

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To amend the Research Facilities Act to address deferred maintenance at agricultural research facilities, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. MORAN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend the Research Facilities Act to address deferred maintenance at agricultural research facilities, 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 “Augmenting Research
5 and Educational Sites to Ensure Agriculture Remains
6 Cutting-Edge and Helpful Act” or the “AG RESEARCH
7 Act”.

8 **SEC. 2. AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH FACILITIES.**

9 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

10 (1) agriculture and related industries—

1 (A) contributed \$1,530,000,000,000 to the
2 gross domestic product of the United States
3 (5.6 percent of the total gross domestic product
4 of the United States) in 2023; and

5 (B) provided 22,000,000 jobs domestically
6 (10.4 percent of total employment in the United
7 States) in 2022;

8 (2) the National Institute of Food and Agri-
9 culture provides more than \$1,700,000,000 in re-
10 search funding each year to schools of agriculture;

11 (3) a study published in 2015 found that de-
12 ferred maintenance needs at 91 schools of agri-
13 culture across the United States totaled
14 \$8,400,000,000, with a total replacement cost of
15 \$29,000,000,000;

16 (4) a study published in 2021 found that de-
17 ferred maintenance needs at schools of agriculture
18 across the United States had increased to
19 \$11,500,000,000, with a total replacement cost of
20 \$38,100,000,000; and

21 (5) infrastructure investments must be made at
22 schools of agriculture to ensure that United States
23 agricultural research remains globally competitive.

1 (b) EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS.—Section 3(d) of
2 the Research Facilities Act (7 U.S.C. 390a(d)) is amend-
3 ed—

4 (1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as
5 paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively; and

6 (2) by inserting before paragraph (2) (as so re-
7 designated) the following:

8 “(1) review the proposal in consultation with
9 representatives of National Institute of Food and
10 Agriculture peer review panels;”.

11 (c) GRANTS FOR AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH FACILI-
12 TIES.—Section 4 of the Research Facilities Act (7 U.S.C.
13 390b) is amended to read as follows:

14 **“SEC. 4. GRANTS FOR AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH FACILI-**
15 **TIES.**

16 “(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to as-
17 sist agricultural research facilities in efforts to alter or re-
18 pair those facilities or equipment of the facilities necessary
19 for conducting agricultural research.

20 “(b) GRANT PROGRAM.—

21 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall estab-
22 lish in the National Institute of Food and Agri-
23 culture a competitive grant program to provide to
24 agricultural research facilities the Federal share of

1 the cost of the construction, alteration, acquisition,
2 modernization, renovation, or remodeling of—

3 “(A) the agricultural research facilities; or

4 “(B) equipment of the agricultural re-
5 search facilities necessary for conducting agri-
6 cultural research.

7 “(2) SECRETARIAL WAIVER.—Notwithstanding
8 section 3(c)(2)(A), the Secretary may provide that
9 the Federal share described in paragraph (1) is up
10 to 100 percent of the costs described in that para-
11 graph on a case-by-case basis, as the Secretary de-
12 termines to be appropriate.

13 “(c) REQUIREMENTS.—

14 “(1) AMOUNT; TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—
15 Grants awarded under this section shall be in such
16 amounts and under such terms and conditions as
17 the Secretary determines are necessary to carry out
18 the purpose of this section.

19 “(2) EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.—To the max-
20 imum extent practicable, grants shall be awarded
21 under this section to ensure—

22 “(A) an equitable geographic distribution
23 of funds;

24 “(B) an equitable distribution of funds to
25 diverse institutions;

1 “(C) an equitable distribution of funds to
2 institutions with diverse areas of study within
3 agricultural science; and

4 “(D) an equitable distribution of funds to
5 agricultural research facilities of various sizes.

6 “(3) LIMITATION.—Not greater than 20 per-
7 cent of amounts made available to carry out this sec-
8 tion shall be awarded to projects in any 1 State.

9 “(4) ADMINISTRATION.—In carrying out this
10 section, the Secretary shall establish procedures
11 for—

12 “(A) the submission of proposals for com-
13 petitive grants; and

14 “(B) in consultation with representatives
15 of National Institute of Food and Agriculture
16 peer review panels, the review and selection of
17 proposals submitted under subparagraph (A).”.

18 (d) FUNDING.—Section 6 of the Research Facilities
19 Act (7 U.S.C. 390d) is amended—

20 (1) by striking the section designation and
21 heading and all that follows through the end of sub-
22 section (a) and inserting the following:

23 **“SEC. 6. FUNDING AND LIMITATIONS ON USE OF FUNDS.**

24 “(a) FUNDING.—

25 “(1) MANDATORY FUNDING.—

1 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsections
2 (b) through (d), but notwithstanding any other
3 provision of law, on October 1, 2025, and on
4 each October 1 thereafter through October 1,
5 2029, out of any funds in the Treasury not oth-
6 erwise appropriated, the Secretary of the Treas-
7 ury shall transfer to the Secretary to carry out
8 section 4 \$1,000,000,000, to remain available
9 until expended.

10 “(B) RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE.—The
11 Secretary shall be entitled to receive, shall ac-
12 cept, and shall use to carry out section 4 the
13 funds transferred under paragraph (1), without
14 further appropriation.

15 “(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In
16 addition to amounts made available under paragraph
17 (1), subject to subsections (b) through (d), there are
18 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary such
19 sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 2026
20 through 2030, to remain available until expended,
21 for the study, plan, design, structure, and related
22 costs of agricultural research facilities under this
23 Act.”; and

24 (2) in subsection (b), by inserting “Federal” be-
25 fore “administration”.