

117TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 6654

To direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish a National Climate Adaptation Science Center and Regional Climate Adaptation Science Centers to respond to the effects of extreme weather events and climate trends, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 9, 2022

Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CASTEN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. LEVIN of California, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. CASE, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. JAYAPAL, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. SCANLON, and Ms. MATSUI) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

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## A BILL

To direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish a National Climate Adaptation Science Center and Regional Climate Adaptation Science Centers to respond to the effects of extreme weather events and climate trends, 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 “Climate Adaptation  
5 Science Centers Act” or the “CASC Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) ADAPTATION.—The term “adaptation”  
4 means—

5 (A) the process of adjustment to actual or  
6 expected climate and the effects of extreme  
7 weather, climate trends, and climate variability;  
8 and

9 (B) protection, management, and conserva-  
10 tion efforts designed to maintain or enhance the  
11 ability of people, fish, wildlife, plants, land, eco-  
12 systems, and water of the United States to  
13 withstand, adjust to, or recover from the effects  
14 of extreme weather, climate trends, and climate  
15 variability.

16 (2) CULTURAL RESOURCES.—The term “cul-  
17 tural resources”—

18 (A) means those features and values re-  
19 lated to cultural heritage; and

20 (B) includes biological species with cultural  
21 heritage or ceremonial importance, and historic  
22 and prehistoric sites, trails, structures, inscrip-  
23 tions, art, and artifacts on Federal lands or  
24 representative of the culture of Indian Tribes,  
25 Native Hawaiians, and Native American Pacific  
26 Islanders.

1           (3) COMMITTEE.—The term “Committee”  
2 means the Advisory Committee on Climate and Nat-  
3 ural Resource Sciences established under section 6.

4           (4) CONSORTIUM INSTITUTION.—The term  
5 “consortium institution” means college, university,  
6 State cooperative institution, State agency, Indian  
7 Tribe, Tribal College or University, Historically  
8 Black College or University, Tribal organization,  
9 Native Hawaiian organization, minority-serving in-  
10 stitution, or other educational institution or organi-  
11 zation, Federal agency, public or private organiza-  
12 tion, individual, or any other party within each Re-  
13 gional Center other than the United States Geologi-  
14 cal Survey and the host institution.

15           (5) DEPARTMENT.—The term “Department”  
16 means the Department of the Interior.

17           (6) ECOSYSTEM SERVICES.—The term “eco-  
18 system services” means those benefits that eco-  
19 systems provide humans and human society, includ-  
20 ing clean air, clean water, and other economically  
21 important services.

22           (7) HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNI-  
23 VERSITIES.—The term “Historically Black Colleges  
24 and Universities” has the same meaning given to the

1 term “part B institutions” in section 322 of the  
2 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1061).

3 (8) HOST INSTITUTION.—The term “host insti-  
4 tution” means the non-Federal lead organization  
5 within each Regional Center.

6 (9) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe”  
7 has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the  
8 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance  
9 Act (25 U.S.C. 5304(e)).

10 (10) MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTION.—The  
11 term “minority-serving institution” means a His-  
12 panic-serving institution, an Alaska Native-serving  
13 institution, a Native Hawaiian-serving institution, a  
14 Predominantly Black Institution, an Asian American  
15 and Native American Pacific Islander-serving insti-  
16 tution, or a Native American-serving nontribal insti-  
17 tution as described in section 371 of the Higher  
18 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q(a)).

19 (11) NATIONAL CENTER.—The term “National  
20 Center” means the National Climate Adaptation  
21 Science Center established under section 3(a).

22 (12) NATIVE AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDERS.—  
23 The term “Native American Pacific Islanders”  
24 means any descendent of the aboriginal people of

1 any island in the Pacific Ocean that is a territory  
2 of the United States.

3 (13) NATIVE HAWAIIAN.—The term “Native  
4 Hawaiian” means any individual who is a descend-  
5 ant of the aboriginal people who, prior to 1778, oc-  
6 cupied and exercised sovereignty in the area that  
7 now constitutes the State of Hawaii.

