

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1737

To establish a global zoonotic disease task force, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 20, 2021

Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To establish a global zoonotic disease task force, 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 “Global Pandemic Pre-
5 vention and Biosecurity Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

7 It shall be the policy of the United States Govern-
8 ment—

9 (1) to support improved community health, for-
10 est management, sustainable agriculture, and safety
11 of livestock production in developing countries, par-

1 ticularly in tropical landscapes where there is an ele-
2 vated risk of zoonotic disease spillover;

3 (2) to support the availability of scalable and
4 sustainable alternative animal and plant-sourced
5 protein for local communities, where appropriate, to
6 minimize human reliance on the trade in live wildlife
7 and raw or unprocessed wildlife parts and deriva-
8 tives;

9 (3) to support foreign governments—

10 (A) to transition from the sale of such
11 wildlife for human consumption in markets and
12 restaurants to alternate protein and nutritional
13 sources; and

14 (B) to prevent commercial trade in live
15 wildlife and raw or unprocessed wildlife parts
16 and derivatives that risks contributing to
17 zoonotic spillover events between animals and
18 humans, excluding commercial trade in—

19 (i) fish;

20 (ii) invertebrates;

21 (iii) amphibians;

22 (iv) reptiles; and

23 (v) the meat of game species—

24 (I) traded in markets in coun-
25 tries with effective implementation

1 and enforcement of scientifically
2 based, nationally implemented policies
3 and legislation for processing, trans-
4 port, trade, marketing; and

5 (II) sold after being slaughtered
6 and processed under sanitary condi-
7 tions; and

8 (C) to establish and effectively manage
9 protected and conserved areas, particularly in
10 tropical landscapes where there is an elevated
11 risk of zoonotic disease spillover, including in-
12 digenous and community-conserved areas;

13 (4) to encourage development projects that do
14 not contribute to the destruction, fragmentation, or
15 degradation of forests or the loss of biodiversity; and

16 (5) to respect the rights and needs of indige-
17 nous people and local communities dependent on
18 such wildlife for nutritional needs and food security.

19 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

20 In this Act:

21 (1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Adminis-
22 trator” means the Administrator of the United
23 States Agency for International Development.

1 (2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
2 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
3 mittees” means—

4 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
5 the Senate;

6 (B) the Committee on Appropriations of
7 the Senate;

8 (C) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
9 the House of Representatives; and

10 (D) the Committee on Appropriations of
11 the House of Representatives.

12 (3) COMMERCIAL WILDLIFE TRADE.—The term
13 “commercial wildlife trade” means trade in wildlife
14 for the purpose of obtaining economic benefit
15 (whether in cash or otherwise) that is directed to-
16 ward sale, resale, exchange, or any other form of
17 economic use or benefit.

18 (4) HUMAN CONSUMPTION.—The term “human
19 consumption” means specific use for human food or
20 medicine.

21 (5) LIVE WILDLIFE MARKET.—The term “live
22 wildlife market” means a commercial market that
23 sells, processes, or slaughters live or fresh wildlife
24 for human consumption in markets or restaurants,

1 regardless of whether such wildlife originated in the
2 wild or in a captive situation.

3 (6) ONE HEALTH.—The term “One Health”
4 means a collaborative, multi-sectoral, and trans-dis-
5 ciplinary approach achieving optimal health out-
6 comes that recognizes the interconnection between—

7 (A) people, wildlife, and plants; and

8 (B) the environment shared by such peo-
9 ple, wildlife, and plants.

10 (7) OUTBREAK.—The term “outbreak” means
11 the occurrence of disease cases in excess of normal
12 expectancy.

13 (8) PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY.—The term
14 “public health emergency” means the public health
15 emergency declared by the Secretary of Health and
16 Human Services with respect to COVID–19 on Jan-
17 uary 31, 2020, pursuant to section 319 of the Public
18 Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d).

19 (9) SPILLOVER EVENT.—The term “spillover
20 event” means the transmission of a pathogen from
21 a species to another species.

22 (10) TASK FORCE.—The term “Task Force”
23 means the Global Zoonotic Disease Task Force es-
24 tablished under section 6(a).

