

[COMMITTEE PRINT]

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**Calendar No. 000**

119TH CONGRESS }  
*1st Session* }

SENATE

{ REPORT  
{ 119-000

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG  
ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIA-  
TIONS BILL, 2026

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JULY 00, 2025—Ordered to be printed

Mr. HOEVEN, from the Committee on Appropriations,  
submitted the following

**REPORT**

[To accompany S. 0000]

The Committee on Appropriations reports the bill (S. 0000) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2026, and for other purposes, reports favorably thereon and recommends that the bill do pass.

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## OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY OF THE BILL

The Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies appropriations bill provides funding for a wide array of Federal programs, mostly in the U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA]. These programs include agricultural research, education, and extension activities; natural resources conservation programs; farm income and support programs; marketing and inspection activities; domestic food assistance programs; rural housing, economic and community development, and telecommunication and electrification assistance; and various export and international activities of the USDA.

The bill also provides funding for the Food and Drug Administration [FDA] and allows the use of collected fees for administrative expenses of the Farm Credit Administration [FCA].

The discretionary programs and activities of USDA and FDA that are supported by this bill include high priority responsibilities entrusted to the Federal Government and its partners to protect human health and safety, contribute to economic recovery, and achieve policy objectives strongly supported by the American people.

All accounts in the bill have been closely examined to ensure that an appropriate level of funding is provided to carry out the programs of USDA, FDA, and FCA. Details on each of the accounts, the funding level, and the Committee's justifications for the funding levels are included in the report.

Fiscal year 2025 levels cited in this report reflect amounts enacted in the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (Public Law 119–4) and do not include fiscal year 2025 supplemental appropriations. Accordingly, any comparisons to fiscal year 2025 do not reflect fiscal year 2025 supplemental appropriations. Fiscal year 2025 supplemental appropriations are included in the comparative statement of new budget authority at the end of this report under the heading "Other Appropriations".

## REPORTS TO CONGRESS

The Committee has, throughout this report, requested agencies to provide studies and reports on various issues. The Committee utilizes these reports to evaluate program performance and make decisions on future appropriations. The Committee directs that all studies and reports be provided to the Committee as electronic documents in an agreed upon format within 120 days after the date of enactment of this act, unless an alternative submission schedule is specifically stated in the report.

## BREAKDOWN BY TITLE

The amounts of obligational authority for each of the seven titles are shown in the following table. A detailed tabulation, showing comparisons, appears at the end of this report. Recommendations for individual appropriation items, projects and activities are carried in this report under the appropriate item headings.

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Title I: Agricultural programs .....	8,387,654	8,651,768
Title II: Farm Production and Conservation programs .....	31,273,402	30,603,472
Title III: Rural economic and community development programs .....	3,433,664	3,679,072
Title IV: Domestic food programs .....	163,940,292	163,319,788
Title V: Foreign assistance and related programs .....	2,098,354	1,979,247
Title VI: Related agencies and Food and Drug Administration .....	3,892,150	3,537,150
Title VII: General provisions .....	— 211,638	— 325,800
Other Appropriations .....	.....	.....
Total, new budget (obligational) authority .....	212,308,077	210,974,896

TITLE I  
 AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS  
 PROCESSING, RESEARCH, AND MARKETING  
 OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
 (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$58,292,000
Committee recommendation .....	51,792,000

The Secretary of Agriculture, assisted by the Deputy Secretary, Under Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries, Chief Information Officer, Chief Financial Officer, and members of their immediate staffs, directs and coordinates the work of the United States Department of Agriculture [USDA]. This includes developing policy, maintaining relationships with agricultural organizations and others in the development of farm programs, and maintaining liaison with the Executive Office of the President and Members of Congress on all matters pertaining to agricultural policy.

The general authority of the Secretary to supervise and control the work of the Department is contained in the Organic Act (Public Law 101–624). The delegation of regulatory functions to Department employees and authorization of appropriations to carry out these functions is contained in 7 U.S.C. 450c–450g.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$51,792,000 for the Office of the Secretary.

The following table reflects the amount provided by the Committee for each office and activity:

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
 [In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Office of the Secretary .....	7,000	7,000
Office of Homeland Security .....	1,896	1,896
Office of Tribal Relations .....	5,190	5,190
Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement .....	7,500	6,000
Office of Assistant Secretary for Administration .....	1,706	1,706
Departmental Administration .....	23,500	20,000
Office of Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations and Intergovernmental Affairs .....	4,500	4,000
Office of Communications .....	7,000	6,000
Total .....	58,292	51,792

*Agricultural Supply Chain Security.*—The Committee recognizes the threat adversaries pose to our nation’s agricultural and food systems. The Committee encourages the Department to consider ways to invest in the development of critical inputs, and secure data domestically. Additionally, the Committee requests a briefing

on our current reliance on adversaries for inputs, such as but not limited to amino acids, vitamins, fertilizers, and pesticides.

*Biosecurity Workforce Readiness.*—The Committee encourages the Department of Agriculture to strengthen internal capacity related to biotechnology and biosecurity as they pertain to national and economic security. The Committee supports the development of core competencies for USDA personnel working on biotechnology policy, including regular training on emerging technologies, laboratory methods, biosecurity protocols, and relevant data systems. The Committee also encourages the Department to evaluate whether key personnel involved in biotechnology and biosecurity decision-making hold appropriate security clearances and have timely access to relevant classified information.

*Colonias and Farmworker Initiatives.*—The Committee requests an update on the Department's effort to streamline and coordinate existing Federal programs serving colonias and farmworkers, including housing, healthcare, water infrastructure, and broadband programs, and the consideration of establishing an "Office of Colonias and Farmworker Initiatives".

*Commodity Credit Corporation [CCC] Obligations and Commitments.*—The Secretary is directed to notify the Committees on Appropriations of the House and Senate in writing 15 days prior to any announcement on the use or cancellation of funds from the CCC or the obligation, commitment, transfer, or cancellation of any emergency funds from the CCC.

The Committee also reminds USDA that while the Secretary has broad authority to utilize the CCC for emergencies such as the recent outbreak of high pathogen avian influenza, creating programs with CCC funds that then cannot be implemented without utilizing the interchange authority, requiring additional appropriated dollars, or that will take years to obligate funding is not an appropriate use. As such, the plan required to be submitted as part of the CCC notification shall also include outyear costs for implementation and how the Department intends to operationalize the program.

*Communication from USDA.*—A collaborative working relationship between the Committee and USDA is necessary to ensure efficient and effective implementation of Congress' funding decisions. USDA is directed to continue notifying the Committee of major changes to existing policies and any significant developments in its operations before providing non-governmental stakeholders such information, before making the changes public, and before implementing them.

*Communications Services for Limited English Proficient Communities.*—The Committee supports efforts to improve communications, which should include mediums such as television and radio, to reach limited English proficient [LEP] communities. The Committee encourages the Department to review its practices and create uniform applications across all Department agencies to strengthen communication practices to include digital, television, and radio advertising when working with LEP communities. The Department shall report to the Committee no later than 60 days after the enactment of this act on planned expenditures in fiscal

year 2026 to reach LEP communities, including local media advertising.

*Cover Crops.*—The Secretary, in consultation with the Risk Management Agency, shall submit a written report, within 1 year of enactment of this act, on how the Department can streamline opportunities for farmers to insure primary and secondary crops with revenue streams resulting from biofuel use, with particular reference to carinata, pennycress, camelina, and other oilseeds.

*Disaster Assistance.*—In December of 2024, the Committee provided more than \$33.5 billion in supplemental disaster assistance funds for our nation's farmers, ranchers, and rural communities to assist with market and weather-related losses. The Committee commends the Department for expeditiously initiating the Emergency Commodity Assistance Program and releasing other funds including those to assist with livestock losses. The Committee directs the secretary to continue to prioritize the advancement and dispersal of the remaining weather-related assistance and to keep the Committee apprised of those efforts. This includes the directive regarding technical assistance for interested non-insured producers who wish to participate in the programs.

*Federal Trust and Treaty Responsibilities.*—The Committee reminds agencies funded by this act of their obligation to uphold the Federal trust and treaty responsibilities to Tribes and Federal obligations to the Native Hawaiian Community. This includes upholding treaty and reserved rights, and any other rights and obligations under Federal law; supporting self-determination efforts by Native communities; fulfilling obligations under Presidential Memoranda and Executive Orders; and conducting early and robust government-to-government consultation with Tribes, and meaningful outreach and engagement with Native Hawaiians. The Committee further reminds agencies that the unique relationship between the Federal Government and Tribes is based on the political status of Tribes, and as such, agencies are directed to ensure that the implementation of Executive Order 14151 does not include American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians.

