

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8754

To amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to encourage practices that benefit both soil and wildlife habitat by increasing payments to producers for such practices under the environmental quality incentives program and the conservation stewardship program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 14, 2024

Ms. BROWNLEY (for herself and Mr. CARBAJAL) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to encourage practices that benefit both soil and wildlife habitat by increasing payments to producers for such practices under the environmental quality incentives program and the conservation stewardship program, and for other purposes.

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Saving Our Inter-
5 connected Lives Act” or the “SOIL Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM.**

2 (a) INCREASED PAYMENTS FOR CERTAIN PRACTICES
3 RELATING TO SOIL AND WILDLIFE HABITAT.—

4 Section 1240B(d) of the Food Security Act of
5 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(d) is amended by adding
6 at the end the following:

7 “(8) INCREASED PAYMENTS FOR PRACTICES
8 THAT BENEFIT BOTH SOIL AND WILDLIFE HABI-
9 TAT.—Notwithstanding paragraph (2), the Secretary
10 shall provide payment to producers at 90 percent of
11 the cost associated with planning, design, materials,
12 equipment, installation, labor, management, mainte-
13 nance, or training for performing a practice that si-
14 multaneously benefits both soil and wildlife habitat
15 for projects identified by the Secretary as addressing
16 both soil and wildlife habitat resource concerns, in-
17 cluding practices that—

18 “(A) achieve alley cropping;

19 “(B) apply conservation cover;

20 “(C) apply contour buffer strips;

21 “(D) enhance or restore wetlands;

22 “(E) establish filter strips;

23 “(F) establish permanent vegetation to
24 stabilize critical areas;

25 “(G) establish riparian herbaceous cover;

26 “(H) establish trees and shrubs;

- 1 “(I) establish wildlife habitat plantings;
- 2 “(J) establish windbreaks;
- 3 “(K) implement field borders;
- 4 “(L) implement hedgerow planting;
- 5 “(M) implement riparian forest buffers;
- 6 “(N) improve forest stands;
- 7 “(O) manage forage harvest;
- 8 “(P) manage harvest of vegetation with
- 9 grazing;
- 10 “(Q) manage or establish stands of trees
- 11 or shrubs in coordination with the management
- 12 of understory plants or nontimber forest prod-
- 13 ucts;
- 14 “(R) manage pest and environmental im-
- 15 pacts;
- 16 “(S) manage residue and tillage manage-
- 17 ment through no-till or reduced till;
- 18 “(T) manage seasonal water for wildlife;
- 19 “(U) manage upland and wetland habitat;
- 20 “(V) plant cover crops;
- 21 “(W) plant grassed waterways;
- 22 “(X) plant stripercrops;
- 23 “(Y) restore rare or declining natural com-
- 24 munities; and
- 25 “(Z) rotate crops.”.

1 (b) EVALUATION AND PRIORITIZATION OF APPLICA-
2 TIONS.—Section 1240C(b) of the Food Security Act of
3 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–3(b)) is amended—

4 (1) in paragraph (3), by striking “and” at the
5 end;

6 (2) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at
7 the end and inserting “; and”; and

8 (3) by adding at the end the following:

9 “(5) that are developed for the purpose of ad-
10 dressing both a soil and wildlife habitat resource
11 concern.”.

12 **SEC. 3. CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM.**

13 (a) EVALUATION AND RANKING OF STEWARDSHIP
14 CONTRACT OFFERS.—Section 1240K(b)(1)(A) of the
15 Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–
16 23(b)(1)(A)) is amended—

17 (1) in clause (ii), by striking “and” at the end;

18 (2) by redesignating clause (iii) as clause (iv);

19 and

20 (3) by inserting after clause (ii) the following:

21 “(iii) the degree to which the project
22 addresses both soil and wildlife habitat re-
23 source concerns; and”.

24 (b) SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENTS FOR RESOURCE-
25 CONSERVING CROP ROTATIONS, ADVANCED GRAZING

1 MANAGEMENT, AND CO-BENEFIT ACTIVITIES FOR SOIL
2 AND WILDLIFE.—Section 1240L(d) of the Food Security
3 Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–24(d)) is amended—

4 (1) in the section heading, by striking “AND
5 ADVANCED GRAZING MANAGEMENT” and inserting
6 “, ADVANCED GRAZING MANAGEMENT, AND CO-
7 BENEFIT ACTIVITIES FOR SOIL AND WILDLIFE”;

8 (2) in paragraph (1), by adding at the end the
9 following:

10 “(D) CO-BENEFIT ACTIVITY.—The term
11 ‘co-benefit activity’ means a conservation activ-
12 ity that—

13 “(i) addresses both soil and wildlife
14 habitat resource concerns; and

15 “(ii) if implemented—

16 “(I) improves habitat for wildlife;
17 and

18 “(II) increases carbon sequestra-
19 tion in the soil and reduces green-
20 house gas emissions.”;

21 (3) in paragraph (2)—

22 (A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “or”
23 at the end;

24 (B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the
25 period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

- 1 (C) by adding at the end the following:
2 “(C) co-benefit activities.”; and
3 (4) in paragraph (3), by striking “or advanced
4 grazing management” and inserting “, advanced
5 grazing management, or co-benefit activities”.

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