8 (14) NATIVE HAWAIIAN ORGANIZATION.—The  
9 term “Native Hawaiian organization” means any or-  
10 ganization which—

11 (A) serves and represents the interests of  
12 Native Hawaiians;

13 (B) has as a primary and stated purpose  
14 the provision of services to Native Hawaiians;  
15 and

16 (C) has expertise in Native Hawaiian Af-  
17 fairs, and shall include the Office of Hawaiian  
18 Affairs and Hui Malama I Na Kupuna O Ha-  
19 wai'i Nei.

20 (15) NATURAL RESOURCES.—The term “nat-  
21 ural resources” has the meaning given the term in  
22 section 11.14 of title 43, Code of Federal Regula-  
23 tions.

24 (16) REGIONAL CENTER.—The term “Regional  
25 Center” means one of the Regional Climate Adapta-

1        tion Science Centers established under section 3(a)  
2        that provide support for specific geographic locations  
3        in the United States.

4            (17) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary”  
5        means the Secretary of the Interior.

6            (18) STATE.—The term “State” means—

7                    (A) a State of the United States;

8                    (B) the District of Columbia;

9                    (C) American Samoa;

10                   (D) Guam;

11                   (E) the Commonwealth of the Northern  
12        Mariana Islands;

13                   (F) Puerto Rico; and

14                   (G) the Virgin Islands of the United  
15        States.

16            (19) TRIBAL COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY.—The  
17        term “Tribal College or University” means an insti-  
18        tution that—

19                    (A) qualifies for funding under the Tribally  
20        Controlled Colleges and Universities Assistance  
21        Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.) or the  
22        Navajo Community College Act (25 U.S.C.  
23        640a note); or

1 (B) is cited in section 532 of the Equity in  
2 Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7  
3 U.S.C. 301 note).

4 (20) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term “Trib-  
5 al organization” means—

6 (A) the recognized governing body of any  
7 Indian Tribe; or

8 (B) any legally established organization of  
9 Indians that is—

10 (i) controlled, sanctioned, or chartered  
11 by the recognized governing body of an In-  
12 dian Tribe; or

13 (ii)(I) democratically elected by the  
14 adult members of the Indian community to  
15 be served by such organization; and

16 (II) includes the maximum participa-  
17 tion of Indians in all phases of its activi-  
18 ties.

19 (21) UNIVERSITY.—The term “university” has  
20 the meaning given to “institution of higher edu-  
21 cation” as that term is defined by section 101(a) of  
22 the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.  
23 1001(a)).

24 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT AND DUTIES.**

25 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in collabora-  
2           tion with States, Indian Tribes, and other partner  
3           organizations, shall establish a program to be known  
4           as the “National and Regional Climate Adaptation  
5           Science Centers” to provide scientific expertise to  
6           managers of natural resources, cultural resources,  
7           and ecosystem services for the purpose of informing  
8           decisions that aid adaptation to a changing climate  
9           and extreme weather events. The program shall in-  
10          clude a National Climate Adaptation Science Center  
11          and Regional Climate Adaptation Science Centers,  
12          which shall be administered by the United States  
13          Geological Survey.

14           (2) CHIEF; DIRECTORS.—The Chief of the Na-  
15          tional Center shall be a United States Geological  
16          Survey employee. Each Regional Center shall have a  
17          Federal Director and a Host Institution Director  
18          who shall work cooperatively to further the mission  
19          of the Regional Center. Federal Directors of the Re-  
20          gional Centers shall be United States Geological  
21          Survey employees who report directly to the Chief of  
22          the National Center.

23           (b) DUTIES OF THE NATIONAL CENTER.—In collabo-  
24          ration with Federal agencies, States, Indian Tribes, Tribal  
25          organizations, Native Hawaiians, Native Hawaiian organi-

1 zations, Native American Pacific Islanders, and other  
2 partner organizations, the National Center shall—

3 (1) serve as the national office for the Regional  
4 Centers;

5 (2) provide leadership and guidance on adminis-  
6 tration, partnerships, information management, and  
7 communications;

8 (3) develop and facilitate coordination among  
9 the Regional Centers;

10 (4) coordinate with other Federal agencies  
11 working on similar research and activities;

12 (5) conduct research on cross-regional and na-  
13 tional science priorities;