1 (11) USAID.—The term “USAID” means the
2 United States Agency for International Develop-
3 ment.

4 (12) ZOOBOTIC DISEASE.—The term “zoonotic
5 disease” means any disease that is naturally trans-
6 missible between animals and humans.

7 **SEC. 4. FINDINGS.**

8 Congress finds the following:

9 (1) The majority of recent emerging infectious
10 diseases have originated in wildlife.

11 (2) There is a rise in the frequency of zoonotic
12 spillover events and outbreaks of such diseases.

13 (3) This rise in such spillover events and out-
14 breaks relates to the increased interaction between
15 humans and wildlife.

16 (4) There is a progressive and increasing rise in
17 interaction between human populations and wildlife
18 related to deforestation, habitat degradation, and ex-
19 pansion of human activity into the habitat of such
20 wildlife.

21 (5) The increase in such interactions due to
22 these factors, particularly in forested regions of trop-
23 ical countries where there is high mammalian diver-
24 sity, is a serious risk factor for spillover events.

1 (6) A serious risk factor for spillover events
2 also relates to the collection, production, commercial
3 trade, and sale for human consumption of wildlife
4 that may transmit to zoonotic pathogens to humans
5 that may then replicate and be transmitted within
6 the human population.

7 (7) Such a risk factor is increased if it involves
8 wildlife that—

9 (A) does not ordinarily interact with hu-
10 mans; or

11 (B) lives under a stressful condition, as
12 such condition exacerbates the shedding of
13 zoonotic pathogens.

14 (8) Markets for such wildlife to be sold for
15 human consumption are found in many countries.

16 (9) In some communities, such wildlife may be
17 the only accessible source of high quality nutrition.

18 (10) The public health emergency has resulted
19 in—

20 (A) trillions of dollars in economic damage
21 to the United States; and

22 (B) the deaths of hundreds of thousands of
23 American citizens.

1 **SEC. 5. UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARD ASSISTING COUN-**
2 **TRIES IN PREVENTING ZOOBOTIC SPILLOVER**
3 **EVENTS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State and the
5 Administrator of the United States Agency for Inter-
6 national Development, in consultation with the Director
7 of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the Sec-
8 retary of Agriculture, and the heads of other relevant
9 agencies, shall coordinate, engage, and work with govern-
10 ments, multilateral entities, intergovernmental organiza-
11 tions, international partners, and nongovernmental orga-
12 nizations—

13 (1) to prevent commercial trade in live wildlife
14 and raw or unprocessed wildlife parts and deriva-
15 tives for human consumption that risks contributing
16 to zoonotic spillover, with a focus on tropical coun-
17 tries and countries with significant markets for live
18 wildlife for human consumption, including—

19 (A) high volume commercial wildlife trade
20 and associated markets;

21 (B) wildlife trade in and across well con-
22 nected urban centers; and

23 (C) wildlife trade for luxury consumption
24 or where there is no dietary necessity;

25 (2) to prevent the degradation and fragmenta-
26 tion of forests and other intact ecosystems, particu-

1 larly in tropical countries, to minimize interactions
2 between wildlife and human and livestock popu-
3 lations that could contribute to spillover events and
4 zoonotic disease transmission, including by providing
5 assistance or supporting policies that—

6 (A) conserve, protect, and restore the in-
7 tegrity of such ecosystems;

8 (B) support the rights of indigenous people
9 and local communities and their ability to con-
10 tinue their effective stewardship of their tradi-
11 tional lands and territories;

12 (C) support the establishment and effective
13 management of protected areas, prioritizing
14 highly intact areas; and

15 (D) prevent activities that result in the de-
16 struction, degradation, fragmentation, or con-
17 version of intact forests and other intact eco-
18 systems and biodiversity strongholds, including
19 activities carried out by governments, private
20 sector entities, and multilateral development fi-
21 nancial institutions;

22 (3) to offer alternative livelihood and worker
23 training programs and enterprise development to
24 wildlife traders, wildlife breeders, and local commu-

