "until [the college] normalized [the food pantry] and pulled it to the center of campus, it was underutilized," and stated that moving the food pantry to the center of campus quadrupled its use.

[45] This is the number of college food pantries registered as members with the College and University Food Bank Alliance and does not include college food pantries that are not members.

[46] The food pantries we visited received funding from a variety of sources, including from their college's budget, faculty, staff, and student donations, grants from community food banks, or endowments created by college donors.

Student Statements from GAO Site Visits at Selected Colleges

I don't tell my family that I'm struggling with food because everyone I know is struggling with money—I don't want to stress them out. It's not a comfortable conversation to have. I haven't lived with my parents in years, I wouldn't even know how to ask them for help.

In the academic community, there's a normalization that you provide food at events to get students to come because they're hungry—one professor said 'starving is part of grad school.' One student responded to that by saying 'Isn't it odd that we're using students' hunger to get them in the door? Why should this even be an issue?'

I didn't recognize the physical impact of eating breakfast until I took Physical Education here, where the coach said we couldn't come to class unless we ate breakfast. I realized that eating breakfast makes me much more clearheaded and focused in my morning classes.

Source: GAO discussion groups with students at selected colleges taking steps to address food insecurity among students. | GAO–19–95.

Officials at 9 of the 14 colleges we contacted reported that their campus food pantry had seen an increased number of users over time as the student body became aware of this resource. One student we spoke with said that his college's food pantry was his only source of food, while another estimated that the food pantry allowed him to save about $100 per month on food.

Officials at 10 of the 14 selected colleges we contacted told us they partner with national organizations or campus dining services or both to try to respond to the needs of students who might be experiencing food insecurity. For instance, public colleges in California receive state funding to incentivize them to address student food insecurity in a variety of ways, including by establishing campus food pantries, providing information to students about SNAP benefits, and establishing meal point donation programs.[47] Two California colleges we contacted were working with a national organization to set up a meal point donation program. One college in another state we visited included in their contract with their private dining services vendor funding for several initiatives, such as a campus-wide survey of student food insecurity, on-campus farmer[s'] markets, and a learning kitchen that teaches students hands-on cooking skills. Additionally, two of the colleges we contacted are working to have SNAP benefits accepted at campus markets.

Beyond providing students with free food, officials at 12 of the 14 colleges we contacted said that their college makes emergency cash assistance available to students through small loans, grants, or grocery store or gas station gift cards. These emergency funds are intended to help students pay bills for one-time financial emergencies, such as buying groceries or paying for a car repair or a utility bill. One community college we visited directly ties this assistance to its retention efforts, providing a one-time amount of up to $500 for students judged to have sufficient need and who are likely to remain in school if the bill is paid.

Centralizing and coordinating student services and access to benefits. Officials at many of the colleges we contacted told us they have centralized their student support and financial aid services, among others, and several have introduced a case management approach to better collaborate across departments and more efficiently and holistically address their students' basic needs (see text box). Of the 14 colleges we contacted, eight had centralized some or all of their student services. For example, one community college we visited has co-located many of its student services—including its financial aid, academic counseling, payroll, food pantry, veterans' services, and women's resource center, among others—around a central hub of the student union. Students visiting this central hub may be assigned a caseworker to connect them with the on-campus, community, state, and Federal benefits for which they are eligible. Officials at a few of the colleges we contacted said that centrally locating student services also helped faculty and staff by providing a single point of contact to refer students. One official said that she tells faculty and peer mentors: "If you see a student in any kind of distress at all—mental health, hunger, homelessness, anything—send them to us." She added that it is too much to ask faculty to figure out which office or official to send students to for specific concerns.

[47] Cal. Educ. Code § 66027.8(d).

Student Statements from GAO Site Visits at Selected Colleges

[The college's centralized benefits hub, which offers food and assistance applying for Federal and state benefit programs] has helped me so much. I visit [it] probably two times a week and they helped me get my SNAP benefits. When I am hungry, I can't concentrate on school or pay attention to my studies.

The entire basement level of the student center is being turned into a basic needs hub. In addition to the food pantry, the hub will also include the student SNAP office, the student environmental resource center [which is a partner in building sustainable and equitable food systems on campus], and other student benefits services. Services on this campus have been very decentralized, and this centralized hub will provide one location for students to go to get assistance with their basic needs—it's going to be a big help having everything in one place.

Source: GAO discussion groups with students at selected colleges taking steps to address food insecurity among students. GAO–19–95.

Officials at 8 of the 14 colleges we contacted told us their campus has established a coordinated benefits access program or is actively screening students for potential eligibility for, and helping them enroll in, Federal and state benefit programs like SNAP, WIC, Medicaid, and the Earned Income Tax Credit.[48] For example, one community college we contacted had a staff member build a statistical model to analyze the college's existing data on first-time students, such as data on students' household income, demographics, and course enrollment, to identify students at risk of not returning to college and to provide these students, their professors, and their faculty advisors with information about on-campus resources. Officials at one college we visited told us the campus hosts weekly clinics with county SNAP eligibility analysts to screen students for SNAP eligibility and help them apply for benefits. At a community college system we visited, the Administration told us they were working with the state SNAP agency to identify which students were receiving SNAP benefits and they plan to send targeted information on SNAP to those potentially eligible students not receiving benefits.

Officials at three of the colleges we contacted said that their college was purchasing software that creates a centralized portal where faculty and staff can share information about a student's situation with student support providers so they can better provide help. For example, at a college we visited that is using such software, officials said that a professor might note in the centralized portal that an at-risk student was either failing or not attending a class, and that student would be flagged in the portal to notify academic advisors, counselors, and other college staff who can direct the student to the on-campus resources they may need, such as the food pantry or help in completing a SNAP application.

While SNAP Can Supplement Other Federal Aid for Some Low-Income Students, FNS Does Not Share Key Information to Help States Better Leverage SNAP to Assist Students

Federal Programs Are Limited in the Extent to Which They Can Address the Needs of College Students Experiencing Food Insecurity

Federal Student Aid Generally Does Not Cover All College Costs for Low-Income Students

Federal grant aid is available to help low-income college students and their families pay for college, but for many students, the maximum amount of grant aid available to them does not cover all of the costs associated with attending college.[49] Officials from many of the organizations we interviewed said that the Federal Pell Grant Program for low-income college students was a major source of financial support for these students, but that it does not cover the full cost of college attendance for many students, and particularly for those at 4 year colleges or in areas with high costs of living.[50] Most low-income students also work while attending college.[51] De-

[48] Medicaid is a joint Federal and state program that provides health coverage to millions of Americans, including some low-income individuals, families and children, pregnant women, the elderly, and people with disabilities. The Earned Income Tax Credit is a Federal benefit for low- to moderate-income workers.

[49] Most states also have need- and merit-based student aid programs.

[50] For 2018–2019, the maximum annual Federal Pell Grant award is $6,095.