*Funding Status Report.*—Within 30 days of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall provide to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations a written report that provides a list of each grant, cooperative agreement, and contract award that was delayed, terminated, or otherwise withheld for more than five days in calendar year 2025. The report shall include a justification for delay, termination, or withholding for each grant, contract, and cooperative agreement, the location of the project or service, the amount of the award, the current status of the award, and the source of funding.

*Institute for Rural Partnerships.*—The Committee recognized the unique challenges faced by rural communities when it provided funding in fiscal year 2025 to continue three Institutes for Rural Partnerships in geographically diverse locations to identify and support community, statewide and regional partnership to address these challenges. As rural challenges evolve, the continued need for these Institutes is clear. Therefore, the Committee provides \$6,000,000 to be divided equally to continue the Institute for Rural Partnerships at established land-grant universities including the



Auburn University Partnership Institute at Auburn University, the Wisconsin Rural Partnership Institute at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and the Leahy Institute for Rural Partnerships at the University of Vermont, which were originally funded in fiscal year 2022. Funding will support focused research and applied transitional needs locally and regionally.

*Office of Tribal Relations.*—The Committee supports elevating the Office of Tribal Relations to an Assistant Secretary level and encourages the Secretary to evaluate the resources needed.

*Resource Conservation and Development Councils.*—Since 1964, the Resource Conservation and Development [RC&D] Councils have worked at the grassroots level with local leaders to plan, develop, and carry out programs for land and water conservation and management. The Committee encourages the Secretary to consider the maximum practical use of RC&D Councils, where such RC&D Councils meet agency performance requirements, in the delivery of USDA programs and services.

*Rural News Media and Advertising Campaigns.*—The Committee recognizes the critical role local media plays in delivering messages to small or rural communities. The Committee directs the Secretary to utilize local news media in rural areas for USDA advertising campaigns to reach citizens in these communities with key messages. Local media should include newspapers, including non-daily newspapers, television, and radio. The Committee directs the Office of the Secretary to update the Committee within 120 days of enactment of this act on the efforts of the Department, including the Agricultural Marketing Service, Rural Development, the Farm Service Agency, and the Food and Nutrition Service, in utilization of local media in rural areas as part of the Department's advertising campaigns for fiscal year 2026.

*Seafood Industry Liaison.*—The Committee provides \$625,000 to establish a position in the Office of the Secretary solely responsible for the effective coordination of seafood policies and activities within the Department, and in coordination with the Secretary of Commerce and the United States Trade Representative, relating to the support of domestically harvested and processed wild and farmed seafood.

*Soil Carbon Monitoring.*—The Committee directs the Department, in close collaboration with experts, to conduct a systematic review of existing USDA and Federal Government soil carbon monitoring methodologies, such as, methodologies that may have been developed by the Long-Term Agroecosystem Research Network, Long-Term Ecological Research Network, the National Ecological Observatory Network, or other networks, in order to develop a standardized soil carbon monitoring methodology that is reflective of current best practices and ensures the scientific rigor necessary to accurately measure and monitor soil carbon stocks and fluctuations over time and across regions, soil types, and various production systems. The Committee encourages the Department to utilize the standardized methodology and large-scale data analysis and insights developed from this review to inform Natural Resources Conservation Service technical assistance to producers.

*Tribal Self-Determination.*—The Committee directs the Secretary to submit a plan for expanding Tribal self-determination beyond

the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations and Tribal Forestry program pilots, including, where possible, through expanding 638 contract authority.

*Quarterly Reports.*—The Committee is concerned with recent changes in staffing levels and expects that the Secretary shall maintain sufficient staffing across the Department to spend the funds provided and to support the programs and missions outlined in this act. The Committee also expects timely obligations of the funds provided within this act. As such, The Committee directs the Secretary to submit a unified quarterly report detailing staffing levels and obligated balances across the Department. Staffing data should provide detail by agency, including current levels and end of year goals. Obligation data should include year-to-date obligations and current balances at the mission area, agency, and program level. The obligation data shall also include a comparison of the obligations incurred in the period covered by the update for this fiscal year to the obligations incurred in the same period in the previous two fiscal years.

#### EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS

Executive operations were established as a result of the reorganization of the Department to provide a support team for USDA policy officials and selected Department-wide services. Activities under the executive operations include the Office of the Chief Economist, the National Appeals Division, and the Office of Budget and Program Analysis.

#### OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ECONOMIST

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$30,500,000
Committee recommendation .....	30,500,000

The Office of the Chief Economist advises the Secretary of Agriculture on the economic implications of Department policies and programs. The Office serves as the single focal point for the Nation's economic intelligence and analysis, risk assessment, and cost-benefit analysis related to domestic and international food and agriculture issues, provides policy direction for renewable energy development; conducts analyses of climate change impacts on agriculture and forestry; and is responsible for coordination and review of all commodity and aggregate agricultural and food-related data used to develop outlook and situation material within the Department.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$30,500,000 for the Office of the Chief Economist. The Committee provides \$3,095,000 for the Office of Pest Management Policy.

*Policy Research.*—The Committee provides \$10,000,000 for policy research under 7 U.S.C. 3155 for entities with existing institutional capacity to conduct complex economic and policy analysis and which have a lengthy and well-documented record of conducting policy analysis for the benefit of USDA, the Congressional Budget Office, or the Congress. Of the amount provided for policy research activities, \$2,425,000 shall be for a center based at an upper Mid-

west land grant university focused on agricultural policy relevant to the region, including crop insurance, livestock risk management, and disaster programs.

#### OFFICE OF HEARINGS AND APPEALS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$16,703,000
Committee recommendation .....	16,000,000

The Office of Hearings and Appeals conducts administrative hearings and reviews of adverse program decisions made by the Rural Development mission area, the Farm Service Agency [FSA], the Risk Management Agency [RMA], and the Natural Resources Conservation Service [NRCS].

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$16,000,000 for the Office of Hearings and Appeals.

#### OFFICE OF BUDGET AND PROGRAM ANALYSIS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$14,967,000
Committee recommendation .....	14,967,000

The Office of Budget and Program Analysis provides direction and administration of the Department's budgetary functions including developing, presenting, and executing of the budget; reviewing program and legislative proposals for program, budget, and related implications; analyzing program and resource issues and alternatives; preparing summaries of pertinent data to aid the Secretary, Departmental policy officials, and agency program managers in the decision-making process; and providing Department-wide coordination for and participation in the presentation of budget-related matters to the Committees of the Congress, the media, and interested public. The Office also provides Department-wide coordination of the preparation and processing of regulations and legislative programs and reports.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$14,967,000 for the Office of Budget and Program Analysis.

#### OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$91,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	91,000,000

The Office of the Chief Information Officer was established in the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-106), which required the establishment of a Chief Information Officer for major Federal agencies. This Office provides policy guidance, leadership, coordination, and direction to the Department's information management and information technology [IT] investment activities in support of USDA program delivery, and is the lead office in USDA e-gov efforts. The Office provides long-range planning guidance, implements measures to ensure that technology investments are economical and effective, coordinates interagency information resources management projects, and implements standards to pro-

mote information exchange and technical interoperability. In addition, the Office of the Chief Information Officer is responsible for certain activities financed under the Department's Working Capital Fund (7 U.S.C. 2235). The Office also provides telecommunication and automated data processing [ADP] services to USDA agencies through the National Information Technology Center with locations in Fort Collins, Colorado; Kansas City, Missouri; and Washington, D.C. Direct ADP operational services are also provided to the Office of the Secretary, the Office of the General Counsel, the Office of Communications, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, and Departmental Management.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$91,000,000 for the Office of the Chief Information Officer.

#### OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$6,867,000
Committee recommendation .....	6,867,000

The Office of the Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the dual roles of Chief Financial Management Policy Officer and Chief Financial Management Advisor to the Secretary and mission area heads. The Office provides leadership for all financial management, accounting, travel, Federal assistance, and strategic planning performance measurement activities within the Department. The Office is also responsible for the management and operation of the National Finance Center and the Departmental Working Capital Fund.

