

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4963

To support Federal, State, and Tribal coordination and management efforts relating to wildlife disease and zoonotic disease surveillance and ongoing and potential wildlife disease and zoonotic disease outbreaks, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 1, 2024

Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. LUJÁN, Ms. SMITH, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

A BILL

To support Federal, State, and Tribal coordination and management efforts relating to wildlife disease and zoonotic disease surveillance and ongoing and potential wildlife disease and zoonotic disease outbreaks, 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 “Wildlife-Agriculture
5 Disease Prevention Act of 2024”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

1 (1) zoonotic diseases are a significant threat to
2 human populations, livestock, domestic animals, and
3 wildlife, which is evidenced by the fact that—

4 (A) more than 6 out of every 10 known in-
5 fectious diseases in human populations origi-
6 nated in animals; and

7 (B) 3 out of every 4 new or emerging in-
8 fectious diseases in human populations origi-
9 nate from animals;

10 (2) zoonotic diseases are capable of transmit-
11 ting between wildlife, livestock, domestic animals,
12 and human populations;

13 (3) the majority of recent emerging infectious
14 diseases have originated in wildlife;

15 (4) zoonotic disease spillover events are occur-
16 ring more frequently;

17 (5) many wildlife diseases and zoonotic dis-
18 eases, such as highly pathogenic avian influenza, are
19 highly transmissible and have spilled over to live-
20 stock and domestic animals;

21 (6) chronic wasting disease is transmissible be-
22 tween wild and captive deer and elk;

23 (7) bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis spilled
24 over from cattle to wildlife;

1 (8) outbreaks of wildlife diseases and zoonotic
2 diseases have significant adverse effects on the
3 United States economy, with the 2022 avian flu out-
4 break resulting in economic costs of \$3,000,000,000;

5 (9) outbreaks of wildlife diseases and zoonotic
6 diseases pose a significant public health threat and
7 may lead to a public health emergency;

8 (10) the Department of Agriculture, Depart-
9 ment of the Interior, and Centers for Disease Con-
10 trol and Prevention play distinct but complementary
11 roles in the prevention, detection, control, and re-
12 sponse to wildlife diseases and zoonotic diseases;

13 (11) State fish and wildlife agencies exercise
14 primary statutory authority over the management of
15 fish and wildlife as public trust resources within
16 their borders;

17 (12) the Department of Agriculture is primarily
18 responsible for safeguarding the health of livestock,
19 developing and conducting monitoring and surveil-
20 lance for livestock diseases, and preventing the
21 spread of diseases that pose a threat to the agricul-
22 tural industry;

23 (13) the Department of the Interior has a re-
24 sponsibility to develop monitoring and surveillance
25 techniques for highly pathogenic avian influenza and

1 other emerging wildlife diseases, including diseases
2 with zoonotic potential;

3 (14) the Centers for Disease Control and Pre-
4 vention is the leading public health agency respon-
5 sible for—

6 (A) monitoring and responding to human
7 health threats posed by wildlife diseases and
8 zoonotic diseases; and

9 (B) conducting surveillance and research
10 and providing guidance to prevent and control
11 the spread of wildlife diseases and zoonotic dis-
12 eases to and among humans;

13 (15) increased coordination and collaboration
14 between Federal, State, and Tribal agencies with re-
15 spect to wildlife disease and zoonotic disease efforts
16 is necessary to adequately monitor and respond to
17 ongoing and potential wildlife disease and zoonotic
18 disease outbreaks;

19 (16) establishing a Agriculture-Wildlife Disease
20 Coordinator as an intermediary between the Depart-
21 ment of Agriculture, the Department of the Interior,
22 and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
23 would facilitate communication, information sharing,
24 and coordinated efforts to prevent, detect, and re-

1 spond to wildlife disease and zoonotic disease out-
2 breaks; and

3 (17) the coordinated efforts described in para-
4 graph (16) are essential to protect public health,
5 wildlife populations, and agricultural interests from
6 the impacts of wildlife diseases and zoonotic dis-
7 eases.

8 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

9 In this Act:

10 (1) AGRICULTURE-WILDLIFE DISEASE COORDI-
11 NATOR.—The term “Agriculture-Wildlife Disease
12 Coordinator” means the individual appointed to the
13 position established by section 4(a).