[51] According to 2015–2016 NPSAS data, 60 percent of low-income students had a job while enrolled in college.

spite this, several college officials we interviewed told us that the gap between the amount of financial aid available and what it costs to attend college is continuing to grow. One financial aid director told us that students used to be able to pay for groceries or rent with some of their financial aid "refund" money (that is, financial aid funds refunded to a student after tuition, fees, and other school charges are paid, which can be used to pay for other education and living expenses); however, he said students rarely receive a refund any more. According to data from Education's National Center for Education Statistics, the average Pell Grant used to cover more of the cost of college than it does today. For example, about 40 years ago—soon after the Pell Grant Program was established—the average award covered about 50 percent of the average cost of in-state tuition, fees, room, and board at public 2 year colleges, and 39 percent at public 4 year colleges. Today, the average Pell Grant award amount covers just 37 percent of these costs at public 2 year colleges, and 19 percent at public 4 year colleges.[52] Federal Work-Study Program employment opportunities may be available to qualifying students, but several officials we interviewed noted that funding for this program is extremely limited, especially at community colleges where there are more students at risk of food insecurity.[53]

When grant funds and student earnings are insufficient to cover the full cost of college, students can take out Federal student loans to make up the difference. Officials at a national association of community colleges and at a few colleges we visited told us that low-income students often use Federal loans to help them pay for basic living expenses—such as food or rent. While these loans can be helpful for some students who need additional funds to support themselves while in college, officials at a few community colleges also cautioned that loans may not be the best choice for all students, and may worsen the financial position of already vulnerable students. For example, at one 4 year college we visited, the financial aid director said that many of their students have reached their maximum Federal lifetime loan limit (see text box for an example).[54] He also noted that graduates have, on average, $25,000 of student loan debt. He said his college has historically trained its students for public sector careers, *e.g.,* teachers or counselors, and he worries that salaries in these professions will not allow graduates to repay this amount of student loans.[55]

Student Statement from GAO Site Visit at Selected College

I was originally in the Registered Nursing (RN) program, but had to switch to the Licensed Practicing Nursing (LPN) program because that program requires fewer credits, and I have maxed out my Federal student loans and have no further funds to pay for the additional classes needed for an RN.

Source: GAO interview. | GAO–19–95.

College Students Have Limited Access to Federal Food Assistance Programs

Given the limitations of Federal student aid funding, officials from several organizations we interviewed spoke about the importance of leveraging other Federal benefits, such as food assistance programs, to help address the needs of college students experiencing food insecurity. According to research on the effect of SNAP benefits, these benefits can provide some help to students, although they may not completely eliminate their food insecurity.[56] However, college students have limited access to

[52] These figures are based on data from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics and Federal Pell Grant Program End of Year reports. See National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics,* Table 330.10 and Pell Grant End of Year reports at *https://www2.ed.gov/finaid/prof/resources/data/pell-data.html*.

[53] The Federal Work-Study Program allows students to earn up to their awarded amount by working at an on-campus job or certain off-campus jobs. Students who participate in the Federal Work-Study Program would meet one of the student SNAP exemptions. A few officials told us that because funds for each campus are limited and awarded to students on a first come, first served basis, many students are unable to participate.

[54] In 2018, the aggregate lifetime Federal Direct Loan limit for dependent undergraduate students was $31,000. For independent undergraduate students, it was $57,500.

[55] Graduates who enter public service careers full time with qualifying employers are eligible for forgiveness for part of their Federal student loan debt after meeting certain other requirements. GAO found that many borrowers are confused about this program and we recommended that Education do more to ensure students understand which employers qualify for the program. See GAO, *Public Service Loan Forgiveness: Education Needs to Provide Better Information for the Loan Servicer and Borrowers, GAO–18–547* (*http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-18-547*) (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 5, 2018).

[56] See, for example, Mabli, Ohls, Dragoset, Castner, and Santos, *Measuring the Effect.*

several key Federal food assistance programs that could help address some of their needs. For example, several college officials we spoke with noted that many low-income students received federally subsidized free or reduced price lunch while in elementary and secondary school, but a comparable program does not exist for college students, even though many face the same level of need. In addition, many college students are prohibited from receiving Federal SNAP benefits because of restrictions on student eligibility. Several college officials told us that when students are unable to meet one of the student exemptions for SNAP benefits, they will try to connect them to community resources or to the on-campus food pantry, but a few characterized these as short-term solutions to their students' problems. We also heard from officials at several colleges that students who are pregnant or postpartum may qualify for the WIC program, which provides food assistance to mothers with infants and young children; however, this program serves only a small minority of college students who may be experiencing food insecurity.

Some State SNAP Agencies Are Assisting Potentially Eligible Students to Access SNAP Benefits

About ⅓ of state SNAP agencies reported they were taking actions to inform college students about SNAP and help them access SNAP benefits.[57] These state SNAP agencies reported assisting college students in various ways, including by developing guidance or training for state and college officials on student eligibility rules, by conducting outreach at local colleges, or by providing students with options to qualify for a SNAP student exemption by participating in employment and training services.

Several States Are Clarifying Student Rules and Conducting Training and Outreach about SNAP Student Eligibility

Eleven state SNAP agencies reported clarifying policy on college student eligibility to SNAP staff who determine eligibility for benefits or providing training to third-party partners to increase awareness of students' potential eligibility for SNAP. For example, in 2015 and 2017 California's state SNAP agency issued policy letters to its county offices clarifying college student eligibility rules and expanding the list of college programs that qualify a student for an exemption under the employment and training provision.[58] Minnesota's state SNAP agency reported that it conducts technical assistance training on student eligibility issues for its caseworkers twice a year.

State SNAP agencies also reported partnering with colleges to increase awareness of potential student SNAP eligibility or to reduce the burden of the application process for students. For example, Missouri's state SNAP agency reported that it recently began a partnership with the state's community college association to increase students' awareness of their potential eligibility for SNAP. To reduce the burden students face in applying for SNAP benefits, Rhode Island's state SNAP agency reported that its outreach partner holds regular "office hours" at state community college campuses to answer questions about SNAP, screen students for potential eligibility, and assist with application completion. Officials from California's state SNAP agency stated that its county SNAP agencies periodically hold SNAP enrollment clinics on college campuses. At one time, a community college in California had a county SNAP staff member located on campus to assist their students with benefit applications.

Finally, two of the states we visited partially fund their state higher education grants for low-income college students with some of their Federal TANF block grant dollars.[59] Because these grant recipients receive TANF benefits, they are eligible for the corresponding SNAP student exemption. For example, the California state SNAP agency issued guidance in February 2017 to all of its county offices to explain that this SNAP student exemption applies to any student who receives the state's

[57] We emailed the SNAP directors of all 50 states and the District of Columbia to ask what, if any, actions their state agency was taking to address college student food insecurity. Fifty of the 51 state SNAP agencies responded to our email for a 98 percent response rate. About a quarter of states that responded to our email indicated that they had implemented a state option related to averaging student work hours on a monthly basis instead of requiring 20 hours per week to qualify for a student exemption. For the purposes of our analysis, we did not include this as a state action because it is an approach to implementing an existing student exemption. This email inquiry was conducted in March and April 2018 and may not include all state actions that have occurred since April 2018.

[58] In California and in nine other states, counties separately administer the SNAP program on behalf of the state SNAP agency.

[59] States may use Federal TANF block grant funds on a wide range of benefits and services, including to support work, education, and training programs.

higher-education grant for low-income students.[60] In Massachusetts, the state SNAP agency issued similar guidance in August 2017 to state SNAP staff who determine eligibility for benefits.[61]

Some States Are Implementing Approaches that Provide Additional Employment and Training Options for Certain Students

Some state SNAP agencies are taking steps related to the exemption for students who are enrolled in certain employment and training programs, which can be offered at 2 year colleges and other community-based organizations.[62] Seven states reported taking steps to designate specific programs at their community colleges to qualify as employment and training programs to make it easier for students and SNAP staff who determine eligibility for benefits to identify students who could meet this exemption. In these states, according to the SNAP agency, they have determined that certain programs at community colleges qualify enrolled students for one of the student SNAP exemptions because they are programs for low-income households, aimed at employment, and run by a state or local government.[63]

According to FNS, state SNAP agencies have the authority to decide which programs would qualify enrolled students for this exemption, and several states have identified qualifying programs at community colleges in their state.[64] Students in these designated community college programs who attend at least half time and do not meet one of the other student exemptions can be eligible for SNAP under this provision if they meet all other eligibility criteria. In 2010, Massachusetts' state SNAP agency began using a dedicated form that provides community college students in these state-designated employment and training programs support for their SNAP application. According to officials at the state SNAP agency, this form has helped to streamline the application process for both students and state SNAP agency staff who determine eligibility for benefits.

