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(Original Signature of Member)

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To amend the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to establish a competitive grant program under which the Secretary of Agriculture provides grants to land-grant colleges and universities to support agricultural producers in adopting conservation and innovative climate practices, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. NEWHOUSE introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to establish a competitive grant program under which the Secretary of Agriculture provides grants to land-grant colleges and universities to support agricultural producers in adopting conservation and innovative climate practices, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Conservation and Inno-
3 vative Climate Partnership Act of 2021”.

4 **SEC. 2. CONSERVATION AND INNOVATIVE CLIMATE PART-**
5 **NERSHIP COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle H of title XVI of the
7 Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990
8 is amended by inserting after section 1672 (7 U.S.C.
9 5925) the following:

10 **“SEC. 1672A. CONSERVATION AND INNOVATIVE CLIMATE**
11 **PARTNERSHIP COMPETITIVE GRANT PRO-**
12 **GRAM.**

13 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

14 “(1) 1862 INSTITUTION; 1890 INSTITUTION.—
15 The terms ‘1862 Institution’ and ‘1890 Institution’
16 have the meanings given those terms in section 2 of
17 the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education
18 Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7601).

19 “(2) 1994 INSTITUTION.—The term ‘1994 In-
20 stitution’ has the meaning given the term in section
21 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Sta-
22 tus Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note; Public Law
23 103–382).

24 “(3) CONSERVATION PRACTICE.—The term
25 ‘conservation practice’ means a practice—

1 “(A) that may include any or a combina-
2 tion of—

3 “(i) carbon retention or carbon se-
4 questration cropping practices;

5 “(ii) resource conserving crop rota-
6 tion;

7 “(iii) alley cropping;

8 “(iv) integrated livestock-crop sys-
9 tems;

10 “(v) advanced grazing management;

11 “(vi) improved forestry or agro-
12 forestry management;

13 “(vii) the insertion of buffers or satu-
14 rated buffers; or

15 “(viii) any other practice that an eligi-
16 ble institution carrying out a project under
17 the program determines to be appropriate;
18 and

19 “(B) the purpose of which is to increase
20 overall sustainability on farmland or ranch land
21 through—

22 “(i) improved soil health and tilth;

23 “(ii) improved water quality, quantity,
24 and management;

25 “(iii) improved nutrient management;

1 “(iv) reduction in tillage; or

2 “(v) wildlife promotion and mainte-
3 nance.

4 “(4) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term ‘eligi-
5 ble institution’ means—

6 “(A) an 1862 Institution;

7 “(B) an 1890 Institution; and

8 “(C) a 1994 Institution.

9 “(5) INNOVATIVE CLIMATE PRACTICE.—The
10 term ‘innovative climate practice’ means a practice,
11 including any practice that an eligible institution
12 carrying out a project under the program determines
13 to be appropriate, that results in—

14 “(A) a reduction of greenhouse gas emis-
15 sions, including carbon dioxide, methane, sulfur
16 dioxide, and nitrous oxide;

17 “(B) carbon sequestration;

18 “(C) soil health improvement; or

19 “(D) reduced exposure to climate-related
20 risk.

21 “(6) PROGRAM.—The term ‘program’ means
22 the competitive grant program established under
23 subsection (b).

24 “(7) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’ means
25 the Secretary of Agriculture.

1 “(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall estab-
2 lish a program to provide competitive grants pursuant to
3 section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. 343(d)) to
4 eligible institutions to carry out projects to increase the
5 voluntary adoption of conservation practices and innova-
6 tive climate practices through public awareness cam-
7 paigns, workshops, and specialized technical assistance.

8 “(c) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to receive a grant
9 under the program, an eligible institution shall submit to
10 the Secretary an application, including a demonstration
11 that the applicant will—

12 “(1) increase interaction with local agricultural
13 producers by a rate of not less than 25 percent
14 above the outreach rate before the implementation of
15 the project under the program;

16 “(2) assist agricultural producers in imple-
17 menting new conservation practices or innovative cli-
18 mate practices on farms or edges of fields, improving
19 existing conservation practices or innovative climate
20 practices on farms or edges of fields, or any com-
21 bination thereof; and

22 “(3) assist agricultural producers in imple-
23 menting a combination of conservation practices or
24 innovative climate practices that contribute to—

1 “(A) the overall improvement of conserva-
2 tion; or

3 “(B) a decrease in, or sequestration of,
4 greenhouse gas emissions.

5 “(d) PARTNERSHIPS.—An eligible institution shall
6 carry out a project using a grant under the program in
7 partnership with not fewer than 1 other entity, which may
8 include—

9 “(1) a nonprofit organization;

10 “(2) a State entity;

11 “(3) the Natural Resources Conservation Serv-
12 ice;

13 “(4) an 1862 Institution;

14 “(5) an 1890 Institution;

15 “(6) a 1994 Institution; or

16 “(7) any combination thereof.

17 “(e) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—The amount of a grant
18 under the program shall be not more than \$400,000.

19 “(f) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible institution may use
20 a grant under the program—

21 “(1) to support agricultural producers in imple-
22 menting a conservation practice or an innovative cli-
23 mate practice;

1 “(2) subject to subsection (g), for additional
2 staffing at the eligible institution to assist in car-
3 rying out a project using the grant;

4 “(3) to conduct workshops for agricultural pro-
5 ducers, and develop and distribute digital and hard-
6 copy materials directly to agricultural producers,
7 that provide clear directions for accessing technical
8 assistance for adopting conservation practices and
9 innovative climate practices; and

10 “(4) for soil testing and the measuring of other
11 indicators of the effectiveness of conservation prac-
12 tices and innovative climate practices.

13 “(g) LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—
14 An eligible institution may use not more than 30 percent
15 of the amount of a grant under the program for adminis-
16 trative expenses.

17 “(h) DURATION.—A grant provided under the pro-
18 gram shall be for such period as the Secretary determines
19 to be appropriate, but not less than 4 years.

20 “(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
21 authorized to be appropriated to provide grants under the
22 program pursuant to section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act
23 (7 U.S.C. 343(d)) \$13,000,000 for each fiscal year.”.

1 (b) ELIGIBILITY OF 1994 INSTITUTIONS.—Section
2 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. 343(d)) is amend-
3 ed, in the third sentence—

4 (1) by striking “program and” and inserting
5 “program,”; and

6 (2) by inserting “, and the conservation and in-
7 novative climate partnership competitive grant pro-
8 gram established under section 1672A of the Food,
9 Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990”
10 before the period at the end.