*National Finance Center.*—The National Finance Center [NFC] is the largest designated Federal Government Payroll Shared Service Provider and it provides integrated payroll and personnel services for over 640,000 Federal employees. To ensure that thousands of Federal employees' pay and human resources services are not interrupted or adversely impacted by major organizational changes, the Committee has modified requirements under current law relating to NFC payroll and shared services operations, missions, personnel, and functions. The Committee also directs the USDA to provide quarterly reports on full-time equivalent [FTE] levels for each of the current NFC divisions, operations, and functions, as well as each of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer [OCFO] and Office of the Chief Information Officer [OCIO] divisions, operations, and functions currently co-located with the NFC. The reports also are to include a detailed breakdown of the FTEs for each and any of these same divisions, functions, or operations for the NFC and the co-located OCFO and OCIO functions compared to those during fiscal years 2017 and 2018.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$6,867,000 for the Office of the Chief Financial Officer.

## OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$1,466,000
Committee recommendation .....	1,466,000

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights provides oversight of civil rights and related functions. This includes coordination of the administration of civil rights laws and regulations for employees of USDA and participants in programs of the Department and ensuring compliance with civil rights laws.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$1,466,000 for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights.

## OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$37,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	37,000,000

The Office of Civil Rights provides overall leadership responsibility for all Department-wide civil rights activities. These activities include employment opportunity, as well as program non-discrimination policy development, analysis, coordination, and compliance. The Office is responsible for providing leadership in facilitating the fair and equitable treatment of USDA employees and for monitoring program activities to ensure that all USDA programs are delivered in a nondiscriminatory manner. The Office's outreach functions provide leadership, coordination, facilitation, and expertise to internal and external partners to ensure equal and timely access to USDA programs for all constituents, with emphasis on the underserved, through information sharing, technical assistance, and training.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$37,000,000 for the Office of Civil Rights.

## AGRICULTURE BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

## (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$22,603,000
Committee recommendation .....	22,603,000

Department headquarters presently operates in a two-building, Government-owned complex in downtown Washington, DC; the George Washington Carver Center in Beltsville, Maryland; and leased buildings in the metropolitan Washington, DC, area. Under an arrangement with the General Services Administration, USDA operates, maintains, and repairs these facilities, in lieu of rental payments. For the last several years, the Department has implemented a strategic space plan to locate staff more efficiently, renovate its buildings, and eliminate safety hazards, particularly in the Agriculture South Building.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$22,603,000 for Agriculture Buildings and Facilities.

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

## (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$3,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	3,000,000

Under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (Public Law 96–510) and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (Public Law 94–580), the Department has the responsibility to meet the same standards regarding the storage and disposition of hazardous materials as private businesses. The Department is required to contain, cleanup, monitor, and inspect for hazardous materials in areas under the Department's jurisdiction.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$3,000,000 for Hazardous Materials Management.

## OFFICE OF SAFETY, SECURITY, AND PROTECTION

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$20,800,000
Committee recommendation .....	20,800,000

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$20,800,000 for the Office of Safety, Security, and Protection.

## OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$111,561,000
Committee recommendation .....	111,561,000

The Office of Inspector General [OIG] was established on October 12, 1978, by the Inspector General Act of 1978 (Public Law 95–452). This act expanded and provided specific authorities for the activities of OIG which had previously been carried out under the general authorities of the Secretary.

The Office is administered by an inspector general who reports directly to the Secretary. Functions and responsibilities of this Office include direction and control of audit and investigative activities within the Department, formulation of audit and investigative policies and procedures regarding Department programs and operations, and analysis and coordination of program-related audit and investigation activities performed by other Department agencies.

The activities of this Office are designed to assure compliance with existing laws, policies, regulations, and programs of the Department's agencies and to provide appropriate officials with the means for prompt corrective action where deviations have occurred. The scope of audit and investigative activities is large and includes administrative, program, and criminal matters. These activities are coordinated, when appropriate, with various audit and investiga-

tive agencies of the executive and legislative branches of the Government.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$111,561,000 for the Office of Inspector General.

#### OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$60,537,000
Committee recommendation .....	60,537,000

The Office of the General Counsel provides all legal advice, counsel, and services to the Secretary and to all agencies, offices, and corporations of the Department. The Office represents the Department in administrative proceedings; non-litigation debt collection proceedings; State water rights adjudications; proceedings before the Environmental Protection Agency, Interstate Commerce Commission, Federal Maritime Administration, and International Trade Commission; and, in conjunction with the Department of Justice, judicial proceedings and litigation.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$60,537,000 for the Office of the General Counsel.

#### OFFICE OF ETHICS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$4,500,000
Committee recommendation .....	4,500,000

The Office of Ethics is the centralized and consolidated office implementing USDA's ethics program throughout the Department. The Office provides ethics services to all employees at the Department concerning advice, training, and guidance about compliance with conflict of interest and impartiality rules. This includes complying with the requirements of the Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge Act (Public Law 112-105) and the Office of Government Ethics regulatory requirements (5 CFR parts 2634 through 2641).

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$4,500,000 for the Office of Ethics.

#### OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMICS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$1,884,000
Committee recommendation .....	1,884,000

The Office of the Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics provides direction and coordination in carrying out the laws enacted by the Congress for food and agricultural research, education, extension, and economic and statistical information. The Office has oversight and management responsibilities for the Agricultural Research Service [ARS]; National Institute of Food and Agriculture [NIFA]; Economic Research Service [ERS]; and National Agricultural Statistics Service [NASS].

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$1,884,000 for the Office of the Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics.



## ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$90,612,000
Committee recommendation .....	90,612,000

The Economic Research Service [ERS] provides economic and other social science research and analysis for public and private decisions on agriculture, food, the environment, and rural America. The information that ERS produces is available to the general public and helps the Executive and Legislative Branches develop, administer, and evaluate agricultural and rural policies and programs.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$90,612,000 for the Economic Research Service.

*Data Collection on Religiously Informed Diets.*—The Committee appreciates the Department's efforts to improve access to kosher and halal food for Americans with religiously informed diets. However, the Committee remains concerned about the gaps that still exist between the need and the products currently available. While studies to collect data in this area have been conducted in individual States, there is a lack of data available at the National level. The Committee encourages ERS to track and report on the scope, scale and location of the needs of Americans with religiously informed diets.

*International Commodity Trade.*—The Committee recognizes the economic importance of international trade for U.S. agricultural commodities and believes that producers and markets would benefit from having access to additional data on the country of destination or origin of those commodities. The Committee appreciates that ERS has begun work on the top five agricultural commodity exports and imports by State and to identify the country of destination or origin of those commodities. The Committee directs ERS to publish this data on a quarterly basis in language that is clear, concise, well-organized, and user-friendly, avoiding unnecessary complexity so that it is easier for members of the general public to understand.

*Midwest Center of Agricultural Policy.*—The Committee encourages the Secretary to continue standing up the new Midwest policy center and continues providing support for the existing regional centers.

*Organic Data Analysis.*—The organic industry has grown at a tremendous rate over the past several years and accurate data for the production, pricing, and marketing of organic products is essential. Therefore, the Committee encourages ERS to continue and expand the efforts relating to organic data analysis.

## NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$187,513,000
Committee recommendation .....	187,513,000

The National Agricultural Statistics Service [NASS] administers the Department's program of collecting and publishing current national, State, and county agricultural statistics. These statistics

provide accurate and timely projections of current agricultural production and measures of the economic and environmental welfare of the agricultural sector, which are essential for making effective policy, production, and marketing decisions. NASS also furnishes statistical services to other USDA and Federal agencies in support of their missions and provides consulting, technical assistance, and training to developing countries.

NASS is also responsible for administration of the Census of Agriculture, which is taken every 5 years and provides comprehensive data on the agricultural economy, including: data on the number of farms, land use, production expenses, farm product values, value of land and buildings, farm size and characteristics of farm operators, market value of agricultural production sold, acreage of major crops, inventory of livestock and poultry, and farm irrigation practices.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$187,513,000 for the National Agricultural Statistics Service, of which \$46,000,000 is for the Census of Agriculture. The Committee directs NASS to continue all activities and reports at the frequency assumed in fiscal year 2023.

*Alfalfa Price Reporting.*—The Committee recognizes alfalfa as the Nation's fourth most valuable field crop. In order to provide critical data for this crop to better participate in ad hoc programs and the creation of a revenue alfalfa crop insurance policy to ensure producers have a safety net they need to produce alfalfa, the Committee directs NASS to enhance price discovery across the country for this important crop. Additionally, the Committee directs NASS to include the Southeast in its crop production reporting.

*Chemical Use Data Series.*—The Chemical Use Data Series provides timely, valuable information on fertilizer and chemical use data on major field crops and selected specialty crops. The Committee encourages NASS to continue funding the collection and analysis of chemical use data, as well as practices such as integrated pest management. The Committee supports efforts to resume collecting Fruit Chemical Use data and Vegetable Chemical Use data in alternating years and directs the continuation of this practice to ensure equal access to Federal statistics.