Other states are developing opportunities for students to meet the employment and training exemption through partnerships with the states' SNAP Employment & Training (E&T) programs. Twenty-four state SNAP agencies reported that they have implemented a third-party partnership with at least one community college to deliver SNAP E&T program services on campus.[65] Under these state SNAP E&T program partnerships, the state SNAP agency works with community colleges to enroll SNAP recipients in programs that are designed to increase the employability of the participant. One FNS official told us that state SNAP E&T programs were an ideal way to provide college students who qualify for SNAP benefits with additional services and support, such as counseling or transportation assistance, and that they can help students persist in their community college program and ultimately improve their self-sufficiency.[66]

According to FNS, state agencies can enroll individuals in these SNAP E&T programs in one of two ways. A SNAP recipient may enroll in the designated community college training program affiliated with the state's SNAP E&T program, which allows them to continue receiving SNAP benefits even if they attend the program more than half time. Or, the community college partner can refer individuals already enrolled at the college to the state SNAP agency to determine if they are eligible for state SNAP E&T program services—a process known as a "reverse referral." In the case of a reverse referral, individuals who are enrolled in certain training

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[60] California Health and Human Services Agency, Department of Social Services, CalFresh Student Eligibility, All County Letter No. 17–05 (Sacramento: February 2017).

[61] Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Department of Transitional Assistance, *SNAP—Student Eligibility Updates,* Online Guide Transmittal 2017–52 (Boston: August 2017).

[62] Many of the student SNAP exemptions are relatively easy for a state SNAP staff member who determines eligibility for benefits to verify, for example, being a single parent of a child under age 12 or participating in the Federal Work-Study Program. One student exemption-related to participation in employment and training programs—is less straightforward because states must review the components of each program and independently determine if it qualifies as such a program under FNS rules. FNS officials told us state SNAP agencies are not required to report information on how many states take these approaches or how many students qualify for SNAP through the employment and training student exemption.

[63] See 7 U.S.C. § 2015(e)(3)(D); see also 7 CFR § 273.5(b)(11)(iv).

[64] These programs must meet the requirements detailed at 7 CFR § 273.5(b)(11)(iv).

[65] FNS-reported data as of Fiscal Year 2018. SNAP E&T programs can also partner with other community-based organizations to deliver services.

[66] According to FNS, state SNAP E&T programs are a secondary payer for students who are enrolled in college programs. For example, if a student is determined to be eligible for a Pell Grant or other Federal financial aid, these funds must be used first to pay for tuition. Once other funding sources have been exhausted, state SNAP E&T program funds may be used for any outstanding tuition and fees.

programs and who are experiencing food insecurity may be able to qualify for a student exemption to receive SNAP, as well as additional services through state SNAP E&T programs.[67] According to Washington's state SNAP agency, SNAP E&T programs operate at all 34 community colleges in the state, and have served approximately 20,000 students each fiscal year since 2015. A senior program official at Washington's state SNAP agency told us that the vast majority of incoming community college students in Washington are screened for potential eligibility and reverse referral into the state's SNAP E&T program services.

College and State Officials Reported That FNS Does Not Share Key Information That Could Help Them Assist Students Experiencing Food Insecurity

At 9 of the 14 colleges we contacted, some officials and students we spoke with indicated that they either did not know about or found it difficult to understand the SNAP student rules. For example, in a student discussion group at one community college, some students said they were uncertain about how SNAP student rules applied to them when they lived with their parents but received no financial support or food from them. Officials at another college told us that many students are not even aware of or do not realize that the SNAP student rules apply to them. In a student discussion group we held at another college, some students told us that they had been unaware that they may be eligible for SNAP until they spoke to someone at their college. Further, we found college officials may also have difficulty understanding SNAP student rules—for example, officials at one college said that they believed that college students are not eligible for SNAP. College officials can be an important source of information for students regarding SNAP, but this can create barriers to access if college officials do not have the correct information. For example, at one college we visited, two students said they were misinformed by officials at their college or their state SNAP agency about their potential eligibility for SNAP.

Officials we met with at three colleges said that they would like information from FNS about college student eligibility rules so they can help educate and enroll students in SNAP, but FNS has not developed such targeted information to distribute to colleges and students. Officials at one college said they requested information from FNS to distribute to students, but the general SNAP eligibility brochure FNS provided did not reference college student eligibility requirements.[68] A senior FNS official said developing printed materials expressly explaining the college student eligibility requirements is primarily a state agency responsibility, and that information about this topic was available on the FNS website. However, we found that the information specifically related to college student eligibility requirements on the FNS website was not easy to find. For example, the main webpage of FNS's SNAP eligibility website lists the special circumstances under which certain specific populations may be SNAP eligible, but it does not include college students nor does it link to the webpage listing the student exemptions.[69] Further, the webpage containing information on SNAP for college students restates the list of student exemptions from the regulations, using legal and technical language that is not always easy to understand. For example, the webpage states that students "may be able to get SNAP benefits if otherwise eligible, and they 'get public assistance benefits under a Title IV—A program of the Social Security Act.'" Many college officials and students may not realize this refers to TANF benefits. In addition, the website does not list being "not physically or mentally fit" (*e.g.,* having a disability) as one of the ways to qualify for a student exemption, nor does it provide information relevant to how students may qualify for an exemption because they are assigned to or placed in certain employment and training programs.

A senior official from the FNS national office said that college student eligibility and the student exemptions were among the most complicated SNAP policies to explain and that they frequently receive questions from the general public about how the rules apply to certain students in certain situations. This official said that because the student SNAP rules are so difficult to navigate, FNS responds to these

[67] Students who are referred to state SNAP E&T programs and qualify for a student SNAP exemption must meet other financial and non-financial eligibility criteria to receive benefits.

[68] Officials at two FNS regional offices told us they were aware of a few colleges in their regions that had developed SNAP materials to distribute to students, but these materials were locally developed and disseminated only at certain colleges.

[69] According to federally developed web usability guidelines, important information should be available within two or three clicks of the homepage. We found the SNAP for Students webpage was not linked to the SNAP Eligibility webpage, and only found the SNAP for Students webpage by conducting a keyword search on the FNS website. See Department of Health and Human Services, *The Research-based Web Design and Usability Guidelines, Enlarged/Expanded Edition,* (Washington, D.C.: August 2006).

individual questions and circumstances as they arise, rather than developing materials that could apply broadly to every situation, and that state SNAP agencies are primarily responsible for assisting students. Officials at all four FNS regional offices we spoke with said materials explaining the student rules tailored to colleges and college students would prove useful to states and colleges in their regions. While developing clear written materials about a complicated policy is challenging, *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government* states that agencies should communicate key information to their internal and external stakeholders.[70] Further, a core activity of the SNAP program is to work with its partners to ensure that those eligible for nutrition assistance can make informed decisions about applying for the program.[71] The lack of clear and easily accessible information on student SNAP eligibility requirements can make it difficult for potentially eligible students to make informed choices about applying for SNAP, and for colleges to develop their own materials to help potentially eligible students apply for SNAP. As a result, students could miss opportunities to obtain the additional support they may need to stay in college and graduate.

In addition, we found that some state SNAP agencies had limited information about approaches that they could take to help potentially eligible college students who may qualify for a student exemption. Specifically, officials at four of the five state SNAP agencies and at three of the four FNS regional offices that we spoke with said that it is not entirely clear to them under which circumstances college students may be eligible for a student exemption if they are enrolled in a qualifying employment and training program run by a community college. State SNAP agency officials in four of the five states, as well as officials in three of the four FNS regional offices, told us that they would like more information from FNS about how to implement the approach some state SNAP agencies are taking to help college students who may qualify for an employment and training exemption access SNAP. One state SNAP agency official said that she believes that the lack of guidance and leadership from FNS on this issue leaves many state SNAP agencies operating with uncertainty, and, as a result, many of them do not take any actions to identify those college students who may qualify for an employment and training exemption under SNAP rules.