14 (6) support Regional Centers that—

15 (A) are hosted at a university, or a consor-  
16 tium of universities or other research institu-  
17 tions, within the region of each Regional Cen-  
18 ter;

19 (B) are collaborations between the Federal  
20 Director and the Host Institution Director and  
21 their staffs to address the broad scientific mis-  
22 sion and goals as defined by the National Cen-  
23 ter in a manner that is relevant to its specific  
24 geographic region and in cooperation with State  
25 and local governments, Indian Tribes, Tribal

1 organizations, Native Hawaiians, Native Hawai-  
2 ian organizations, Native American Pacific Is-  
3 landers, and other entities within that region;

4 (C) promote research, education, training,  
5 and advisory service activities and broad and  
6 prompt dissemination of knowledge and tech-  
7 niques; and

8 (D) receive funding at the host institution  
9 through cooperative agreements, contracts, and  
10 grants under section 4; and

11 (7) acting through the Chief of the National  
12 Center, with respect to the Regional Centers—

13 (A) evaluate and assess the performance of  
14 the programs of Regional Centers every five  
15 years, using the priorities, guidelines, and quali-  
16 fications established by the Secretary under this  
17 section, and determine if the programs are well  
18 managed and carry out high-quality research,  
19 education, training, and advisory service activi-  
20 ties; and

21 (B) subject to the availability of appropria-  
22 tions, allocate funding among Regional Centers  
23 so as to—

1 (i) conduct regionally relevant re-  
2 search, education, training, and advisory  
3 service activities in each of the regions;

4 (ii) encourage collaborations among  
5 Regional Centers to address regional and  
6 national priorities established under this  
7 section;

8 (iii) ensure successful implementation  
9 and operation of Regional Centers;

10 (iv) to the maximum extent consistent  
11 with other provisions of this Act, provide a  
12 stable base of funding in support of the  
13 Regional Centers; and

14 (v) encourage and promote coordina-  
15 tion and cooperation between the research,  
16 education, training, and advisory service  
17 activities of the Department and those of  
18 the host and consortium institutions.

19 (c) AUTHORITIES OF THE NATIONAL CENTER.—The  
20 National Center may—

21 (1) procure the services of appropriate public  
22 and private agencies and institutions and other  
23 qualified persons to conduct its work; and

24 (2) operate and fund a network of not fewer  
25 than nine Regional Centers that shall address the

1 impacts of climate trends and variability, including  
2 extreme weather events, on natural and cultural re-  
3 sources and ecosystem services.

4 (d) DESIGNATION OF THE REGIONAL CENTERS.—

5 (1) EXISTING REGIONAL CENTER DESIGNA-  
6 TIONS.—Any institution or consortium of institu-  
7 tions designated as the host institution of a Regional  
8 Center before the date of the enactment of this Act,  
9 shall not have to reapply for designation as a Re-  
10 gional Center if the Chief of the National Center de-  
11 termines that the institution or consortium of insti-  
12 tutions meets the guidelines established in para-  
13 graph (2).

14 (2) REVIEWS OF THE REGIONAL CENTERS.—

15 The Chief of the National Center, in consultation  
16 with the Committee, shall establish guidelines re-  
17 lated to the activities and responsibilities of the Re-  
18 gional Centers. Such guidelines shall include—

19 (A) requirements for the merit review of  
20 the Regional Centers;

21 (B) the circumstances by which a host in-  
22 stitution may not be continued as a host insti-  
23 tution;

24 (C) the schedule for reviews according to  
25 the criteria in the schedule for reviews; and

1 (D) the process to select a new host insti-  
2 tution.

3 (3) CHANGES TO CONSORTIUM INSTITUTIONS.—

4 The Chief of the National Center, in consultation  
5 with the Federal Director and Host Institution Di-  
6 rector of a Regional Center, may add or remove con-  
7 sortium institutions at any time to address regional  
8 and national priorities established under this section.