*Floriculture Crops Report.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of the Floriculture Crops Report and maintains funding for NASS to complete the report. In compiling the report, the Committee continues to direct NASS to include data from Alaska.

*National Turfgrass Economic Value Study.*—The Committee recognizes the burgeoning natural turf industry and encourages NASS to collect data on acreage, production, and economic impact, to include employment, input costs, and retail value, of turfgrass production.

*Reports.*—The Committee encourages NASS to prioritize the continued publication of all periodically published reports. The Committee recognizes that producers rely on NASS reports to make sound marketing and investment decisions in the agricultural market. The reports are vital for market transparency and market anticipation for the entire agricultural sector.

*State-Specific and Regionally-Tailored Publications.*—The Committee is concerned by the decision to discontinue publications tailored specifically to individual States and regions, though it notes that the State-level data will continue to be available in national releases and the Quick Stats database. The Committee directs NASS to brief the Committee within 30 days of enactment of this act on how the agency will continue to make this information readily available and accessible to producers and stakeholders.

*Vineyard and Orchard Acreage Survey.*—The Committee appreciates the expanded data collection on grape production reflected in the Noncitrus Fruits and Nuts 2024 report. The Committee directs NASS to continue that data collection and brief the Committee within 30 days of enactment of this act on the feasibility of expanding data collection and reporting to provide a similar level of detail as the previous Vineyard and Orchard Acreage Survey.

#### AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE

##### SALARIES AND EXPENSES

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$1,788,063,000
Committee recommendation .....	1,826,778,000

The Agricultural Research Service [ARS] is responsible for conducting basic, applied, and developmental research through its major program areas of New Products/Product Quality/Value Added; Livestock/Crop Production; Food Safety; Livestock/Crop Protection; Human Nutrition; and Environmental Stewardship. The research applies to a wide range of goals, including commodities, natural resources, fields of science, and geographic, climatic, and environmental conditions.

ARS is also responsible for the Abraham Lincoln National Agricultural Library, which provides agricultural information and library services through traditional library functions and modern electronic dissemination to USDA agencies, public and private organizations, and individuals.

As USDA's in-house agricultural research unit, ARS has major responsibilities for conducting and leading the National agricultural research effort. It provides initiative and leadership in the following five areas: research on broad regional and national problems, research to support Federal action and regulatory agencies, expertise to meet national emergencies, research support for international programs, and scientific resources to the executive branch and Congress.

The mission of ARS research is to develop and transfer solutions to agricultural problems of high national priority and to provide information access and dissemination to ensure high-quality, safe food and other agricultural products; assess the nutritional needs of Americans; sustain a competitive agricultural economy; enhance the natural resource base and the environment; and provide economic opportunities for rural citizens, communities, and society as a whole.

##### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$1,826,778,000 for salaries and expenses of the Agricultural Research Service.

The Committee expects extramural research to be funded at no less than the fiscal year 2024 levels.

*6PPD.*—The Committee is concerned with the impact that 6p-phenylene-diamine (6PPD) and its transformant, 6PPD-quinone (6PPD-q), are having on aquatic ecosystems. Stormwater runoff containing 6PPD-q has been linked to mass die-offs of endangered and threatened salmon across the Puget Sound and San Francisco Bay areas. The Committee supports the Service's work to assess, analyze, and develop potential alternatives to 6PPD and provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to continue research to identify an alternative. The Committee directs ARS to continue coordinating across Federal and State agencies on shared priorities, and to engage in robust government-to-government consultation with impacted Tribes. ARS is directed to provide a report to the Committee within 90 days of enactment of this act on 6PPD-related activities, including the ARS's current strategy, an overview of research work completed to date, a plan for addressing potential data gaps, recommendations for future research activities, and potential funding sources.

*Aflatoxin Mitigation Research.*—The Committee recognizes the increasing economic and food safety threat that aflatoxin poses to corn and other affected agricultural crops and products. Aflatoxin has historically been a regional concern in the southeast but is currently spreading to other parts of the country due to more frequent extreme weather events. As such, the Committee provides an increase of \$250,000 for ARS to expand research into methods of mitigating the risk of aflatoxin, particularly regarding responsive agriculture, human nutrition, and food safety.

*Agricultural Data Security.*—The Committee recognizes the critical need for agricultural data security advancements alongside increased use of autonomous systems and new technologies. To prepare for these needs, the Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for ARS to collaborate with a land-grant university to research these data security needs and solutions. The partnership should involve a university with expertise in both agricultural technology cybersecurity.

*Agricultural Genomics.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for agricultural genomic research to expand the knowledge of public and private sector entities and persons concerning genomes for species of importance to the food and agriculture sectors in order to maximize the return on the investment in genomics of agriculturally important species.

*Agrivoltaics.*—The Committee directs ARS to conduct a study on dual-use renewable energy systems that includes an assessment of the compatibility of different species of livestock and different crop types with different dual-use renewable energy system designs as well as a risk-benefit analysis of dual-use renewable energy systems in different regions. Further, the Committee directs USDA to conduct a demonstration program on dual-use renewable energy systems in multiple regions of the United States, including arid, semi-arid, and wet agricultural zones. In picking locations for the demonstration programs, the Department shall prioritize cooperative agreements with land-grant universities and ARS climate hubs. The Committee also encourages USDA to enter into a

multiyear cooperative agreement to provide education, outreach and technical assistance materials for producers. The Committee provides an increase of \$1,000,000.

*AgTech Cooperative Agreements.*—The Committee provides an increase of \$3,000,000 for cooperative agreements to support the research, development and acceleration of agriculture technology.

*Alfalfa Research.*—The Committee notes that research into alfalfa seed and alfalfa forage systems holds the potential to increase yields, increase milk production, and improve genetics, and the Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support research focused on alfalfa improvement. Research should focus on using tools to accelerate and enhance existing breeding programs focused on improving yield and quality parameters; developing innovative harvesting and utilization systems; developing new markets for co-products; and quantifying environmental benefits from alfalfa-based systems.

*Ancient Crop Genetics.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of crop genetics research conducted at public-private consortiums to enhance yields, fight diseases and pests, adapt to changing climates, and reduce global food insecurity. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for research focused on utilizing ancient crop plant ancestors to mobilize genetic diversity, meet consumer demands, and protect the global food supply.

*Animal Research.*—The Committee directs ARS to provide a report within 60 days of enactment of this act on steps the agency can take to transition away from animal research.

*Appalachian Native Tree Crop.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for the USDA Appalachian Fruit Research Station to study and expand native fruit tree breeding including the pawpaw, American persimmon, and hazelnut to expand new market opportunities for Appalachian farmers.

*Appalachian Natural Products Research.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to advance natural products research and applications with a focus on plant species in Appalachia.

*Barley Pest Initiative.*—The Committee recognizes that insects and viral, bacterial, and fungal diseases inflict substantial yield and quality losses to the barley crop throughout the United States, resulting in significant economic losses to growers and end-users. The Committee supports research to be carried out through the Barley Pest Initiative to address these major threats to sustainable and profitable barley production and utilization. The Committee provides an increase of \$500,000.

*Bee Genomic Sequencing.*—The Committee is aware that the genome of the honeybee, *Apis mellifera*, has been sequenced, but there are more than 4,000 bee species in the United States, not all of which are affected by colony collapse or population declines in the same way. The Committee recognizes the critical importance of bee species to American agriculture, floriculture, and ecosystem biodiversity and the increasing challenges to bee colony health related to parasites, poor nutrition, pathogens, and pesticides. Although progress has been made in understanding these influences on pollinator health, additional research into a broader range of genetic information will assist in addressing the decline in bee polli-

nators. The Committee provides an increase of \$750,000 to sequence and study the genomes of all species of bees in the United States and directs that this research be conducted in conjunction with Midwestern land-grant universities with established expertise in bee genomic biology.

*Biochar Research.*—The Committee is aware that biochar provides recalcitrant carbon to soils that can last hundreds to thousands of years, improving carbon sequestration and crop yields. The Committee encourages ARS to research biochar to advance understanding of how different types and applications of biochar affect soil health, productivity, and carbon sequestration.

*Carpophilus truncatus.*—The Committee recognizes the threat posed by *Capophilus truncatus* to pistachio and almond orchards. The Committee encourages ARS to research integrated pest management strategies to safeguard the domestic tree nut industry.

*Center for Soil Health Research.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support comprehensive soil testing in addition to critical research on emerging contaminants and biological characteristics of soil.