Several of the FNS regional office officials we interviewed agreed that the FNS national office was uniquely positioned to collect and share information about potential approaches that states are using to implement the student exemption for employment and training programs so that other states could also consider using such approaches to assist low-income college students who may qualify. Officials at one FNS regional office said that an FAQ-type document on college student eligibility scenarios would be helpful. At the same time, a few FNS regional office officials said that the national office is cautious about developing information for all states when each state's SNAP program operates slightly differently.[72] According to FNS national office officials, FNS issued the most recent document discussing general SNAP eligibility for students in August 2010. This document explained that certain employment and training services provided by a state or local government may qualify a student for a SNAP student exemption. In November 2016, six Federal agencies including USDA (on behalf of FNS) released an interagency letter, *Aligning Federal Supports and Program Delivery for College Access and Completion,* that includes information from FNS related to general student eligibility for SNAP.[73]

However, neither of these documents included specific strategies or examples of approaches states have used or can use to help potentially eligible college students access SNAP benefits. *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government* states that agency management should internally communicate the necessary information to achieve the program's objectives.[74] In addition, part of the role of the FNS national office is to work with its partners, including its regional offices and the state SNAP agencies, to improve program administration and ensure access to benefits for eligible individuals. FNS officials told us FNS has several existing mechanisms for information sharing with the regional offices and the state SNAP agencies, including policy memos, webinars, and annual conferences. However, a senior

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[70] GAO, *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government, GAO–14–704G* (*http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-14-704G*) (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 10, 2014).

[71] The SNAP program's other core activity is to improve program administration and ensure program integrity.

[72] As previously noted, state SNAP agencies have flexibility to adapt their programs to meet the needs of eligible, low-income households in their states.

[73] See *Aligning Federal Supports and Program Delivery for College Access and Completion* (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 15, 2016). According to an Education official, this interagency letter was the product of the Federal College Access and Completion Interagency Working Group.

[74] *GAO–14–704G* (*http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-14-704G*).

FNS official told us that she was not aware of any plans to share additional information with state SNAP agencies or regional offices on this topic, noting that college students are a relatively small population compared to other SNAP recipients. As a result, state SNAP agencies may not be aware of approaches other states have used that they could take to assist college students experiencing food insecurity in accessing SNAP benefits, and FNS may not be fulfilling its role to ensure program access for college students who are eligible.

In addition to noting how complicated the college student SNAP eligibility rules are, most state higher education and SNAP policy organization officials we interviewed remarked that the student exemptions can make it challenging for many students who are food-insecure to obtain SNAP benefits that could help them succeed in college. Specifically, a few researchers and state higher education officials said the eligibility restrictions were instituted when college students were generally from higher-income households, whereas many students enrolled in college today are from low-income households. Several higher education officials and one researcher noted that when a student qualifies for a student exemption by working 20 hours a week, it can have a detrimental impact on college completion. For example, research has shown that full-time college students who work more than 15 hours a week or who reduce their college course load and attend part time in order to increase their work hours are less likely to complete their degree or educational program.[75]

At the same time, FNS officials and officials at one state SNAP agency stressed the importance of having proper controls in place to prevent certain students from improperly receiving benefits. A senior FNS official noted that the college student restrictions were established to prohibit traditional college students who are supported by their parents from receiving SNAP benefits. This official said that the student eligibility rules should ensure that middle-class and wealthy students do not access SNAP while attending college. Further, officials at a few organizations and one state SNAP agency we interviewed expressed support for some of the student exemptions, such as the exemption for college students who work 20 hours per week.[76]

Conclusions

The Federal Government invests billions of dollars annually in higher education through grants and loans to low-income students. Partially as a result of this investment, a college education is accessible to more low-income Americans than ever before. Despite this Federal support, many low-income college students struggle to meet their basic needs, including obtaining the food that they need, and may drop out of college as a result. SNAP can be an important source of support for low-income students, although it may not completely ameliorate food insecurity. However, because the SNAP eligibility requirements for college students can be difficult for students and colleges to understand, students may be unaware of or misinformed about their potential eligibility for SNAP. FNS has not made information that clearly explains student SNAP eligibility requirements easily accessible to students and college officials and, as a result, students experiencing food insecurity may remain unaware that they could be eligible for SNAP.

In addition, some states are exercising existing state flexibilities to help students experiencing food insecurity to access SNAP, but FNS does not actively share this information among state SNAP agencies. By collecting and sharing information on approaches taken by state SNAP agencies active in this area, FNS could potentially help state SNAP agencies identify ways to help eligible students who are experiencing food insecurity. Better supporting these students will also help the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Education meet their respective goals

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[75] See, for example, Robert Bozick, "Making It Through the First Year of College: The Role of Students' Economic Resources, Employment, and Living Arrangements," *Sociology of Education,* vol. 8, no. 3 (2007); and Sarah Blanchard Kyte, *Who Does Work Work For? Understanding Equity in Working Learner College and Career Success,* (Iowa City, IA: ACT Center for Equity in Learning, July 2017). Officials at all state SNAP agencies, along with several college and state higher education policy officials, as well as a few students that we interviewed also noted that if college students were allowed to count unpaid internships or similar volunteer work in their field of study to qualify for the student exemption by working 20 hours per week, it could help support their academic and future career success.

[76] Many Federal means-tested benefits programs require some low-income recipients to work in order to receive benefits. For more information, see our prior work on Federal means-tested benefits programs, GAO, *Federal Low-Income Programs: Eligibility and Benefits Differ for Selected Programs Due to Complex and Varied Rules, GAO–17–558* (*http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-558*) (Washington, D.C.: June 29, 2017).

and make good use of the substantial Federal investment in higher education while improving the health and nutrition of individuals experiencing food insecurity.

Recommendations for Executive Action

We are making the following two recommendations to FNS:

The Administrator of FNS should make information on their website regarding student SNAP eligibility requirements easier to understand and more accessible, as a resource for colleges and state SNAP agencies. (Recommendation 1)

The Administrator of FNS should coordinate with its regional offices to collect and review information about existing SNAP flexibilities and examples of approaches state SNAP agencies are taking to assist eligible college students to access SNAP benefits, and share such information with state SNAP agencies. (Recommendation 2)

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

We provided a draft of this report to the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Education for review and comment. The Department of Education provided technical comments, which we incorporated into the report as appropriate. On November 28, 2018, and December 7, 2018, the Directors of the FNS SNAP Program Development Division and Office of Employment and Training met with us to provide the agency's comments orally. At the December 7, 2018 meeting, FNS officials told us they partially concur with our recommendations and believe that FNS has sufficient guidance in place for states to provide further information to colleges. However, the agency agrees with the intent of GAO's recommendations and plans to review its existing guidance to determine if any improvements are warranted. We continue to believe that additional action is necessary to address our recommendations. While reviewing its existing information would be helpful, we believe that changes to FNS's existing information are also needed to improve the clarity and accessibility of information about SNAP student eligibility requirements on FNS's website, and that FNS needs to work with its regional offices to identify and share additional information about state approaches to assist eligible college students with access to SNAP benefits. In response to FNS officials' comments, we also clarified both recommendations to focus more on actions that fall under the responsibility of the FNS National Office. FNS also provided technical comments, which we incorporated into the report as appropriate.

As agreed with your offices, unless you publicly announce the contents of this report earlier, we plan no further distribution until 30 days from the report date. At that time, we will send copies of this report to the Secretaries of Agriculture, Education, appropriate Congressional committees, and other interested parties. In addition, the report will be available at no charge on the GAO website at *http://www.gao.gov*.

If you or your staff have any questions about this report, please contact me at (202) 512–7215 or *larink@gao.gov*. Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this report. GAO staff who made key contributions to this report are listed in *appendix II*.

KATHRYN LARIN,
Director, Education, Workforce, And Income Security.