1 nities whose members are engaged in the commercial
2 wildlife trade for human consumption;

3 (4) to work with indigenous peoples and local
4 communities—

5 (A) to ensure that their rights are re-
6 spected and their authority to exercise such
7 rights is protected;

8 (B) to provide education and awareness re-
9 garding animal handling, sanitation, and dis-
10 ease transmission;

11 (C) to provide sustainable wildlife manage-
12 ment and support for the development of vil-
13 lage-level alternative sources of protein and nu-
14 trition;

15 (D) to reduce the risk of zoonotic spillover,
16 while ensuring food security and access to
17 healthy diets; and

18 (E) to improve farming practices to reduce
19 the risk of zoonotic spillover to livestock;

20 (5) to strengthen global capacity for detection
21 of zoonotic diseases with pandemic potential; and

22 (6) to support the development of One Health
23 systems at the community level.

24 (b) ENGAGEMENT METHODS.—The efforts described
25 in subsection (a) shall be carried out by—

1 (1) working through existing treaties, conven-
2 tions, and agreements to develop new protocols or
3 amend existing protocols or agreements;

4 (2) expanding combating wildlife trafficking
5 programs to support enforcement of the closure of
6 such markets and new illegal markets in response to
7 closures, and the prevention of such trade, includ-
8 ing—

9 (A) providing assistance to improve law en-
10 forcement;

11 (B) detecting and deterring the illegal im-
12 port, transit, sale, and export of wildlife;

13 (C) strengthening such programs to assist
14 countries through legal reform;

15 (D) improving information sharing and en-
16 hancing capabilities of participating foreign
17 governments;

18 (E) supporting efforts to change behavior
19 and reduce demand for wildlife products de-
20 scribed in subsection (a)(1); and

21 (F) leveraging United States private sector
22 technologies and expertise to scale and enhance
23 enforcement responses to detect and prevent
24 such trade;

1 (3) leveraging strong bilateral relationships with
2 the United States to support new and existing inter-
3 ministerial collaborations or task forces that can
4 serve as regional One Health models; and

5 (4) building local agricultural capacity by
6 leveraging expertise from the Department of Agri-
7 culture, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service,
8 and institutions of higher education with agricultural
9 expertise.

10 **SEC. 6. GLOBAL ZONOTIC DISEASE TASK FORCE.**

11 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the
12 “Global Zoonotic Disease Task Force” (referred to in this
13 section as the “Task Force”).

14 (b) COMPOSITION.—

15 (1) MEMBERSHIP.—The Task Force shall be
16 composed of—

17 (A) a Chairperson, which position shall ro-
18 tate every 2 years, in an order to be determined
19 by the Administrator, among a representative
20 (at the level of Deputy Assistant Secretary or
21 above) of—

22 (i) the Animal and Plant Health In-
23 spection Service of the Department of Agri-
24 culture;

1 (ii) the Department of Health and
2 Human Services or the Centers for Disease
3 Control and Prevention;

4 (iii) the Department of the Interior or
5 the United States Fish and Wildlife Serv-
6 ice;

7 (iv) the Department of State or
8 USAID; and

9 (v) the National Security Council; and

10 (B) at least 13 additional members,

11 from—

12 (i) the Centers for Disease Control
13 and Prevention;

14 (ii) the Department of Agriculture;

15 (iii) the Department of Defense;

16 (iv) the Department of State;

17 (v) the Environmental Protection
18 Agency;

19 (vi) the National Science Foundation;

20 (vii) the National Institutes of Health;

21 (viii) the National Institute of Stand-
22 ards and Technology;

23 (ix) the Office of Science and Tech-
24 nology Policy;

25 (x) USAID;

1 (xi) the United States Fish and Wild-
2 life Service;

3 (xii) U.S. Customs and Border Pro-
4 tection; and

5 (xiii) U.S. Immigration and Customs
6 Enforcement.

7 (2) TIMING OF APPOINTMENTS.—Initial ap-
8 pointments to the Task Force shall be made not
9 later than 30 days after the date of the enactment
10 of this Act.