*Chronic Wasting Disease [CWD].*—The Committee recognizes the importance of a live test for cervids potentially affected with CWD and provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for research dedicated to the development of such test and research on pathways of transmission.

*Circular Economy that Reimagines Corn Agriculture [CERCA].*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for CERCA activities.

*Citrus Greening Disease Research.*—The Committee commends ARS on its research efforts on citrus greening disease and encourages the agency to continue working to develop methods to reduce transmission and enhance immunity in citrus trees, and to work with industry, universities, growers, and other partners to develop effective control mechanisms. The Committee also encourages ARS to coordinate its efforts with the Huanglongbing Multi-Agency Coordination [HLB–MAC] group.

*Climate Hubs.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for ARS research teams to support regional Climate Hubs.

*Coffee Leaf Rust [CLR].*—The recent discovery of coffee leaf rust in the U.S. insular pacific has substantially impacted U.S. coffee agriculture, and the Committee provides an increase of \$500,000 to develop science-based management strategies, provide extension services, and research CLR resistant varieties of coffee.

*Controlled Environment Agriculture.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for research on nutrient and water management, best practices, logistics, the agriculture-energy nexus, and economic feasibility for controlled environment agriculture. Work should specifically include research on solutions to Tribal food sovereignty and access to traditional foods including viability for controlled environment cultivation of such crops and medicines.

*Cotton Seed Bug.*—The Committee recognizes the risk that the cotton seed bug poses to Western cotton production. The Committee

provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for research to develop control strategies.

*Cover Crops and Cereal Grain Variety Selection.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to develop soil enhancement technologies and research cereal grains, cover crops, and invasive weeds as they related to the northern climates in regions dominated by permafrost.

*Cover Crops Research and Outreach.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of developing profitable and practicable cover crop options for use in dairy, grain, and vegetable production systems, including for use in no-till organic systems and as forages. Therefore, the Committee provides an increase of \$1,000,000 to support research with the purposes of improving measures of soil health and resiliency; varietal development; optimal dairy forage species combinations; timing and strategies for cover crop seeding and termination; forage integration into organic dairy systems; and mitigation of environmental and extreme rainfall impacts on water quality and soil security for diverse cover crop systems.

*Cranberry Research.*—The Committee recognizes the need for advancements in water conservation, pest control, disease reduction, and fruit quality improvements in cranberry production. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for the improvement of cranberry yields, pest and disease management, and water resource management by developing fields devoted to cranberry research and collection and storage of samples for analysis in appropriate existing laboratory facilities.

*Crop Production, Bees, and Pollination.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for the National Program 305 to study treatments and tools for managing threats posed by diseases and pests, particularly parasitic mites, and thereby improving pollination capacity.

*Crop Production Systems and Crop Genetics.*—The Committee recommends no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support ARS activities in crop production systems and crop genetics in the mid-south region.

*Dairy Forage Research.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for research and outreach on the attributes of alternative cropping cycles and forage systems for dairy production systems, including evaluation of the interactions between climate change, water quality, soil carbon, and cost-of-production in the short and long term.

*Dam Repair Research.*—The Committee notes that rural and agricultural areas are uniquely threatened by aging and physically deteriorating dams. 3D concrete printing technology may be adapted for autonomous underwater use to provide reductions in project costs and length while improving worker safety. As such, the Committee provides \$1,000,000 to establish a research, development, testing and evaluation autonomous underwater dam repair program utilizing the assets of the USDA ARS Hydraulic Engineering Research Unit and an R1 University with an existing 3D concrete printing research program with demonstrated.

*Drought Mitigation Research.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of scientific information to support and enhance efficient, accurate implementation of Federal drought preparedness

and drought response programs and provides \$1,500,000 for the National Drought Mitigation Center.

*East Coast Shellfish Breeding.*—The Committee recognizes the dangers of parasites and bacterial and viral diseases to shellfish farmers and understands the importance of selective breeding to combat these infections. The Committee provides an increase of \$500,000 for shellfish breeding research focused on the East Coast.

*Enteric Methane Reduction.*—The Committee encourages ARS to research novel mitigation strategies to reduce enteric methane emissions and support sustainability in Western and Central Great Plains beef and dairy production systems.

*Federal Invasive Species Control Lab.*—The Committee continues to be concerned about the threats invasive pests pose to the Pacific region, notably to agriculture, the economy, environment, human health, and national security. The Committee directs ARS to continue its work with stakeholders in the Pacific region to assess options for combatting invasive pests. Options may include invasive pest biocontrol research and development facilities, including appropriate containment, rearing facilities, greenhouse quarantine, and additional agricultural research laboratory space and administrative space.

*Fish Meal from Woody Biomass.*—The Committee recognizes that the continued growth of the aquaculture industry in the U.S. and globally depends upon the development of sustainable fish meal. ARS is encouraged to accelerate work on fish meal from woody biomass, such as yeast from woody biomass that have the ability to convert low-grade wood into high-value (high-quality protein source) fish meal with economic yields.

*Floriculture and Nursery Research.*—The Committee recognizes the economic importance of the floriculture and nursery sector of agriculture and the industry's need for continued innovation. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for ARS to support academic and Federal researchers to pursue efforts in crop protection, breeding, mechanization, and other areas through USDA's Floriculture and Nursery Research Initiative.

*Food Systems.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for ARS to continue a Food Systems Center that addresses how local, regional, and global food systems can provide nutritious and culturally appropriate food, regardless of individual life circumstances.

*Forest Products.*—The Committee provides continued funding at the fiscal year 2024 level to support research and innovation for wood product quality improvement and to inform further advancements in forest products evaluation standards and valuation technique.

*Fortifying Biological Defenses.*—The Committee supports the Department's mandate to partner with private sector entities that represent emerging technologies with the potential to assist the Department in expediting the development and commercialization of research to ensure a secure and efficient food supply. The Committee directs ARS to engage with entities that may advance new and ongoing research within the Department through the utilization of new and emerging technologies that may prove expeditious to more traditional research methods.



*Fusion of Machine Learning and Electromagnetic Sensors.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for research on fusing machine learning and enhanced multi-spectrum sensors for the purpose of collecting real-time environmental data at the site of food production.

*Genetic Improvement for Blueberries.*—The Committee recognizes the need to support blueberry genetics research to enhance desirable traits, improve disease and pest resistance, and improve post-harvest resilience. The Committee provides an increase of \$500,000.

*Genetic Oat Research.*—The Committee recognizes the potential genetic oat research has to improve disease resistance (especially rusts and viruses), augment genetics, increase yields, and develop crop rotation systems that include oats, which will enhance the value of oats and provide benefits to producers and consumers. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to expand existing research focused on oat improvement.

*Genomes to Fields.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support the Germplasm Enhancement of Maize project to complement existing USDA maize germplasm programs and to support the emerging large-scale public sector effort to investigate the interaction of maize genome variation and environments, known as the Genomes to Fields project.

*Grape Genomics.*—The Committee understands the importance of the National Grape Improvement Center that, when complete, will be the world's leading facility for grape genomics and gene expression research. The Committee provides an increase of \$750,000 for ARS to recruit and hire scientists necessary to operate the center.

*Healthy Soils Initiative.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support the study of enhanced food nutritional quality through Healthy Soil-Healthy Food-Healthy People Initiatives.

*Healthy Soils in Semi-Arid Locations.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to conduct research on soil health in the semi-arid west within integrated cropland and rangeland ecosystems.

*Hemp Cultivar Development.*—The Committee encourages ARS to conduct biotechnology and genomics research in collaboration with capable institutions to elucidate the genetic control of key production and product quality traits in hemp to facilitate cultivar development. In addition, the Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for ARS to partner with institutions already engaged in such research to conduct hemp genetic improvement research and breeding with new breeding and editing techniques.

*Hemp Germplasm.*—The Committee recognizes the increasing demand for hemp for a variety of uses and its growing importance as a crop for U.S. farmers. When the Nation's hemp germplasm was destroyed in the 1980s, researchers lost access to publicly available germplasm for plant breeding purposes. The Committee directs ARS to establish and maintain a hemp germplasm repository at the Plant Genetics Resources Research Unit and provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for this purpose. The Committee also encourages ARS and the Plant Genetics Resources Research Unit to partner with 1890 institutions that have existing institu-

tional capacity on hemp germplasm research, education, and extension capabilities.

*Hemp Production Systems.*—The Committee recognizes the emerging market potential for U.S. hemp and hemp-based products for a variety of uses. The Committee directs ARS to conduct regionally-driven research, development, and stakeholder engagement to improve agronomic and agro-economic understanding of effectively integrating hemp into existing agricultural cropping, processing, and marketing systems. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for this purpose. Research, engagement, and technology transfer shall be conducted in strict accordance with all applicable Federal and State authorities and regulations.