Appendix I: Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

This report examines (1) what is known about the extent of food insecurity among college students and their use of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); (2) how selected colleges are addressing student food insecurity; and (3) the extent to which Federal programs assist college students experiencing food insecurity. This appendix provides details of the data sources used to answer these questions, the analyses we conducted, and any limitations to our analysis.

Overview

We used multiple methodologies to conduct this review. We conducted a review of academic studies based on original research to determine what is known about food insecurity among college students. We assessed the quality of these studies by evaluating their research methods and determined that the studies we included in our review were sufficiently reliable for our use. To describe the prevalence of risk factors for food insecurity among college students, we used data on student characteristics from the nationally representative National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS). We assessed the reliability of NPSAS data by reviewing existing information about the data and the system that produced them and by interviewing

agency officials knowledgeable about the data. We determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of describing the prevalence of risk factors for food insecurity among college students and students' participation in SNAP.

To understand how selected colleges address student food insecurity, we conducted four state site visits (California, Kentucky, Massachusetts, and Michigan) selected based on whether colleges and/or state government agencies were taking steps to address food insecurity among students, and geographic diversity, among other criteria. In each state, we visited public colleges and universities, where we met with college officials, students, and researchers. We also interviewed state higher education and SNAP officials, as well as experts from relevant policy organizations. To assess Federal efforts, we identified Federal programs that may assist college students in need of food, interviewed officials from Education and USDA, and reviewed relevant Federal laws, regulations, and agency guidance and program documents, as well as Federal internal controls standards applicable to these programs.

Review of Studies

To understand what is currently known about the extent of food insecurity among college students, we conducted an in-depth review of studies. Our preliminary search in Scopus identified a recent systematic literature review on food insecurity on college campuses.[1] Upon reviewing the article's scope and methodology, we chose to update rather than duplicate their efforts. We expanded the original search terms to include "higher education" and "postsecondary" among others, and searched two additional research databases (ProQuest and Scopus) in addition to the original list of sources (MEDLINE, PSYCHINFO, and Web of Science). We identified peer-reviewed journal articles and other published research through this search. Through news reports on food insecurity and interviews with researchers, we also identified studies published up to August 31, 2018 that may not have been included in our initial review. We included studies in our review if they met the following criteria: (1) were based on research conducted and published in the United States; (2) were published since 2007; and (3) contained original, direct estimates of food insecurity rates among college students.

We identified a total of 35 studies that met these criteria and conducted an initial review to determine if the studies met generally accepted social science standards and were appropriate for our purpose to provide information on the prevalence of food insecurity among college students. We eliminated some studies if we determined that the methods were not appropriate or rigorous—specifically, we concluded that we could not report the results of four studies due to research design limitations. For instance, some studies did not fully disclose their methods, had small sample sizes, used data based on low survey response rates, or did not attempt to correct for or address potential biases in their methodology. For studies included in this report, we performed an initial in-depth review of the findings and methods, and a GAO methodologist performed a second review to confirm our reported analysis of the findings. As a result, we determined 31 studies to be of sufficient quality and we summarized the findings of these 31 studies in our report (see *table 3*).

Table 3: Studies Included in GAO's Review That Estimate College Student Food Insecurity

	Title	Authors	Year of publication
1	*Food Insecurity Prevalence among College Students at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa*	Chaparro, M. Pia, Sahar S. Zaghloul, Peter Holck, Joannie Dobbs	2009
2	*Examining the Role of Financial Factors, Resources and Skills in Predicting Food Security Status among College Students*	Gains, Alisha, Clifford A. Robb, Linda L Knol, Stephanie Sickler	2014
3	*Prevalence and Correlates of Food Insecurity among Students Attending a Midsize Rural University in Oregon*	Patton-Lopez, Megan M., Daniel F. Lopez-Cevallos, Doris I. Cancel-Tirado, Leticia Vazquez	2014
4	*Hungry to Learn: Addressing Food and Housing Insecurity Among Undergraduates.*	Goldrick-Rab, Sara, Katharine Broton, Daniel Eisenberg	2015
5	*Food Insecurity Among Community College Students: Prevalence and Association With Grade Point Average*	Maroto, Maya E., Anastasia Snelling, Henry Linck	2015

[1] Meg Bruening, Katy Argo, Devon Payne-Sturges, and Melissa N. Laska, "The Struggle is Real: A Systematic Review of Food Insecurity on Postsecondary Education Campuses," *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics,* vol. 117, no. 11 (2017).

Table 3: Studies Included in GAO's Review That Estimate College Student Food Insecurity—Continued

	Title	Authors	Year of publication
6	*The Relationship Between Food Security, Housing Stability, and School Performance Among College Students in an Urban University*	Silva, Meghan R., Whitney L. Kleinert, A. Victoria Sheppard, Kathryn A. Cantrell, Darren J. Freeman-Coppadge, Elena Tsoy, Tangela Roberts, and Melissa Pearrow	2015
7	*Factors Related to the High Rates of Food Insecurity among Diverse, Urban College Freshmen*	Bruening, Meg, Stephanie Brennhofer, Irene van Woerden, Michael Todd, Melissa Laska	2016
8	*Prevalence of Food Insecurity Among College Students at Southeast Missouri State University*	Hillmer, Amelia	2016
9	*Predictors of College-Student Food Security and Fruit and Vegetable Intake Differ by Housing Type*	Mirabitur, Erica, Karen E. Peterson, Colleen Rathz, Stacey Matlen, Nicole Kasper	2016
10	*The Prevalence of Food Security and Insecurity Among Illinois University Students*	Morris, Loran Mary, Sylvia Smith, Jeremy Davis, Dawn Bloyd Null	2016
11	*A Household-Based Food Security Survey of Western New York College Students to Determine Its Prevalence*	Bentley, Bradley J.	2017
12	*Assessing Food Insecurity on Campus*	Blagg, Kristin, Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach, Craig Gundersen, James P. Ziliak	2017
13	*The Evolution of Poverty in Higher Education: Material Hardship, Academic Success, and Policy Perspectives*	Broton, Katharine M.	2017
14	*The Relationship Between Food Insecurity and Academic Performance Among San Jose State University Students*	Dudley, Bethany	2017
15	*Hungry and Homeless in College: Results from a National Study of Basic Needs Insecurity in Higher Education*	Goldrick-Rab, Sara, Jed Richardson, Anthony Hernandez	2017
16	*Fostering Success: Understanding the Experience of Foster Youth Undergraduates*	Kinarsky, Alana. R.	2017
17	*Food Insecurity Among College Students: Exploring the Predictors of Food Assistance Resource Use*	King, Jennifer A.	2017
18	*Food Insecurity, Self-rated Health, and Obesity among College Students*	Knol, Linda L., Cliff A., Robb, Erin M.McKinley, Mary Wood	2017
19	*Food Insecurity in California's Public University System: What are the risk factors?*	Martinez, Suzanna M., Karen Webb, Edward A. Frongillo, Lorrene D. Ritchie	2017
20	*A High Prevalence of Food Insecurity Among University Students in Appalachia Reflects a Need for Educational Interventions and Policy Advocacy.*	McArthur, Laura Helena, Lanae Ball, Ariel C. Danek, Donald Holbert	2017
21	*Prevalence and Predictors of Social Work Student Food Insecurity*	Miles, Rhen, Bowen McBeath, Stephanie Brockett, Paul Sorenson	2017
22	*Student Hunger on Campus: Food Insecurity Among College Students and Implications for Academic Institutions*	Payne-Sturges, Devon C., Allison Tjaden, Kimberly M, Caldeira, Kathryn B. Vincent, Amelia M. Arria	2017
23	*Hungry to Learn: the Prevalence and Effects of food Insecurity on Health Behaviors and Outcomes over Time among a Diverse Sample of University Freshmen*	Bruening, Meg, Irene van Woerden, Michael Todd, and Melissa N. Laska.	2018
24	*Study of Student Basic Needs*	Crutchfield, Rashida, Jennifer Maguire	2018
25	*Why are Hungry College Students Not Seeking Help? Predictors of and Barriers to using an on-Campus Food Pantry.*	El Zein, Aseel, Anne E. Mathews, Lisa House, and Karla P. Shelnutt.	2018
26	*Food Insecurity and Hunger: Quiet Public Health Problems on Campus*	Forman, Michele R., Lauren D Mangini, Yong-Quan Dong, Ladia M Hernandez, Karen L Fingerman	2018
27	*Still Hungry and Homeless in College*	Goldrick-Rab, Sara, Jed Richardson, Joel Schneider, Anthony Hernandez Clare Cady	2018
28	*Food Insecurity and Behavioral Characteristics for Academic Success in Young Adults Attending an Appalachian University*	Hagedorn, Rebecca L., and Melissa D. Olfert	2018
29	*Food Insecurity and Academic Disruption among College Students.*	Phillips, Erica, Anne McDaniel, and Alicia Croft.	2018
30	*Relationship between Diet and Mental Health in a Young Adult Appalachian College Population.*	Wattick, Rachel A., Rebecca L. Hagedorn, and Melissa D. Olfert.	2018

