

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2839

To amend the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to improve assistance for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and veteran farmers and ranchers, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 15, 2018

Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Ms. SMITH, Mr. JONES, Mr. UDALL, and Mr. HEINRICH) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

A BILL

To amend the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to improve assistance for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and veteran farmers and ranchers, 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 “Assist Socially Dis-
5 advantaged and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Act of
6 2018”.

1 **SEC. 2. OUTREACH AND ASSISTANCE FOR SOCIALLY DIS-**
2 **ADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCHERS AND**
3 **VETERAN FARMERS AND RANCHERS.**

4 Section 2501(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conserva-
5 tion, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(a)) is amend-
6 ed—

7 (1) in paragraph (1)(B), by striking “agricul-
8 tural” and inserting “agricultural, forestry, and re-
9 lated”;

10 (2) in paragraph (3)—

11 (A) by redesignating subparagraphs (B)
12 through (D) as subparagraphs (E) through (G),
13 respectively;

14 (B) by inserting after subparagraph (A)
15 the following:

16 “(B) **MAXIMUM TERM AND AMOUNT OF**
17 **GRANT, CONTRACT, OR AGREEMENT.**—A grant,
18 contract, or agreement entered into under this
19 paragraph shall be—

20 “(i) for a term that is not more than
21 3 years; and

22 “(ii) in an amount that is not more
23 than \$200,000 for each year of the grant,
24 contract, or agreement.

1 “(C) PEER REVIEW.—The Secretary shall
2 establish a fair and efficient external peer re-
3 view process that—

4 “(i) the Secretary shall use in making
5 grants and entering into contracts and
6 other agreements under subparagraph (A);
7 and

8 “(ii) shall include a broad representa-
9 tion of peers of the eligible entity.

10 “(D) INPUT FROM ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—
11 The Secretary shall seek input from eligible en-
12 tities providing technical assistance under this
13 subsection not less than once each year to en-
14 sure that the program is responsive to the eligi-
15 ble entities providing that technical assist-
16 ance.”; and

17 (C) in subsection (G) (as so redesignated),
18 by adding at the end the following:

19 “(v) The number of farms or ranches
20 started, maintained, or improved as a re-
21 sult of funds made available under the pro-
22 gram.

23 “(vi) Actions taken by the Secretary
24 in partnership with eligible entities to en-
25 hance participation in agricultural pro-

1 grams by veteran farmers or ranchers and
2 socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers.

3 “(vii) The effectiveness of the actions
4 described in clause (vi).”; and

5 (3) in paragraph (4)—

6 (A) in subparagraph (A)—

7 (i) in the subparagraph heading, by
8 striking “2018” and inserting “2023”;

9 (ii) in clause (ii), by striking “and” at
10 the end;

11 (iii) in clause (iii), by striking the pe-
12 riod at the end and inserting “; and”; and

13 (iv) by adding at the end the fol-
14 lowing:

15 “(iv) \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal
16 years 2019 through 2023, to remain avail-
17 able until expended.”; and

18 (B) in subparagraph (E), by striking
19 “2018” and inserting “2023”.

1 **SEC. 3. TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SO-**
 2 **CIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND**
 3 **RANCHERS AND VETERAN FARMERS AND**
 4 **RANCHERS.**

5 Section 2501A of the Food, Agriculture, Conserva-
 6 tion, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279–1) is amend-
 7 ed—

8 (1) in the section heading, by inserting “**AND**
 9 **VETERAN FARMERS AND RANCHERS**” before the
 10 period at the end;

11 (2) in subsection (a), by inserting “and veteran
 12 farmers and ranchers” before “in programs”;

13 (3) in subsection (b)—

14 (A) by striking the subsection designation
 15 and heading and all that follows through “the
 16 term” the first place it appears and inserting
 17 the following:

18 “(b) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

19 “(1) **SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMER OR**
 20 **RANCHER.**—The term”;

21 (B) by adding at the end the following:

22 “(2) **VETERAN FARMER OR RANCHER.**—The
 23 term ‘veteran farmer or rancher’ has the meaning
 24 given the term in section 2501(e).”;

25 (4) in subsection (c)—

26 (A) in paragraph (1)—

1 (i) in the matter preceding subpara-
2 graph (A), by inserting “and veteran farm-
3 ers or ranchers” after “ranchers”; and

4 (ii) in subparagraph (A), by striking
5 “and gender” and inserting “gender, and
6 veteran status”;

7 (B) by redesignating paragraphs (2)
8 through (4) as paragraphs (3) through (5), re-
9 spectively;

10 (C) by inserting after paragraph (1) the
11 following:

12 “(2) 5-YEAR REQUIREMENT.—Not later than
13 March 31, 2020, and every 5 years thereafter, for
14 each county and State in the United States, the Sec-
15 retary shall—

16 “(A) compile data on—

17 “(i) the number of base acres of each
18 program crop owned by farmers or ranch-
19 ers;

20 “(ii) payment yields for each program
21 crop made by farmers or ranchers;

22 “(iii) the number of fee waivers and
23 premium reductions provided to farmers or
24 ranchers under the noninsured crop dis-
25 aster assistance program established by

1 section 196 of the Federal Agriculture Im-
2 provement and Reform Act of 1996 (7
3 U.S.C. 7333);

4 “(iv) the number of loans guaranteed
5 by the Secretary to farmers or ranchers;

6 “(v) the allocation of grazing permits
7 by the Forest Service to farmers or ranch-
8 ers; and

9 “(vi) the race, ethnicity, gender, and
10 veteran status of each farmer or rancher
11 under clauses (i) through (v), subject to
12 appropriate privacy protections, as deter-
13 mined by the Secretary; and

14 “(B) organize the data compiled under
15 clauses (i) through (v) of subparagraph (A) ac-
16 cording to the categories described in clause (vi)
17 of that subparagraph.”;

18 (D) in paragraph (3) (as so redesign-
19 nated)—

20 (i) by striking “and ethnicity” and in-
21 sserting “ethnicity, and veteran status”;
22 and

23 (ii) by striking “paragraph (1)” and
24 inserting “paragraphs (1) and (2)”;

1 (E) in paragraph (4) (as so redesignated)—
2

3 (i) by redesignating subparagraphs
4 (A) through (C) as clauses (i) through
5 (iii), respectively, and indenting appropriately;
6

7 (ii) by striking the paragraph designation and heading and all that follows
8 through “Using” and inserting the following:
9
10

11 “(4) REPORTS.—

12 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Using”;

13 (iii) in subparagraph (A) (as so redesignated), in the matter preceding clause (i)
14 (as so redesignated), by striking “under paragraph (1)” and inserting the following:
15
16

17 “under—

18 “(i) paragraph (1); and

19 “(ii) in a separate report, under paragraph (2).
20

21 “(B) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted
22 under subparagraph (A) shall contain data”;
23 and

24 (iv) in subparagraph (B) (as so redesignated), in the matter preceding clause (i)
25

1 (as so redesignated), by striking “that
2 paragraph” and inserting “paragraphs (1)
3 and (2), as applicable,”; and
4 (F) in paragraph (5) (as so redesignated),
5 by striking “the report described in paragraph
6 (3)” and inserting “the reports described in
7 paragraph (4)”.

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