*Herbicide Resistance Initiative.*—The Committee provides no less than fiscal year 2024 funding level to support the regionally focused Herbicide Resistance Initiative for the Pacific Northwest to identify and overcome herbicide resistance associated with the crop production pathway, reducing production losses and reducing or eliminating pressure on trade limits due to contamination. The Committee supports research to address weed management strongly affecting the long-term economic sustainability of food systems in collaboration with ARS, research institutions, and stakeholder support.

*High Performance Computing Support.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support high performance computing capability to address scientific needs and directs ARS to collaborate with appropriate partners with the technical capacity and scientific synergy to provide cost-effective high performance computing support.

*High-Resolution Data Analysis.*—The Committee recognizes the value that daily high-resolution thermal data provides to our national agriculture producers. The Committee notes that cutting-edge commercially available solutions can improve resolution and accuracy needed for precision agriculture, crop yield forecasting, and irrigation solutions. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for ARS to use commercially available daily high-resolution thermal data analysis solutions to supplement its research.

*Honey Bee Breeding, Genetics, and Physiology Research.*—The Committee recognizes that critical research is needed to mitigate against threats posed by landscape use, pests, and pathogens to the beekeeping and specialty crop industries, and to the health of pollinators in general. ARS shall prioritize Honey Bee Breeding, Genetics, and Physiology Research to study breeding resistance in bees from mites, diseases, and various other threats.

*Hops Research.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support hops research.

*Human Nutrition Research.*—Maintenance of health throughout the lifespan, along with prevention of obesity and chronic diseases via food-based recommendations, are the major emphases of human nutrition research. This research supports USDA's strategic goals of nutrition monitoring; the scientific basis for dietary recommendations; prevention of obesity and related diseases; and life stage nutrition and metabolism, in order to better define the role of nutrition in pregnancy and growth of children and for healthier

aging. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 levels for the existing human nutrition centers.

*Improving Efficiency of Catfish Aquaculture.*—The Committee provides an increase of \$500,000 for Improving Efficiency of Catfish Aquaculture.

*Improvements in Broiler Production.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level and directs ARS to coordinate with academic partners to understand the interactions between parasites and viruses in antibiotic free poultry production for improved vaccination strategies and products that are able to mitigate against coinfections in poultry products.

*Innovative Water Systems.*—The Committee provides recognizes the persistent threat posed to agriculture production by predictable and erratic natural disasters and other adverse weather conditions. Accelerating innovative technologies and practices to quantify and mitigate these effects are essential to cultivating resilient agricultural ecosystems. The Committee provides an increase of \$2,000,000 to develop innovative water management practices that maximize the productivity and resiliency of agricultural systems.

*Integrative Precision Agriculture.*—The Committee encourages ARS to prioritize projects that create or improve precision agricultural technologies to reduce specialty crop growers' manual labor requirements and increase the efficiency of crop production, resource management, harvesting, processing, post-harvest technologies, and packaging through mechanization, automation, and other innovations and technologies.

*Invasive Pests.*—The Committee continues to be concerned about the threats invasive pests pose to the Pacific region, notably to agriculture, the economy, environment, human health, and national security. The Committee directs ARS to continue its work with stakeholders in the Pacific region to assess options for combatting invasive pests. Options may include invasive pest biocontrol research and development facilities, including appropriate containment, rearing facilities, greenhouse quarantine, and additional agricultural research laboratory space and administrative space.

*Laboratory Staffing.*—The Committee directs ARS to fully staff laboratories even if the laboratory is proposed to be closed in the budget request.

*Little Cherry Disease.*—The Committee is concerned by the growing prevalence of Little Cherry Disease in the Pacific Northwest and the significant threat that it poses to the region's stone fruit. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for research on detection and mitigation of the disease and the vector insects involved.

*Livestock Infrastructure Contracting and Procurement.*—The Committee is concerned that centralization of procurement and contracting in the USDA and Federal construction requirements have added significant costs and greatly reduced administrative efficiency at working farm- and ranch-scale livestock research facilities. USDA should identify and implement contracting and procurement practices for livestock facilities to ensure costs for livestock related infrastructure is brought in line with industry estimates.

*LTAR Program.*—The Committee is aware of the Long-Term Agroecosystem Research [LTAR] Network's work to support sus-

tainable intensification of agricultural production; however, the Committee is concerned about the lack of geographic diversity and the absence of specialty crop work in the program, especially in the Northeastern United States. Therefore, the Committee strongly encourages the Department to include more geographic and crop diversification in the selection of additional LTAR sites. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for the LTAR Network.

*Macadamia Tree Health Initiative [MTHI].*—The Committee recognizes the importance of the MTHI in developing and disseminating science-based tools and treatments to combat the macadamia felted coccid. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level.

*Malignant Catarrhal Fever.*—The Committee provides an increase of \$1,750,000 for the development of a vaccine and improved diagnostics for Malignant Catarrhal Fever, which is the leading cause of death in American Bison.

*Meat Animal Research.*—The Committee supports robust investment at the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center for milling technologies to drive operational sophistication and expand research opportunities and provides no less than fiscal year 2024 level for these purposes.

*Mississippi River Invasive Species Consortium.*—The Committee recognizes the significant economic, environmental, and agricultural threats posed by invasive species, particularly in the Lower Mississippi River Basin. The Committee supports a coordinated, multi-state approach to invasive species management and mitigation and encourages ARS to work with stakeholders to develop proactive, science-based strategies for the detection, prevention, and management of invasive species affecting agriculture and natural resources.

*National Agricultural Library [NAL].*—The Committee strongly encourages ARS to maintain its focus on agriculture-related legal issues within the NAL. The Committee notes that as the agriculture sector faces increasing financial stress, there is a necessity that agriculture-related legal issues be addressed on an increasingly frequent basis. Further, agriculture-related legal issues are increasingly complex and the impact of these legal issues continues to broaden in scope. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support climate science research at the NAL. Further, the Committee provides an increase of \$500,000 to the Agricultural Law Information Partnership, including for the existing partner institutions, and recommends that the National Agricultural Library continue to play an important role in assisting all stakeholders with understanding these complex legal issues. The Committee encourages ARS and the National Agricultural Library to engage in multi-year cooperative agreements with the Agricultural Law Information Partnership's partner institutions.

*National Bio- and Agro-Defense Facility.*—The Committee provides an increase of \$6,000,000 to continue stand-up activities and other initial costs to operate and maintain the National Bio- and Agro-Defense Facility [NBAF].

*Nematodes.*—The Committee recognizes that one of the biggest trade, quality, and condition irritants for potato research in the Pa-

cific Northwest are nematodes. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support research into sampling methods and suppression strategies for nematodes.

*New England Protected Agriculture.*—The Committee recognizes that significant weather variability has led to devastating losses for small-scale farmers in New England in recent years and that protected agriculture systems can significantly reduce weather exposure and market risks. The Committee provides an increase of \$2,000,000 for research into the development and application of optimal protected agriculture systems in New England.

*Onion Breeding.*—The Committee understands the challenges facing the onion industry including perishability, disease and pest management, and low yield. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for ARS to research onion breeding and genetics. The research should work to develop new onion varieties, resiliency against disease and pests, as well as adoption of automation and mechanization technology.

*Pacific Shellfish Genetics and Breeding.*—The Committee recognizes the economic importance of shellfish aquaculture for rural and coastal communities on the Pacific coast and the need for resilient, healthy genetic stocks that can withstand the region's changing ocean and coastal conditions as well as new disease threats. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for a shellfish genetics and breeding program to develop genetically improved stock, promote enhanced disease resiliency, modernize production technologies, and transfer technology and improved stocks to shellfish farmers in Pacific States.

*Peanut Genomic Research.*—The Committee provides no less than fiscal year 2024 levels for research within an existing cooperative agreement related to peanut genomics.

*Peanut Nutrition.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for peanut nutrition research.

*Pecan Genetics.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for pecan genetics research.

*Pecan Processing Research.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for pecan processing research.

*PFAS Solutions Throughout Agricultural and Food Systems.*—The Committee provides an increase of \$3,000,000 to continue a Center of Excellence for PFAS solutions throughout Agricultural and Food Systems in conjunction with a university partner. Funding shall be used on research to address PFAS issues in the agricultural landscape, animal uptake, adsorption, distributions, metabolism, and excretion, as well as the fate of PFAS residues in meat and dairy products as well as in animal urine and feces and subsequent distribution in the environment.