11 (3) TERMS.—

12 (A) IN GENERAL.—Each member of the
13 Task Force shall be appointed for a term of 2
14 years.

15 (B) VACANCIES.—Any member appointed
16 to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration
17 of the term for which the member's predecessor
18 was appointed shall be appointed only for the
19 remainder of the prior member's term. A mem-
20 ber may serve after the expiration of his or her
21 term until a successor has been appointed.

22 (c) DUTIES.—The Task Force shall—

23 (1) ensure an integrated approach across the
24 Federal Government and globally to the prevention
25 of, early detection of, preparedness for, and response

1 to zoonotic spillover and the outbreak and trans-
2 mission of zoonotic diseases that may pose a threat
3 to global health security;

4 (2) not later than 1 year after the date of the
5 enactment of this Act, develop and publish, on a
6 publicly accessible website, a plan for global biosecu-
7 rity and zoonotic disease prevention and response
8 that leverages expertise in public health, wildlife
9 health, livestock veterinary health, sustainable forest
10 management, community-based conservation, rural
11 food security, and indigenous rights to coordinate
12 zoonotic disease surveillance internationally, includ-
13 ing support for One Health institutions around the
14 world that can prevent and provide early detection
15 of zoonotic outbreaks; and

16 (3) expand the scope of the implementation of
17 the White House’s Global Health Security Strategy
18 to more robustly support the prevention of zoonotic
19 spillover and to respond to zoonotic disease inves-
20 tigation and outbreaks by establishing a 10-year
21 strategy with specific Federal Government inter-
22 national goals, priorities, and timelines for action,
23 including—

24 (A) recommended policy actions and mech-
25 anisms in developing countries to reduce the

1 risk of zoonotic spillover and zoonotic disease
2 emergence and transmission, including support
3 for the activities described in section 5;

4 (B) new mandates, authorities, and incen-
5 tives that are needed to strengthen the global
6 zoonotic disease prevention and response plan
7 required under paragraph (2); and

8 (C) prioritizing engagement in programs
9 that target tropical countries and regions expe-
10 riencing high rates of deforestation, forest deg-
11 radation, and land conversion and countries
12 with significant markets for live wildlife for
13 human consumption.

14 (d) MEETING.—

15 (1) INITIAL MEETING.—The Task Force shall
16 hold its initial meeting not later than 45 days after
17 the final appointment of all members pursuant to
18 subsection (b)(2).

19 (2) MEETINGS.—

20 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Task Force shall
21 meet at the call of the Chairperson.

22 (B) QUORUM.—Eight members of the
23 Task Force shall constitute a quorum, but a
24 lesser number may hold hearings.

25 (e) COMPENSATION.—

1 (1) PROHIBITION OF COMPENSATION.—Except
2 as provided in paragraph (2), Task Force members
3 may not receive additional pay, allowances, benefits
4 as compensation for their service on the Task Force.

5 (2) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Each Task Force
6 member shall receive travel expenses, including per
7 diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with appli-
8 cable provisions under subchapter I of chapter 57 of
9 title 5, United States Code.

10 (f) REPORTS.—

11 (1) REPORT TO TASK FORCE.—Not later than
12 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act
13 and annually thereafter, each Federal agency listed
14 in subsection (b)(1) shall submit a report to the
15 Task Force containing a detailed statement with re-
16 spect to the results of any programming within such
17 agency that addresses the goals of zoonotic spillover
18 and disease prevention.

19 (2) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1
20 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and
21 annually thereafter, the Task Force shall submit a
22 report to the appropriate congressional committees
23 and the National Security Advisor that contains a
24 detailed statement of the recommendations of the
25 Task Force pursuant to subsection (c)(3)(A).

1 (g) TERMINATION.—In accordance with section
2 14(a)(2)(B) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5
3 U.S.C. App.), the Task Force shall terminate on the later
4 of—

5 (1) the date that is 7 years after the date of the
6 enactment of this Act; or

7 (2) on a date selected by the Chairperson of the
8 Task Force that is not later than 2 years after the
9 date referred to in paragraph (1).

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