

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5044

To require the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out certain activities relating to research for wood products, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 27, 2023

Ms. SALINAS (for herself, Mr. DUARTE, Ms. PEREZ, and Ms. PINGREE) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out certain activities relating to research for wood products, 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 “Timber Innovation for
5 Building Rural Communities Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITION OF SECRETARY.**

7 In this Act, the term “Secretary” means the Sec-
8 retary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the For-
9 est Service.

1 **SEC. 3. FOREST AND WOOD PRODUCTS DATA PROVISION.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in collaboration
3 with the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation
4 Service and in consultation with federally recognized In-
5 dian Tribes, State foresters, and private sector partners,
6 shall establish a platform to provide measurement, moni-
7 toring, verification, and reporting data regarding the car-
8 bon emissions, sequestration, storage, and related atmos-
9 pheric impacts of forest management and wood products.

10 (b) ACTIVITIES.—In carrying out subsection (a), the
11 Secretary shall source data, information, and data anal-
12 ysis from Department of Agriculture programs, includ-
13 ing—

14 (1) the Forest Inventory and Analysis program;

15 (2) the Timber Products Output survey;

16 (3) Forest Service and Natural Resources Con-
17 servation Service soil carbon estimations;

18 (4) Department of Agriculture entity-level guid-
19 ance;

20 (5) the Forest Products Laboratory;

21 (6) the Federal Life Cycle Assessment Com-
22 mons;

23 (7) Department of Agriculture entity level
24 guidelines; and

1 (8) other relevant programmatic data and infor-
2 mation sources, as they are published and made
3 available.

4 (c) PRIORITIES.—The platform established by sub-
5 section (a) shall provide tools that calculate—

6 (1) the above- and below-ground forest carbon
7 stocks and stock changes associated with species
8 composition, forest management regime, and land-
9 owner types, including small area estimations for re-
10 gional and localized geographies across the United
11 States, made available through Forest Inventory and
12 Analysis updates and annual reports;

13 (2) the embodied carbon involved in the manu-
14 facture of products, using data from published envi-
15 ronmental product declarations and life cycle assess-
16 ments, updated as new and more refined data be-
17 comes available;

18 (3) the long-term stored carbon in manufac-
19 tured timber products; and

20 (4) the carbon displacement of wood products,
21 compared to other materials, using substitution fac-
22 tors.

23 (d) TIMEFRAME.—To the maximum extent prac-
24 ticable, the Secretary shall establish the platform under

1 subsection (a) not later than 2 years after the date of en-
2 actment of this Act.

3 **SEC. 4. WOOD INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM.**

4 Section 8643 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of
5 2018 (7 U.S.C. 7655d) is amended—

6 (1) in subsection (d), by inserting “50 percent
7 of” before “the amount”; and

8 (2) by striking subsection (e) and inserting the
9 following:

10 “(c) TARGETING TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOP-
11 MENT, ENHANCED BUILDING DESIGN, AND IMPACT AS-
12 SESSMENT.—In selecting among proposals of eligible enti-
13 ties under subsection (b)(2), the Secretary may give pri-
14 ority to proposals for projects that—

15 “(1) include the use or retrofitting (or both) of
16 existing sawmill facilities located in counties in
17 which the average annual unemployment rate ex-
18 ceeded the national average unemployment rate by
19 more than 1 percent in the previous calendar year;

20 “(2) recognize or enhance carbon reduction
21 strategies in building design, including forest im-
22 pacts, which can be improved or incentivized by
23 North American procurement; or

24 “(3) report on the connection between their
25 proposal and the resilience and economic benefits as-

1 sociated with wood products from anticipated wood
2 supply areas, including wildfire risk reduction, in-
3 creased fiber flow, forest or mill jobs, and support
4 for forested communities created because of forest
5 management.”.

6 **SEC. 5. WOOD BUILDING EDUCATION ACCELERATOR**
7 **GRANT PROGRAM.**

8 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

9 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
10 ty” means—

11 (A) an engineering, architecture, or design
12 school at an institution of higher education; or

13 (B) a center of excellence that consists of
14 1 or more partnerships between forestry, engi-
15 neering, architecture, or business schools at 1
16 or more institutions of higher education.

17 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
18 the Secretary, acting through the Research and De-
19 velopment deputy area and the State, Private, and
20 Tribal Forestry deputy area of the Forest Service.

21 (b) GRANT PROGRAM.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish
23 a program, to be known as the “Wood Building
24 Education Accelerator Grant Program”, to annually
25 award grants to geographically diverse eligible enti-

1 ties to support the development of curricula, pro-
2 grams, and best practices relating to the critical ele-
3 ments of designing and building with wood, includ-
4 ing the use of traditional wood products, mass tim-
5 ber, and other advanced wood products.