*Plant Associated Microbes.*—The Committee recognizes that plant associated microbes can play a critical role in promoting plant health and growth. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for the National Soil Dynamics Laboratory for additional research and storage and plant associated microbes to characterize key attributes that benefit plant production.

*Potato Bioinformatician.*—The Committee is concerned by the growing prevalence of extreme weather and insect prevalence in the Columbia River Basin and the significant threat both pose to

the region's sustainable production of vegetable and seed crops. The Committee provides \$1,175,000 for the establishment of a potato bioinformatician to advance breeding research in the region.

*Poultry Processing Research and Innovation.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support research focused on novel poultry processing approaches and methods that drive transformational innovation in intelligent systems, automation, robotics, data science, and artificial technologies that could enable greater efficiencies, better resilience, and viable poultry enterprises at various scales of production.

*Pollinator Recovery, Education, and Research.*—The Committee is aware that bees play a crucial role in U.S. agriculture as pollinators and that colony loss poses a serious threat to future food production. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to continue work at the Pollinator Recovery, Education, and Research Center.

*Potato Research.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for the development of new management strategies for potato storage that will maintain potato quality, reduce grower and processor losses, and increase profits.

*Precision Aquaculture.*—The Committee recognizes that land-based, closed-containment aquaculture provides the capacity to raise freshwater or marine species in any locale with minimal environmental impacts. Implementing precision agriculture technologies in these systems will increase production efficiencies and profitability, ultimately increasing capacity for meeting the seafood demands of U.S. consumers through responsible and sustainable domestic aquaculture production. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to continue the implementation of precision aquaculture in land-based, closed-containment aquaculture systems.

*Precision Management of Live Broiler Production.*—The Committee directs ARS to support research focused on improving animal welfare and health, food safety and food security through novel broiler chicken live production approaches and methods that drive transformational innovation in intelligent systems, automation, robotics, data science, and artificial technologies that could enable greater efficiencies, better resilience, and viable poultry enterprises at various scales of production.

*Predictive Modeling Tools.*—The Committee supports efforts to develop sustainable agricultural production systems for crops through the use of forecasting tools that incorporate post-harvest soil testing and in-season monitoring of plant pathogens to combat crop diseases. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for ARS to work with Federal and land-grant university partners in order to develop predictive modeling tools that aid farm management decisions to improve agricultural production of row crops.

*Predictive Crop Performance.*—The Committee is aware of the growing need for crop varieties whose performance minimizes risks associated with severe year-to-year fluctuations in weather patterns. As such, the Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for research that integrates high-throughput performance data collected with drone, robot, and on-tractor technologies

with genome data to accurately predict which advanced lines have economic value and environmental stability.

*Promoting Innovation in Ag Machines.*—Continued innovation in ag machines and equipment has the ability to significantly improve productivity and portability of agriculture production systems. The Committee encourages ARS to research the development of advanced technologies to meet the complex agricultural challenges facing farmers.

*Pulse Crop Quality.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of ARS wheat quality laboratories in researching and advancing the quality and overall utilization of wheat and pulse crops. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to further these efforts for pulse crops by establishing quality analysis standards, developing innovative production processes, and evaluating crop varieties for product functionality and market suitability.

*Pulse Health Initiative.*—The Committee supports the expansion of pulse crop research and provides an increase of \$500,000 to enhance scientific research into the health and nutritional benefits of dry peas, lentils, chickpeas, and dry beans.

*Rangeland Precision Livestock Management.*—The Committee recognizes the opportunity for precision livestock management strategies and tools to promote economically efficient and environmentally responsive livestock production systems for the Western rangeland. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to develop precision nutrition strategies for rangeland-based livestock as well as technology-based rangeland and livestock management strategies to optimize the health and productivity of both Western rangeland-based livestock and the rangeland ecosystem. Further, the Committee recommends this funding to transfer new knowledge and technology strategies into data-informed tools and decision guidance for Western livestock and rangeland managers.

*Rangeland Research.*—The Committee recognizes the demonstrated potential for cooperative partnerships to address complex sagebrush steppe ecosystem challenges in the Great Basin region. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for ARS to support a regional, multi-institutional cooperative partnership to advance collaborative science-based conservation research, extension, and education to address time-sensitive and shared rangeland challenges affecting sustainable agricultural productivity, rural communities, and ecosystem health.

*Recirculating Aquaculture Systems Research.*—The Committee remains concerned with the significant trade deficit in consumed seafood and aquaculture products and therefore provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support Recirculating Aquaculture Systems to expand production and resilience in domestic finfish aquaculture.

*Research Facilities.*—The Committee directs ARS to work cooperatively with land-grant universities to better utilize available state-of-the-art laboratory space to effectively address important agricultural research issues, including obstacles to increasing food production. These challenges include diseases which affect the blueberry, potato, apple, and marine finfish aquaculture produc-

tion. The Committee again directs ARS to study ways in which the Federal labs could be better utilized, in cooperation with land-grant universities, to explore new scientific opportunities that benefit the Nation's food and agriculture system, and to submit a report with recommendations to the Committee no later than 180 days after enactment of this act. The report should include information on the current utilization of ARS facilities by universities and other co-operators, as well as the extent in which ARS is housed in cooperator facilities.

*Resilient Barley Initiative.*—The Committee recognizes the need to build resiliency within the barley production system in order to maintain a sustainable and high-quality supply for its many value-added end uses. The Committee directs ARS to coordinate research efforts focused on strengthening barley's resilience to climate stressors that threaten that supply through improved genetics and management. The Committee provides \$3,000,000 to support this initiative.

*Resilient Dryland Farming.*—The Committee recognizes the need for advancements in dryland production practices, cropping, and equipment to increase profitability, conserve the soil, enhance soil water storage, promote soil health, and decrease reliance on herbicides. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to expand research focused on resilient dryland farming. Research should focus on improving yield and quality parameters; developing cropping systems capable of tolerating drought, heat, and diseases; and quantifying economic and environmental benefits from dryland crop production systems.

*Resilient Livestock Initiative.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of livestock as a main source of sustainability of food production systems to remain globally competitive and nourish a growing global population. In the face of increasing severe weather events, exponential expansion of the human population, and reductions in natural resources, livestock production needs to be more efficient and resilient to provide products for human consumption. The Committee support the ARS's Animal Disease Research Unit increasing its collaborative work to devise functional genomics strategies for developing traits in livestock to address disease resistance and improve resiliency in harsher weather conditions and provides an increase of \$1,000,000 to support the Resilient Livestock Initiative.

*Salmonella.*—The Committee recognizes the need to support additional research and monitoring with respect to mitigating salmonella in beef production. The Committee encourages ARS to research solutions to mitigate salmonella in beef. Activities should include surveying feedlots, longitudinal surveillance, and the characterization of salmonella types.

*Sclerotinia.*—The Committee is aware of the economic importance of controlling sclerotinia, which affects sunflowers, soybeans, canola, edible beans, peas, and lentils and provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for this purpose. The Committee encourages ARS to continue both core research and cooperative projects of the National Sclerotinia Initiative.

*Shrimp Production Research.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of increasing domestic shrimp production and provides no



less than the fiscal year 2024 level for research and commercial development of production technologies that will improve shrimp health and streamline feed management regimes.

*Small Fruits.*—The Committee recognizes the need to support research to promote sustainable and organic production of berry and grape crops with the goal of reducing pesticide use and improving quality and yield. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support research to improve the ability to forecast pest and disease spread, implement precision management strategies, and improve the overall quality of fruit.

*Small Grains Genomic Initiative.*—The Committee supports research on barley and wheat high throughput genomics and phenotyping and recognizes its importance in improving crop traits and developing new cultivars. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support the Small Grains Genomic Initiative.

*Smoke Exposure.*—The Committee is concerned about the impacts of wildfire smoke on winegrape producers and supports research to help growers and processors establish science-based threshold levels of smoke compounds that cause smoke-tainted grapes, identify the compounds responsible for smoke taints, develop mitigation methods to reduce or eliminate smoke taint, and conduct research into compounds that can act as a barrier between the grapes and the smoke compounds. The Committee provides an increase of \$1,000,000 for this research.

*Soft White Wheat Falling Numbers Test.*—The Committee recognizes the emerging crisis surrounding wheat starch degradation as detected by the Hagberg-Perten Falling Numbers [FN] Test. The quality loss was particularly devastating to Pacific Northwest soft white wheat producers in late 2016. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 funding level to research the accuracy of the FN test and better understand environmental, storage, and genetic conditions leading to this quality loss.