Table 3: Studies Included in GAO's Review That Estimate College Student Food Insecurity—Continued

	Title	Authors	Year of publication
31	*Experiences With "Acute" Food Insecurity Among College Students*	Wood, J. Luke, Frank Harris III	2018

Source: Studies GAO reviewed. |GAO–19–95.

Note: We selected studies for inclusion based on the following criteria: (1) based on research conducted and published in the United States; (2) published after 2007; and (3) contains original, direct estimates of food insecurity rates among college students. While we determined that these 31 studies were appropriate for our purpose to provide some information regarding food insecurity among college students, all of the studies have methodological limitations and none provide estimates of food insecurity for the college student population in general.

While these 31 studies are of sufficient quality to provide information on what is known about food insecurity among college students, the generalizability of their findings require significant caveats. Most of the survey results in these studies are not generalizable to a population larger than their sample size, meaning that the findings apply only to the respondents of the survey. None of the studies in our review conducted non-response bias analyses or attempted to address potential selection bias in the sample. Despite these limitations, the studies collectively offer assessments of food insecurity conducted on over 200 campuses in more than 30 states, at both 2 and 4 year schools, and all but three of the studies used adapted versions of the USDA food insecurity measure.

NPSAS Data Analysis

We analyzed data from the Department of Education's (Education) National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS). Because no Federal datasets contain food insecurity data specifically about college students, we chose to analyze NPSAS data for the prevalence of risk factors associated with food insecurity.[2] Additionally, we used some summary statistics from frequencies presented in the 2016 NPSAS data codebook.

NPSAS data contain nationally representative, detailed demographic and financial aid data for college students enrolled in less than 2 year, 2 year, 4 year, and graduate postsecondary programs. These data come from institutional records, government databases, and interviews with students. Because the NPSAS data are based on probability samples, estimates are calculated using the appropriate sample weights provided which reflect the sample design. Each of these samples follows a probability procedure based on random selection, and they represent only one of a large number of samples that could have been drawn. Since each sample could have provided different estimates, we express our confidence in the precision of our particular sample's results as a 95 percent confidence interval. This is the interval that would contain the actual population value for 95 percent of the samples we could have drawn. Unless otherwise noted, all percentage estimates from the NPSAS data analysis have 95 percent confidence intervals within plus or minus 5 percentage points of the percent estimate, and other numerical estimates have confidence intervals within plus or minus 5 percent of the estimate itself. We compared 95 percent confidence intervals to identify statistically significant differences between specific estimates and the comparison groups. The information provided in the NPSAS data, particularly those from the interview portion of the study, are self-reported and not all of the data are based on Federal determinations or cross-verified with outside sources. For example, students self-report their disability status, their hours worked, and so on. Such self-reported data are subject to several sources of nonsampling error, including the inability to obtain information about all sample cases; difficulties of definition; differences in the interpretation of questions; respondents' inability or unwillingness to provide correct information; and errors made in collecting, recording, coding, and processing data. These nonsampling errors can influence the accuracy of information presented in the report, although the magnitude of their effect is not known.

[2] Federal data sets that collect data on food insecurity measure food insecurity at a household level, which is limited for estimating food insecurity among college students. Likewise, no Federal education datasets currently contain food insecurity data for individual students. Department of Education officials told us they are planning to include a series of questions measuring student food insecurity in the next NPSAS data collection in 2020.

Identification of Risk Factors for Food Insecurity

In order to identify risk factors associated with food insecurity among college students, we reviewed published articles and reports on the topic of food insecurity and interviewed researchers, college and state officials, and officials at relevant policy organizations. We present the list of risk factors for food insecurity we considered in *table 4.* Not all of the risk factors we identified have a corresponding NPSAS variable. For example, NPSAS does not ask respondents about unmet medical needs or childhood food insecurity. Additionally some of the risk factors overlapped and were thus not included in our analysis. For example, the NPSAS dataset contains multiple variables pertaining to student and student household income, such as household income, financial aid, and receipt of public benefits. Many indicators of low-income status likely overlap (*e.g.,* being eligible for a Pell Grant and receiving other financial aid), and many students who have one indicator will likely have others.

Table 4: Risk Factors Identified by GAO Associated with Food Insecurity Among College Students

Risk factor selected for GAO analysis	Description
Disability	Several studies and an expert in one interview mentioned having a disability as a correlate for food insecurity; also it is one of the exemptions for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) eligibility. Disability is a stressor that may partially overlap with the low-income variable, but adds a unique dimension of risk for food insecurity.
First-generation student	Mentioned in several studies as a correlate of food insecurity; may partially overlap with the low-income variable.
Former foster youth	Former foster youth are more likely to be low income, housing insecure, and food-insecure than other types of students.
Homelessness/housing insecurity	Several studies mention homelessness/housing insecurity as a strong correlate of food insecurity. Particularly in high-cost areas, this may be an indicator of food insecurity risk even among students who are not technically low income.
Low income	Multiple studies and experts in multiple interviews mention that having a low income is associated with an increased risk of food insecurity.
Single parent status	Single parent status likely overlaps with low-income status to some degree; it is also indicative of a unique stressor that may increase food insecurity risk (it is also one of the student exemptions for SNAP eligibility).
Receiving SNAP	Receipt of SNAP benefits is positively associated with food insecurity. While receiving SNAP mitigates food insecurity, SNAP recipients still have higher food insecurity rates than the general population.
Risk factors considered but not included in analysis	**Reason excluded**
(Lack) of access to credit card	No corresponding National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) variable.
Age or year in school	Some studies identify different years in school or different age groups as having different risks for food insecurity, but which year is at higher risk varies from study to study.
Exogenous shock (*e.g.,* death of family member, income loss, natural disaster, *etc.*)	No corresponding NPSAS variable.
Familial financial support/expected family contribution	Experts mentioned lack of family financial support as a strong correlate of food insecurity and a proxy for financial need. It is also indicative of the level of support a student's family can provide to assist a student experiencing food insecurity. However, this factor is likely highly correlated with low-income status.
Food prep skills/other skills	No corresponding NPSAS variable
Household receipt of Free and Reduced Price Lunch in High School	Research has found that household receipt of Free or Reduced Price Lunch is positively associated with food insecurity. However, this variable broadly overlaps with low-income status.
Living arrangements, such as on- or off-campus housing and whether food provision is included in on-campus housing	This factor may be correlated with food insecurity and is potentially related to homelessness/housing insecurity; however, homelessness is a stronger correlate/indicator of food insecurity risk.
Hours worked per week	Two studies found that the number of hours worked per week is positively correlated with food insecurity. However, working a greater number of hours while in college is likely correlated with having a low-income.