6 (2) PROPOSALS.—To be eligible to receive a
7 grant under this subsection, an eligible entity shall
8 submit to the Secretary a proposal at such time, in
9 such manner, and containing such information as
10 the Secretary may require.

11 (3) REVIEW AND AWARDS.—The Secretary shall
12 review proposals submitted under paragraph (2),
13 and award grants under this subsection, in consulta-
14 tion with nonprofit organizations, research organiza-
15 tions, or other private entities providing funding to
16 eligible entities to support activities carried out
17 using grants under this section.

18 (c) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—As a condition of re-
19 ceiving a grant under subsection (b)(1), an eligible entity
20 shall provide funds equal to the amount received by the
21 eligible entity under the grant, to be derived from non-
22 Federal sources.

23 (d) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT.—The total amount of
24 grants awarded under subsection (b)(1) shall be not more
25 than \$10,000,000 for each fiscal year.

1 (e) ALLOCATION.—Subject to the availability of ap-
2 propriations made in advance for such purposes, the Sec-
3 retary shall allocate to carry out this section not more
4 than \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2024 through
5 2028.

6 **SEC. 6. RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND BUILDING PILOT**
7 **PROGRAM.**

8 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

9 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
10 ty” means—

11 (A) a nonprofit organization;

12 (B) a community-based organization;

13 (C) a State, local, or municipal govern-
14 ment;

15 (D) a tribally designated housing author-
16 ity;

17 (E) a private entity, as determined by the
18 Secretary; and

19 (F) a consortium of 2 or more entities de-
20 scribed in subparagraphs (A) through (E).

21 (2) PRODUCED AND ASSEMBLED IN THE
22 UNITED STATES.—The term “produced and assem-
23 bled in the United States”, with regard to wood ma-
24 terials, means that—

1 (A) the wood materials, if manufactured,
2 were manufactured entirely in the United
3 States; and

4 (B) if the wood materials were produced,
5 all production occurred entirely in the United
6 States.

7 (3) PUBLIC AGENCY.—The term “public agen-
8 cy” means a department, agency, other unit, or in-
9 strumentality of Federal, State, Tribal, or local gov-
10 ernment.

11 (4) RURAL.—The term “rural” has the mean-
12 ing given the term in section 343(a) of the Consoli-
13 dated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C.
14 1991(a)).

15 (5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
16 the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the
17 Under Secretary for Rural Development, in con-
18 sultation with the Under Secretary for Natural Re-
19 sources and Environment.

20 (b) GRANT PROGRAM.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
22 grants to eligible entities to carry out pilot projects
23 to demonstrate the use of innovative wood products,
24 systems, and technologies, such as mass timber, in

1 the construction and renovation of rural infrastruc-
2 ture and building projects.

3 (2) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to receive a
4 grant under this subsection, an eligible entity shall
5 submit to the Secretary an application at such time,
6 in such manner, and containing such information as
7 the Secretary may require.

8 (c) PROJECT REQUIREMENTS.—A pilot project car-
9 ried out using a grant received under subsection (b)(1)
10 shall—

11 (1) be not longer than 5 years;

12 (2) include collaboration between 1 or more eli-
13 gible entities and 1 or more public agencies;

14 (3) primarily use for construction materials
15 wood products that are manufactured and prefab-
16 ricated offsite and assembled onsite as a “kit-of-
17 parts” or by assembling finished modules;

18 (4) to the extent practicable, use wood mate-
19 rials that are produced and assembled in the United
20 States; and

21 (5) be located in or provide benefits to a rural
22 community that, to the extent practicable, has a his-
23 tory in wood products manufacturing.

24 (d) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—As a condition of re-
25 ceiving a grant under subsection (b)(1), an eligible entity

1 shall provide funds, to be derived from non-Federal
2 sources—

3 (1) except as provided in paragraph (2), equal
4 to the amount received by the eligible entity under
5 the grant; or

6 (2) in the case of a pilot project serving a popu-
7 lation of—

8 (A) less than 19,000 residents, equal to 50
9 percent of the amount received by the eligible
10 entity under the grant; or

11 (B) less than 2,500 residents, equal to 25
12 percent of the amount received by the eligible
13 entity under the grant.

14 (e) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT.—The total amount of
15 grants awarded under subsection (b)(1) shall be not more
16 than \$10,000,000 for each fiscal year.

17 (f) EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall provide for an
18 independent evaluation of pilot projects carried out under
19 this section that includes—

20 (1) a summary of the activities conducted under
21 the pilot projects;

22 (2) an assessment of the effectiveness of the
23 project requirements described in subsection (c); and

1 (3) best practices regarding the use of public-
2 private partnerships for increased wood utilization to
3 benefit rural communities.

4 (g) ALLOCATION.—Subject to the availability of ap-
5 propriations made in advance for such purposes, the Sec-
6 retary shall allocate to carry out this section not more
7 than \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2024 through
8 2028.

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