

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2457

To amend the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 to establish an Office of Self-Governance, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 20, 2023

Ms. SMITH introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

A BILL

To amend the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 to establish an Office of Self-Governance, 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. OFFICE OF SELF-GOVERNANCE.**

4 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Subtitle A of the Department
5 of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6912
6 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

7 **“SEC. 224B. OFFICE OF SELF-GOVERNANCE.**

8 “(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary shall establish
9 in the Office of the Secretary an Office of Self-Govern-
10 ance.

1 “(b) DIRECTOR.—The Office of Self-Governance
2 shall be headed by a Director.

3 “(c) DUTIES.—The Director of the Office of Self-
4 Governance shall oversee self-determination contracts and
5 self-governance compact agreements entered into between
6 the Secretary and Tribal organizations under the Indian
7 Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25
8 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.).”.

9 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

10 (1) Subtitle A of the Department of Agriculture
11 Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6912 et seq.)
12 is amended by redesignating section 225 (relating to
13 a Food Access Liaison) (7 U.S.C. 6925) as section
14 224A.

15 (2) Section 296(b) of the Department of Agri-
16 culture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C.
17 7014(b)) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
18 lowing:

19 “(11) The authority of the Secretary to carry
20 out section 224B.”.

21 **SEC. 2. REPORT ON SELF-GOVERNANCE IMPLEMENTATION.**

22 The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Di-
23 rector of the Office of Self-Governance established under
24 section 224B of the Department of Agriculture Reorga-
25 nization Act of 1994, shall—

1 (1) prepare a report describing—

2 (A) activities carried out by the Secretary
3 of Agriculture under the provisions of the Agri-
4 culture Improvement Act of 2018 (Public Law
5 115–334; 132 Stat 4490) and the amendments
6 made by that Act that provided authority to the
7 Secretary of Agriculture to enter into self-deter-
8 mination contracts with Tribal organizations
9 under the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-
10 cation Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.)
11 with respect to—

12 (i) the food distribution program on
13 Indian reservations established under sec-
14 tion 4(b) of the Food and Nutrition Act of
15 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2013(b)); and

16 (ii) forestry activities;

17 (B) the administration of the authorities
18 described in subparagraph (A) by the Depart-
19 ment of Agriculture;

20 (C) best practices for administering con-
21 tracting and compacting authority under the
22 Indian Self-Determination and Education As-
23 sistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) within
24 the Department; and

1 (D) what, if any, resources or authority
2 the Department or the Office of Self-Govern-
3 ance requires to fully implement contracting
4 and compacting authority under that Act within
5 the Department; and

6 (2) not later than 1 year after the date of en-
7 actment of this Act—

8 (A) submit the report prepared under
9 paragraph (1) to—

10 (i) the Committee on Agriculture, Nu-
11 trition, and Forestry of the Senate;

12 (ii) the Committee on Agriculture of
13 the House of Representatives;

14 (iii) the Committee on Indian Affairs
15 of the Senate; and

16 (iv) the Committee on Natural Re-
17 sources of the House of Representatives;
18 and

19 (B) make the report prepared under para-
20 graph (1) publicly available.

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