9 (4) FACA.—Committees, subcommittees, and  
10 working groups appointed by Federal Directors of  
11 the Regional Centers pursuant to this subsection  
12 shall not be subject to the Federal Advisory Com-  
13 mittee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

14 (e) DUTIES OF THE REGIONAL CENTERS.—In col-  
15 laboration with Federal and State natural resources agen-  
16 cies and departments, Indian Tribes, Tribal organizations,  
17 Native Hawaiians, Native Hawaiian organizations, Native  
18 American Pacific Islanders, Tribal Colleges or Univer-  
19 sities, Historically Black Colleges or Universities, minor-  
20 ity-serving institutions, universities, other research or edu-  
21 cational institutions, and other partner organizations, Re-  
22 gional Centers shall develop research, education, training,  
23 and advisory service priorities regarding the impacts of cli-  
24 mate trends and variability on natural and cultural re-

1 source management in their regions for the purpose of cli-  
2 mate adaptation.

3 **SEC. 4. GENERAL AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO CONTRACTS,**  
4 **GRANTS, COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS, AND**  
5 **INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS.**

6 (a) **AUTHORITY.**—The Director of the United States  
7 Geological Survey is authorized to enter into contracts,  
8 grants, cooperative agreements, and interagency agree-  
9 ments with a host institution or consortium institution to  
10 further the research, education, training, and advisory  
11 service activities of the Department or its partners relat-  
12 ing to impacts of climate trends and variability. This au-  
13 thority supplements all other laws relating to the Depart-  
14 ment and is not to be construed as limiting or repealing  
15 any existing authorities.

16 (b) **LEGAL INSTRUMENTS.**—The Director of the  
17 United States Geological Survey may use a contract,  
18 grant, cooperative agreement, or interagency agreement as  
19 the legal instrument reflecting a relationship between the  
20 Secretary and a host institution or consortium institution,  
21 to further the duties under section 3 without regard to—

22 (1) any requirements for competition;

23 (2) section 6101 of title 41, United States  
24 Code; or

1           (3) subsections (a) and (b) of section 3324 of  
2           title 31, United States Code.

3           (c) PARTICIPATION OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Not-  
4           withstanding any other provision of law, any Federal  
5           agency may participate in any such cooperative agreement  
6           under this section by contributing funds through the Na-  
7           tional Center or otherwise if it is mutually agreed that  
8           the objectives of the agreement shall further the author-  
9           ized programs of the contributing agency.

10          (d) TITLE TO ASSETS.—The Secretary, acting  
11          through the Director of the United States Geological Sur-  
12          vey, may vest title to expendable and nonexpendable as-  
13          sets, including equipment, supplies, and other tangible  
14          personal property in the contractor or recipient when the  
15          contractor or recipient purchases such assets with con-  
16          tract, grant, cooperative agreement, or interagency agree-  
17          ment funds and the Secretary deems such vesting of title  
18          a furtherance of the research, education, training, and ad-  
19          visory service objectives of the Department.

20          (e) APPROVAL REQUIRED.—In any case where a con-  
21          tract is let or grant made to an organization to perform  
22          services benefitting more than one Indian Tribe, the ap-  
23          proval of each such Indian Tribe shall be a prerequisite  
24          to the letting or making of such contract or grant.

1 **SEC. 5. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION.**

2 Each department, agency, or other instrumentality of  
3 the Federal Government, that is engaged in or concerned  
4 with, or that has authority over, matters relating to nat-  
5 ural and cultural resources, ecosystem services, or climate  
6 variability or change, including all member agencies of the  
7 United States Global Change Research Program—

8 (1) may make available, on a reimbursable  
9 basis or otherwise, any personnel (with their consent  
10 and without prejudice to their position and rating),  
11 service, or facility which the Chief of the National  
12 Center deems necessary to carry out any provision  
13 of section 3;

14 (2) shall, upon a written request from the Sec-  
15 retary, furnish any available data or other informa-  
16 tion that the Secretary deems necessary to carry out  
17 any provision of section 3;

18 (3) shall cooperate with the National Center,  
19 Regional Centers, and duly authorized officials  
20 thereof; and

21 (4) may transfer budgetary resources or other-  
22 wise enter into interagency agreements, including  
23 funding, facilities, computational resources, data, or  
24 other tangible or intangible resources, between the  
25 National Center or Regional Centers to aid collabo-  
26 rative work among Federal agencies, when approved

1 by the Chief of the National Center and their coun-  
2 terpart in the other Federal agency.

