

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5971

To require the Secretary of Agriculture to direct a study on soil health of Federal lands, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 17, 2023

Mr. NEGUSE introduced the following bill

OCTOBER 25, 2023

Referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Agriculture to direct a study on soil health of Federal lands, 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 “Study on Improving
5 Lands Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. STUDY.**

7 The Secretary of Agriculture, in consultation with the
8 Secretary of the Interior, shall direct the National Acad-

1 emies of Science to study and report on the state of soil
2 health on Federal lands in the United States.

3 **SEC. 3. DUTIES.**

4 The National Academies of Science shall determine
5 the parameters by which to measure soil health, includ-
6 ing—

7 (1) soil organic matter and other measure-
8 ments;

9 (2) soil qualities that lead to the sequester of
10 carbon; and

11 (3) soil qualities that support strong ecosystems
12 and resilient environments.

13 **SEC. 4. DATABASE.**

14 Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment
15 of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture, in coordination
16 with the Secretary of the Interior and the National Acad-
17 emies of Science, shall—

18 (1) commence a study on the state of soil
19 health on Federal lands that determines impacts
20 such as grazing, wildfire, recreation, invasive species,
21 and other relevant impacts on soil health on Federal
22 lands; and

23 (2) create a database of the information col-
24 lected during the study.

1 **SEC. 5. REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

2 (a) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not later than 180 days
3 after the commencement of the study under section 4, and
4 annually thereafter, the Secretary of Agriculture shall
5 evaluate the progress of that study and report any short-
6 term findings to the Committee on Natural Resources and
7 the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representa-
8 tives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Re-
9 sources and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and
10 Forestry of the Senate.

11 (b) REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later
12 than 2 years after the commencement of the study under
13 this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall submit to the
14 Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on
15 Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Com-
16 mittee on Energy and Natural Resources and the Com-
17 mittee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Sen-
18 ate a report summarizing the results of the study together
19 with any recommendations for legislative or regulatory ac-
20 tion to improve soil health, increase carbon sequestration,
21 and improve community benefits of soil health programs
22 on Federal lands.

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