Table 4: Risk Factors Identified by GAO Associated with Food Insecurity Among College Students—Continued

Risk factors considered but not included in analysis	Reason excluded
Independent student status	Independent student status may be a proxy for having a low income or lacking family resources. Other variables may more directly indicate low-income status.
Loan use	May be a proxy for having a low income, but is also very broad as many non-low-income students also take out student loans.
Race/Ethnicity	Several studies have found that non-whites and certain ethnicities have higher risk of food insecurity. Race is generally considered a marker of other underlying risk factors more strongly associated with food insecurity, including being low-income. Because of this, we did not include race as a risk factor in our analysis.
Receipt of or eligibility for Pell Grants or financial aid broadly speaking	Several studies have found that unmet financial need and Pell Grant receipt are both indicators of overall need and are positively associated with food insecurity. The Federal Government determines Pell Grant eligibility based on income as reported on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). However, this risk factor largely overlaps with having a low income.
Sex/Gender	The research results are unclear on the relationship between gender and food insecurity.
Type of institution attended (2 year *vs.* 4 year, for-profit, *etc.*).	Several studies have found that community and vocational and technical college students have higher food insecurity rates than students at 4 year colleges. We report the results of our analysis by college type, but do not consider college type a risk factor itself.
Undocumented/international students	No corresponding NPSAS variable for undocumented students, and few variables available for documented international students.
Unmet medical needs	No corresponding NPSAS variable.

Source: GAO analysis. |GAO–19–95.
Notes: GAO compiled this list of risk factors associated with food insecurity among college students based on whether the risk factor was mentioned in research or mentioned during interviews with researchers, college officials, state and Federal officials, and relevant policy organizations.

Although this is not an exhaustive list of risk factors, individuals who experience one of the following seven characteristics may be at risk of food insecurity: being disabled, homeless or housing insecure, being a former foster youth, receiving SNAP benefits, being a single parent, and being the first-generation in a student's family to attend college.[3] *Table 5* shows how we compared these risk factors with corresponding variables from the 2016 NPSAS data.

Table 5. Selected Risk Factors and Corresponding Variables in the 2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study Data Set

Risk factor	NPSAS variable name	Description
Disability[a]	DISABIL2	Indicates student has some type of disability or condition.
Homeless/housing insecure	HOMELESS2	Includes some students who were determined by a professional to be homeless (via the Free Application for Federal Student Aid or FAFSA), but predominantly measures student-determined "risk of homelessness." This is not a direct measure of homelessness.
Former foster youth	ORPHAN2	Indicates student is an orphan, ward of court, emancipated minor, or in legal guardianship.
Receiving SNAP[b]	FEDBENA	Indicates whether any member of the student's household received Food Stamp (SNAP) Benefits during the 2013 or 2014 calendar year.
Single parent status	SINGLPAR	Identifies independent students who were single parents/caretakers during the 2015–2016 academic year.

[3] Participation in SNAP is correlated with both having a low-income and with food insecurity; studies show SNAP recipients are more food-insecure than the general population even though they receive SNAP benefits. This is partially because food-insecure people choose to participate in SNAP and partially because receiving SNAP does not completely ameliorate food insecurity. According to research by USDA, participating in SNAP for 6 months was associated with a decrease in food insecurity of 12.7 percentage points. See James Mabli, Jim Ohls, Lisa Dragoset, Laura Castner, and Betsy Santos, *Measuring the Effect of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Participation on Food Security,* a report prepared by Mathematica Policy Research at the request of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (Washington, D.C.: August 2013).

Table 5. Selected Risk Factors and Corresponding Variables in the 2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study Data Set—Continued

Risk factor	NPSAS variable name	Description
Low-Income	PCTPOV	Indicates total 2014 income as a percentage of the Federal poverty level thresholds for 2014. For our purposes, low income is defined as having a household income level at or below 130 percent of the Federal poverty level.
First generation student	PAREDUC	Indicates the highest level of education achieved by a parent, stepparent, or guardian of the student. Per previous Department of Education studies, we define first generation as college students whose parents' maximum educational attainment was a high school diploma or less. Note that students who did not know their parent's highest education were not counted as first generation students.

Source: GAO analysis. |GAO–19–95.

[a] The data are self-reported. The student may not be eligible for or receiving Federal disability benefits.

[b] The data are reported by the student and their family on the FAFSA or during the student interview. National level, individual SNAP enrollment data are not available to verify this variable, as states provide aggregate statistics to FNS.

Because our analysis does not include some of the risk factors for food insecurity listed in *table 4,* our findings may underestimate the number of college students who have a risk factor for food insecurity. For example, we heard in some of our interviews with researchers and in our discussions with students that being an undocumented or an international student was a risk factor for food insecurity. Such students are generally ineligible for Federal financial aid and are restricted in the type of other Federal aid they can receive. Undocumented students are also more likely than other students to be poor. However, NPSAS does not contain detailed data about undocumented or international students, so we could not include this risk factor for food insecurity in our analysis. The risk factors for food insecurity we included in our analysis may also be correlated with one another and can co-occur. For example, youth who were formerly in foster care are more likely than other youth to be low-income.[4] Indeed, the prevalence of additional risk factors for food insecurity is higher among low-income than wealthier students. We did not analyze the extent to which some risk factors are more strongly associated with food insecurity than others or attempt to rank or weight the relative importance of risk factors.

Student SNAP Eligibility

To calculate potential student SNAP eligibility, we first calculated the number of students who might qualify for SNAP based upon having a household income at or below 130 percent of the Federal poverty line, which is the standard income requirement for households that do not include a member who is 60 years of age or older or disabled to qualify for SNAP benefits. Next, we analyzed NPSAS variables to identify those that corresponded with SNAP student eligibility rules. We deemed all students who met the income requirements, were enrolled in school at least half time, and met one of the student eligibility exemptions we were able to identify in the data as potentially eligible for SNAP.

However, our analysis has limitations and does not precisely identify all students who are SNAP eligible. The 2016 NPSAS data set contains several variables that match up closely with certain student eligibility exemptions. For example, the exemptions related to age, having young dependents, working 20 hours per week, and receiving certain Federal benefits have corresponding NPSAS variables (see *table 6*). For two of the exemptions, we used variables from the NPSAS data set that do not perfectly correspond to the statute but were the closest available proxies in the data. For the eligibility exemption that covers parents caring for a child 6–11 years old who are unable to obtain childcare to attend school and work, we identified students who have a child 6–11 years old and indicate they have no paid childcare. However, some individuals may have unpaid childcare, such as family members, and be able to work and attend school despite not having paid childcare, meaning they would not meet this SNAP student eligibility exemption. For the disability exemption, we

[4] Most foster and homeless youth have incomes within the lowest income quartile of all college-enrolled youth. See GAO, *Higher Education: Actions Needed to Improve Access to Federal Financial Assistance for Homeless and Foster Youth, GAO–16–343* (*http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-343*) (Washington, D.C.: May 19, 2016).

used the NPSAS variable based on an interview question that asks students if they have a mental or physical disability. However, because of different definitions, the NPSAS disability variable may include students with disabilities who would not qualify for the SNAP student exemption related to disability. Specifically, to qualify for this SNAP student exemption, the student must not be "physically or mentally fit,", while the NPSAS interview question asks students if they have some type of disability or condition, including a long-lasting condition such as serious difficulty hearing; blindness or serious difficulty seeing; difficulty concentrating, remembering or making decisions, a serious learning disability, depression, or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder; or serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs. As a result, we may overestimate the number of students who would qualify for the student exemption related to having a disability or caring for a child age 6–11. Last, NPSAS does not contain a variable to capture the student eligibility exemption related to enrollment in certain programs aimed at employment, such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families employment and training programs. Therefore, we could not identify any students who met this eligibility exemption for SNAP and may have therefore underestimated the number of students who were potentially eligible for SNAP.