3 **SEC. 6. COMMITTEES.**

4 (a) **AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH COMMITTEES.**—The  
5 Chief of the National Center may establish committees or  
6 working groups and procedures to facilitate public partici-  
7 pation in the advisory process, such as a national advisory  
8 committee for the National Center, stakeholder advisory  
9 committees and science implementation panels for the Re-  
10 gional Centers, and working groups for review of competi-  
11 tive or noncompetitive proposals.

12 (b) **ADVISORY COMMITTEE.**—

13 (1) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—Not later than 180 days  
14 after the date of the enactment of this Act, and pur-  
15 suant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5  
16 U.S.C. App.), the Secretary shall establish an Advi-  
17 sory Committee on Climate and Natural Resource  
18 Sciences.

19 (2) **MEMBERS.**—The Committee shall have not  
20 fewer than 15 members, each of whom is an em-  
21 ployee of—

22 (A) an Indian Tribe;

23 (B) a Tribal organization;

24 (C) a Native Hawaiian organization;

25 (D) a State or local government;

1 (E) a host institution of a Regional Center;

2 (F) a nongovernmental organization;

3 (G) an academic institution; or

4 (H) an organization of the private sector.

5 (3) CHAIR.—The Director of the United States  
6 Geological Survey shall appoint a Committee Chair  
7 from among the members of the Committee.

8 (4) DUTIES.—The Committee shall identify and  
9 recommend priorities for ongoing research needs on  
10 the issues described in section 3(e) to inform the re-  
11 search priorities of the National Center.

12 (5) TERM OF OFFICE.—(A) The term of office  
13 of a voting member of the Committee shall be not  
14 more than 3 years.

15 (B) No person may serve more than two con-  
16 secutive terms as a voting member of the Com-  
17 mittee.

18 (C) The Chair may extend the term of office of  
19 a voting member of the Committee by up to 1 year.

20 (D) Any individual appointed to a partial or full  
21 term may be reappointed for one additional full  
22 term.

23 (E) Not less than once each year, the Secretary  
24 shall publish a notice in the Federal Register solici-  
25 iting nominations for membership on the Board.

1           (F) The Committee shall select one voting  
2 member to serve as the Vice Chair, who shall act as  
3 Chair in the absence or incapacity of the Chair.

4           (c) COMMITTEES; WORKING GROUPS.—

5           (1) IN GENERAL.—At the direction of the Sec-  
6 retary, the Chief of the National Center may estab-  
7 lish committees or working groups to provide input  
8 on the science priorities, implementation of science  
9 programs, review of competitive and noncompetitive  
10 proposals, and evaluation of processes, procedures,  
11 and outcomes of the National Center and the Re-  
12 gional Centers.

13           (2) MEMBERS.—The committees or working  
14 groups shall, to the extent practicable, include mem-  
15 bers from Federal and State government, univer-  
16 sities, private sector, nongovernmental organizations,  
17 Indian Tribes, Tribal organizations, and Native Ha-  
18 waiian organizations.

19           (3) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—The Secretary  
20 may establish procedures to facilitate public partici-  
21 pation in the advisory process, including providing  
22 advance notice of meetings, providing adequate op-  
23 portunity for public input and comment, maintaining  
24 appropriate records, and making a record of the pro-  
25 ceedings of meetings available for public inspection.

1           (4) IMPLEMENTATION; AVAILABILITY OF  
2 RECORDS.—The Secretary shall ensure that the pro-  
3 cedures described in paragraph (3) are adopted and  
4 implemented and that the records described in para-  
5 graph (3) are accurately maintained and available  
6 for public inspection.

7           (5) FACA.—(A) The committees or working  
8 groups shall not be considered advisory committees  
9 under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5  
10 U.S.C. App.).

11           (B) Seeking advice and input under subpara-  
12 graph (A) shall not be subject to the Federal Advi-  
13 sory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

14 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

15       There is authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-  
16 retary to carry out this Act not less than—

- 17           (1) \$97,000,000 for fiscal year 2023;  
18           (2) \$109,000,000 for fiscal year 2024;  
19           (3) \$121,000,000 for fiscal year 2025;  
20           (4) \$133,000,000 for fiscal year 2026; and  
21           (5) \$145,000,000 for fiscal year 2027.

○