

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7110

To direct the Secretary of Agriculture to provide for prize competitions relating to specialty crop mechanization, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 30, 2018

Mr. PANETTA (for himself and Mr. VALADAO) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Agriculture to provide for prize competitions relating to specialty crop mechanization, 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 “Specialty Crop Mecha-
5 nization Prize Challenge of 2018”.

6 **SEC. 2. SPECIALTY CROP MECHANIZATION CHALLENGES.**

7 (a) **AUTHORITY.**—Not later than 180 days after the
8 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture
9 shall establish a program to be known as “Specialty Crop
10 Mechanization Challenges” for carrying out prize competi-

1 tions described under subsection (c) pursuant to section
2 24 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of
3 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3719) relating to the mechanization of
4 specialty crop production.

5 (b) PRIZE COMMITTEES.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall assem-
7 ble a prize committee with respect to each prize
8 competition that shall define the scope and detail of,
9 and provide the requirements for, the prize competi-
10 tions under this section. Such committee shall be
11 composed of—

12 (A) representatives of the specialty crop in-
13 dustry, with at least a plurality of committee
14 members from sectors of the specialty crop in-
15 dustry that are labor-intensive and lack ade-
16 quate mechanization technology;

17 (B) members from the Federal agency, de-
18 partment, or office that most appropriately cor-
19 responds with the topic of the prize competi-
20 tion; and

21 (C) representatives of any other entities, as
22 determined appropriate by the Secretary, in-
23 cluding State and local governments and insti-
24 tutions of higher education.

1 (2) INCENTIVE FOR PRIZE COMPETITION.—The
2 prize committee for each prize competition shall de-
3 termine the incentive for the prize competition. In
4 determining the incentive, the committee shall con-
5 sider—

6 (A) a cash prize;

7 (B) access to Government facilities, a coop-
8 erative research and development agreement, or
9 other method; and

10 (C) any other incentive provided for by
11 law.

12 (3) JUDGING CRITERIA.—The prize committee
13 for each prize competition shall establish judging cri-
14 teria for the competition that shall include, at a min-
15 imum—

16 (A) potential for the solution to become a
17 commercial product or service to further the
18 public good;

19 (B) consideration of how likely the solution
20 is to lead to subsequent research, development,
21 or manufacturing in the United States;

22 (C) the degree to which the solution will
23 alleviate stresses on the agricultural workforce
24 and allow them to work more efficiently;

1 (D) the degree to which the solution will
2 alleviate burdens on agricultural producers,
3 shippers, and packers facing labor shortages;
4 and

5 (E) the degree to which the solution will
6 reduce losses of fresh fruit and vegetables due
7 to lack of available workers to manage and har-
8 vest crops.

9 (4) CONSIDERATION.—In carrying out this sec-
10 tion, the committee shall take into consideration the
11 best practices provided for in the challenges and
12 prizes toolkit made publicly available on December
13 15, 2016, by the General Services Administration.

14 (c) PRIZE COMPETITIONS.—In carrying out the pro-
15 gram, the Secretary shall provide for prize competitions,
16 including at least one prize competition on each of the fol-
17 lowing:

18 (1) PLANTING.—Solutions to automate or al-
19 leviate stresses on the workforce during the planting
20 of specialty crops including, but not limited to, the
21 planting of seeds, seedlings, and plants being trans-
22 ferred from nurseries or greenhouses to the field.

23 (2) CROP MANAGEMENT.—Solutions to auto-
24 mate or alleviate stresses on the workforce when
25 conducting tasks associated with the management of

1 specialty crops including, but not limited to, weed-
2 ing, pest management, and the application of crop
3 protectants.

4 (3) HARVESTING.—Solutions to automate or al-
5 leviate stresses on the workforce related to the har-
6 vesting of specialty crops.

7 (4) PACKAGING.—Solutions to automate or al-
8 leviate stresses on the workforce when processing
9 and preparing specialty crops for distribution.

10 (d) ACCEPTANCE OF FUNDS.—In addition to such
11 sums as may be appropriated or otherwise made available
12 to the Secretary to award prizes under this section, the
13 Secretary may accept funds from other Federal agencies,
14 private sector entities, institutions of higher education,
15 and State and local governments to award prizes under
16 this section. The Secretary may not give any special con-
17 sideration relating to the selection of awards under the
18 prize competition to any private sector entity or individual
19 in return for a donation to the Secretary or prize com-
20 mittee.

21 (e) ELIGIBILITY.—Notwithstanding section 24(g)(3)
22 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of
23 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3719(g)(3)), for a group to be eligible
24 for an award under this section, at least one member of

1 such group shall be a citizen or permanent resident of the
2 United States.

3 (f) COMPLETION OF PRIZE COMPETITIONS.—The
4 prize competitions carried out under this section shall be
5 completed not later than the date that is 5 years after
6 the program is established under subsection (a).

7 (g) GAO REPORT.—Not later than the date of com-
8 pletion under subsection (f), the Comptroller General of
9 the United States shall submit to Congress a report on
10 the impact and the effectiveness of the program carried
11 out under this section.

12 (h) SPECIALTY CROP DEFINED.—In this section, the
13 term “specialty crop” has the meaning given the term in
14 section 3(1) of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act
15 of 2004 (7 U.S.C. 1621 note).

16 (i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
17 authorized to be appropriated \$10,000,000 to carry out
18 this Act, to remain available until expended.

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