Table 6: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Eligibility Exemptions for College Students and Corresponding Variables in the 2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study Data Set

College student SNAP exemption	NPSAS variable	Variable description and limitations
Under age 18 or age 50 or older	AGE	Provides the student's age as of 12/31/2015.
Parent caring for a child under age 6	DEPCHILD, DEPYNG	DEPCHILD identifies students who dependents who are children; DEPYNG provides the age of the student's youngest child during the 2015–16 academic year.
Parent caring for a child 6–11 years old who is unable to obtain child care to attend school and work	DEPCHILD, DEPYNG, DEPCARE	DEPCARE indicates whether the student had dependent children in paid childcare during the 2015–16 academic year. Students who have a child between 6 and 11 and indicate they do not have paid childcare were identified as meeting this condition. However, some individuals may have unpaid childcare that allows them to work and attend school, which these variables do not capture.
Single parent caring for a child under 12 years old and enrolled full-time	SINGLPAR, DEPYNG, ATTEND2	The student's single parent status, age of their youngest child, and whether they are enrolled full time.
Working a minimum of 20 hours per week	JOBHOUR	Based on the following student interview question asked of each job the student has held while enrolled, "How many hours per week have you usually worked [for this employer] while you have attended school?" Excludes work study hours.
Receiving any Federal Work-Study funds	TFEDWRK	Total amount of Federal work study awarded for the 2015–2016 academic year.
Receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits	FEDBEND	Whether any member of the student's household received Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF) benefits during the 2013 or 2014 calendar year.
Not physically or mentally fit (*e.g.,* have a disability)	DISABIL2	Student has self-reported some type of disability or condition; not based on a Federal disability determination.
Enrolled in certain programs aimed at employment, including TANF work programs, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I programs, and others	N/A	No corresponding NPSAS Variables

Source: GAO analysis and 2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study Documentation. | GAO–19–95.

Additionally, SNAP eligibility for college students depends not only on income and meeting a student exemption, but also on other determinations such as the level of the individual's financial assets, including savings and any state policy waivers that may apply to the individual's eligibility. Given that our analysis relied on self-reported information, and did not capture all aspects of student SNAP eligibility, we did not make any legal determinations about whether individuals were eligible for

SNAP, and therefore our analysis can be characterized as providing only a rough estimate of those students who may potentially be eligible for SNAP benefits.

State Site Visits

To understand how selected colleges address student food insecurity, we conducted four state site visits (California, Kentucky, Massachusetts, and Michigan). We selected these states based on the following criteria:

- Mentioned in interviews with researchers or government officials as being a state that is: actively addressing college food insecurity, or has at least one public college that is taking action to address food insecurity among college students (number of mentions).
- School or state program on hunger or food insecurity featured in research papers or policy briefs (number of mentions).
- FNS data on food insecurity rates in the state, to indicate whether food insecurity among college students might also be a problem (rank by state).
- FNS data on SNAP enrollment and participation in the state, to indicate the level of SNAP usage in the state (rank by state).
- FNS information regarding the number of SNAP waivers a state has received, as a proxy for SNAP policy activity in the state (rank by state).

We also sought geographic diversity in our site visit states. To achieve this, we created summary rank ordering of states based upon our criteria, then, from those states that ranked in the top 15, we selected one state from the Northeast, South, Midwest, and West Census regions. Some of our criteria were purely qualitative in nature, such as information from interviews, research papers, and policy briefs regarding states and colleges with promising practices. Our site visit selection focused specifically on states and colleges with documented activity addressing college student food insecurity, and is therefore biased toward those that had taken action to address college student food insecurity. Our selection strategy did not capture situations where there was high food insecurity among students but the college or state was taking no action to address it, nor did we seek to identify or visit locations where food insecurity had not been identified as a problem. In addition to our site visits, we conducted interviews with officials from one college in Texas and one college in Ohio to learn about specific campus food insecurity initiatives in these states.

In each site visit state, we visited several colleges that were taking action to address food insecurity among their student populations, selected based on recommendations from researchers and college officials. We also considered geographic proximity when selecting colleges to visit. Overall, we spoke with officials representing 14 2 and 4 year public colleges (12 in-person and two telephone interviews).[5] In each of our site visit states, we visited at least one large public university and one community college. See *table 7* for a list of the 2 and 4 year colleges we interviewed in each state.

Table 7: List of 2 and 4 year Selected Colleges that GAO Contacted, by State

State	2 year colleges interviewed	4 year colleges interviewed
California	Skyline College	California State University, Sacramento University of California, Berkeley
Kentucky	Maysville Community and Technical College	Eastern Kentucky University University of Kentucky
Massachusetts	Bunker Hill Community College	University of Massachusetts, Boston
Michigan	Mott Community College Washtenaw Community College	Eastern Michigan University University of Michigan, Dearborn
Ohio	Cuyahoga Community College	
Texas	Amarillo College	
Total	**7**	**7**

Source: GAO. |GAO–19–95.

At colleges, we asked members of the leadership team, financial aid officers, student affairs administrators, and other staff members questions about how they recognize, measure, and address college student food insecurity. We also conducted dis-

[5] In addition, we met with one private college during the course of our study. We met with this 4 year private work college to learn about their unique approach to meeting their students' basic needs. This college is not included in our summary of actions taken by colleges because it fell outside of our report's focus on public 2 and 4 year colleges.

cussion groups with students at seven colleges we visited and asked about their experiences with food insecurity and Federal assistance programs, such as SNAP. Students were invited by college officials to participate in these meetings. In each state we visited, we also met with officials from the state agencies that administer SNAP and any state governmental agencies, such as those overseeing higher education or involved in addressing food insecurity among college students. Lastly, in each site visit state, we identified and interviewed staff members at policy organizations, such as legal policy institutes or hunger advocacy groups, involved in efforts to address food insecurity among college students.

Assessing Federal Efforts to Address Food Insecurity

We assessed the extent to which Federal programs assist college students experiencing food insecurity by reviewing relevant Federal laws, regulations, and agency guidance and program documents related to specific SNAP requirements for college students and we interviewed FNS national office officials, including representatives of the Divisions of SNAP Program Development, Employment and Training, and Retailer Policy. We also interviewed FNS regional office officials in four of the seven FNS regions about their experiences working with the FNS national office and with state SNAP agencies in their regions to address college student food insecurity and access to SNAP.

We also sent an email to all 51 state SNAP agency directors (all 50 states plus the District of Columbia) to ask about any actions their state has taken to address college student food insecurity. We received responses from 50 of the 51 state SNAP agencies, for a 98 percent response rate.[6] This email inquiry was conducted in March and April 2018 and may not include all state actions that have occurred since April 2018.

We conducted in-depth interviews with officials at five state SNAP agencies and asked about any specific policies or actions their agencies have taken to address college student food insecurity or to assist potentially eligible college students to access SNAP. We conducted these interviews in person with state SNAP agencies during our four state site visits, and interviewed the Washington state SNAP agency by phone.[7]

We conducted this performance audit from July 2017 to December 2018 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Appendix II: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contact

Kathryn Larin, (202) 512–7215 or *larink@gao.gov*.

Staff Acknowledgments

In addition to the contact named above, Michelle L. St. Pierre (Assistant Director), Nora Boretti (Analyst-In-Charge), Jessica K. Rider, and Stephen C. Yoder made significant contributions to this report. Also contributing to this report were Holly A. Dye, Barbara J. El Osta, Sarah C. Gilliland, Alison E. Grantham, Gina M. Hoover, Saida B. Hussain, Sheila R. McCoy, John W. Mingus, Jr., Mimi Nguyen, Monica P. Savoy, Benjamin A. Sinoff, Almeta Spencer, Rachel R. Stoiko, Elaine L. Vaurio, and David A. Watsula.

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[6] The Michigan State SNAP agency did not respond to our email. However, we interviewed the Michigan state SNAP agency director during the course of our review and incorporated the state's actions into our report, as appropriate.

[7] We interviewed the Washington State SNAP agency director because of Washington's extensive SNAP Employment & Training Program partnerships with colleges.

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