14 (2) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe”
15 has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the
16 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance
17 Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

18 (3) LIVESTOCK.—The term “livestock” has the
19 meaning given the term in section 10403 of the Ani-
20 mal Health Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 8302).

21 (4) WILDLIFE DISEASE.—The term “wildlife
22 disease” means any infectious disease originating in
23 wildlife that can be transmitted, directly or indi-
24 rectly, from an infected animal, host or vector, inani-
25 mate source, or any other source to non-human ani-

1 mals, including wildlife, livestock, and domestic ani-
2 mals.

3 (5) ZOOBOTIC DISEASE.—

4 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “zoonotic dis-
5 ease” means any disease that is naturally trans-
6 missible between animals and humans.

7 (B) INCLUSION.—The term “zoonotic dis-
8 ease” includes a wildlife disease.

9 **SEC. 4. AGRICULTURE-WILDLIFE DISEASE COORDINATOR.**

10 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within
11 the United States Fish and Wildlife Service a position, to
12 be known as the “Agriculture-Wildlife Disease Coordi-
13 nator”, to be jointly appointed by the Director of the
14 United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Adminis-
15 trator of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service,
16 to serve as a liaison between the Department of the Inte-
17 rior, the Department of Agriculture, the Centers for Dis-
18 ease Control and Prevention, the Department of Home-
19 land Security, and other relevant Federal, State, and Trib-
20 al agencies, as determined necessary by the Director of
21 the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Ad-
22 ministrator of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection
23 Service.

24 (b) QUALIFICATION.—The Agriculture-Wildlife Dis-
25 ease Coordinator shall have expertise in wildlife health, ag-

1 ricultural animal veterinary science, epidemiology, or an-
2 other related field.

3 (c) DUTIES.—The Agriculture-Wildlife Disease Coor-
4 dinator shall—

5 (1) establish relationships with relevant Fed-
6 eral, State, and Tribal agencies to carry out the pur-
7 poses of this Act;

8 (2) facilitate information sharing about existing
9 and emerging wildlife disease, including disease in
10 livestock and domestic animals, and zoonotic disease
11 outbreaks between States, including State depart-
12 ments of agriculture, environment, natural re-
13 sources, fish and wildlife, and public health and
14 State animal health officials, Indian Tribes, the Na-
15 tional Animal Health Laboratory Network, the Na-
16 tional Wildlife Health Center of the United States
17 Geological Survey, the Department of Agriculture,
18 the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the
19 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the De-
20 partment of Homeland Security, and other relevant
21 Federal agencies, as determined by the Director of
22 the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the
23 Administrator of the Animal and Plant Health In-
24 spection Service;

1 (3) assist States and Indian Tribes in accessing
2 resources, including applying for funding, to work on
3 wildlife disease issues, including diseases—

4 (A) with potential to transmit between
5 wildlife and livestock or domestic animals; and

6 (B) with zoonotic potential;

7 (4) coordinate—

8 (A) between States, including State depart-
9 ments of agriculture, environment, natural re-
10 sources, fish and wildlife, and public health and
11 State animal health officials, and Federal agen-
12 cies; and

13 (B) with other relevant entities engaged in
14 wildlife disease and zoonotic disease testing,
15 monitoring, surveillance, and management ac-
16 tivities, including entities convened by the Asso-
17 ciation of Fish and Wildlife Agencies;

18 (5) develop and share best management prac-
19 tices relating to wildlife diseases and zoonotic dis-
20 eases prepared by the Department of Agriculture,
21 the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the
22 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and
23 State and Tribal agencies between those Federal
24 agencies and State and Tribal agencies, including
25 State departments of agriculture, environment, nat-

1 ural resources, fish and wildlife, and public health
2 and State animal health officials; and

3 (6) submit to Congress a report on rec-
4 ommendations for improving interagency coordina-
5 tion and additional resources necessary to address
6 and prevent wildlife disease and zoonotic disease
7 outbreaks.

8 (d) BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES.—Best manage-
9 ment practices developed and shared under subsection
10 (c)(5) may include voluntary guidance relating to the hu-
11 mane dispatch of animals in the field, surveillance and
12 monitoring techniques, biosecurity and biosafety meas-
13 ures, public education, and other information, as deter-
14 mined necessary by the Agriculture-Wildlife Disease Coor-
15 dinator.

16 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
17 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
18 such sums as are necessary for fiscal year 2025 and each
19 fiscal year thereafter.

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