*Soil Carbon Research.*—The Committee recognizes the need for research into current and future dryland production practices to increase profitability, conserve soil, enhance soil water storage, promote sequestration of carbon and soil health, and reduce reliance on herbicides. The Committee no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for research focused on improving yield; assessing the level of carbon sequestration through existing practices; developing new cropping systems capable of tolerating drought, heat, and diseases by improving soil health; improving sequestration of carbon; and identifying opportunities for increasing sustainability of dryland crop production.

*Sorghum Crop Improvement.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for sorghum research to address increased drought pressure and erratic climate patterns through trait-based sorghum breeding, phenotyping, and associated genomic resources. This research will help develop varieties which respond to plant stress and deliver increased yield potential in these harsh semi-arid conditions.

*Southern Regional Research Center [SRRC].*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for the SRRC crop adaptive resilience food program to conduct collaborative research

with research universities by exploring the value-added enhancement of State-grown crops such as rice and other grains and pulses, to define the role for novel approaches in crop biological signaling and modification to yield environmentally sustainable, adaptive and stressor resistant varieties and interventions.

*Strawberry Production.*—The Committee recognizes that the highly perishable, delicate, and labor-intensive nature of strawberry production makes this crop an ideal test bed for innovative automation technologies. The Committee provides an increase of \$500,000 to utilize innovative automatic technologies to enhance strawberry production.

*Sudden Oak Death.*—The European strain 1 [EU1] and the North American strain 1 [NA1] of the sudden oak death pathogen are major threats to western Douglas-fir/tanoak forests, resulting in quarantine restrictions that threaten U.S. forests and export markets for log shipments and lily bulbs. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for research to improve understanding of the EU1 and NA1 strains of the sudden oak death pathogen and treatment methods to inform control and management techniques in wildlands.

*Sugar Beet Research.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for plant disease research to improve the quality of sugar beet production.

*Sugarcane Variety Development.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support research to shorten the conventional sugarcane breeding timeline, break through the current plateau in sugar content, and predict improvement in other traits such as cold tolerance, ratooning ability, and disease resistance.

*Sunflower Breeding Initiative.*—The Committee notes the limited availability of locally-adapted hybrid sunflower seeds. The Committee provides an increase of \$1,000,000 for sunflower breeding research to help improve yields, disease resistance, and insect tolerance.

*Supplemental and Alternative Crops.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of nationally coordinated, regionally managed canola research and extension programs. The Committee encourages the Secretary to seek input from stakeholders and give priority consideration to proposals in the peer review process that address research needs in production areas with the greatest potential to expand, as well as those where canola production is established and needs to be maintained.

*Sustainable Aquaculture.*—The Committee notes that aquaculture is the fastest growing food production industry in the world. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for a pilot Aquaculture Experiment Station in partnership with universities to support rapid response research on sustainable aquaculture for coldwater and warmwater production environments, with special emphasis on workforce education.

*Sustainable Seaweed Aquaculture.*—The Committee is aware of the challenges seaweed aquaculture is facing, including reliable seed supplies and a need for more research in cultivation practices and provides \$1,000,000 to support sustainable microalgae aquaculture research in the Gulf of Maine.

*Sweet Potato Research.*—The Committee provides no less than fiscal year 2024 level to support the continuation and enhancement of the ARS Food Science and Market Quality and Handling Research Unit work relating to sweetpotato varieties with high nutrient content and desirable fresh and processed sweetpotato products. The committee directs ARS to support food science and product development research that would enhance the consumption and marketability of the U.S. sweetpotato domestically and globally.

*Tree Fruit Post-Harvest Research.*—The Committee recognizes that the tree fruit industry faces significant economic vulnerability from variations in post-harvest quality control. The Committee provides funding at fiscal year 2024 levels for cherry and pear fruit physiology and pathology research that is needed to promote enhanced quality and resiliency from endemic and emerging diseases.

*Tropical and Subtropical Research.*—Research on Tropical and Subtropical crops is critical as the presence of and destruction by invasive pests such as fruit flies, coffee berry borer, felted macadamia nut coccid, plant viruses, and fungal diseases increasingly threaten crop security in the Pacific and Insular Areas. The Committee encourages ARS to support this research.

*Tropical Grazing Land Pest Management.*—The recent introduction of invasive insect species such as *Prosapia bicincta* has substantially impacted tropical grazing lands. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to develop science-based pest management strategies.

*Unmanned Aerial Systems [UAS] Precision Agriculture Applications.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support efforts utilizing UAS in crop production operations and to address the challenges associated with data capture, transfer, and analysis.

*U.S.-Israel Binational Agricultural Research and Development Fund.*—The Committee provides an increase of \$1,000,000.

*U.S. Wheat and Barley Scab Initiative [USWBSI].*—The Committee recognizes that fusarium head blight is a major threat to agriculture, inflicting substantial yield and quality losses throughout the United States. The Committee supports research carried out through the USWBSI. The Committee provides an increase of \$1,000,000 to conduct further research on reducing the impact of fusarium head blight on wheat and barley.

*Vidalia Onion Breeding.*—The Committee recognizes the need for additional research to develop a disease-resistant Vidalia onion crop. The Committee provides an increase of \$500,000 to research short-day onion breeding for the Southeast.

*Warmwater Aquaculture.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to facilitate the advancement of technologies that improve the efficiency, profitability, and sustainability of warmwater aquaculture production.

*Water Quality Management Systems.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to assess, develop, and disseminate novel water resource monitoring systems that promote sustainability practices for watershed and rangeland management necessary for small communities to prepare for a changing climate.

*Wheat Resiliency Initiative.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for a Wheat Resiliency Initiative

that supports additional research into Wheat Stem Sawfly and Hessian Fly. This funding would allow researchers to build capacity to address underfunded and emerging challenges to wheat production throughout the United States.

*Whitefly.*—The Committee remains concerned with the whitefly, *Bemisia tabaci*, epidemic, which is severely impacting pecan production in the Southeastern United States. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to continue this research.

*Wind Erosion Research Network.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to develop infrastructure to predict wind erosion effects and target erosion mitigation measures in response to fire and vegetation loss and a changing climate.

*Woody Biomass for Recyclable Packaging.*—The Committee recognizes the potential for biobased thermoplastics made from woody biomass as more recyclable packaging material and encourages ARS to accelerate research and technology deployment in this space.

The Committee provides no less than the level of funding outlined in the following table:

#### AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE—SALARIES AND EXPENSES

[In thousands of dollars]

Program/Activity	Committee recommendation
Aflatoxin Mitigation Research .....	1,750
Agrioltaics .....	2,750
AgTech Cooperative Agreements .....	5,000
Barley Pest Initiative .....	4,000
Bee Genomic Sequencing .....	3,000
Coffee Leaf Rust .....	1,800
Cover Crops Research and Outreach .....	5,250
Dam Repair Research .....	1,000
East Coast Shellfish Breeding .....	3,500
Genetic Improvement for Blueberries .....	1,500
Grape Genomics .....	4,000
Improving Efficiency of Catfish Aquaculture .....	3,250
Innovative Water Systems .....	2,000
Malignant Catarrhal Fever .....	1,750
National Agricultural Library .....	30,079
National Bio- and Agro-Defense Facility .....	121,558
National Drought Mitigation Center .....	1,500
New England Protected Agriculture .....	2,000
PFAS Center of Excellence .....	10,000
Potato Bioinformatician .....	1,175
Pulse Health Initiative .....	6,000
Resilient Barley Initiative .....	3,000
Resilient Livestock Initiative .....	2,000
Smoke Exposure .....	6,500
Strawberry Production .....	2,250
Sunflower Breeding Initiative .....	1,000
Sustainable Seaweed Aquaculture .....	1,000
U.S.-Israel Binational Agricultural Research and Development Fund [BARD] .....	3,500
U.S. Wheat and Barley Scab Initiative .....	15,000
Vidalia Onion Breeding .....	500

#### BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

Appropriations, 2025 .....	
Committee recommendation .....	\$42,650,000

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$42,650,000 for Agricultural Research Service, Buildings and Facilities, which is for Congressionally Directed Spending.

## NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Section 7511(f)(2) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–234) amends the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6971) by establishing an agency to be known as the National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The Secretary transferred to the Director of NIFA, effective October 1, 2009, all authorities administered by the Administrator of the Cooperative State, Research, Education, and Extension Service. The mission is to work with university partners and customers to advance research, extension, and higher education in the food and agricultural sciences and related environmental and human sciences to benefit people, communities, and the Nation.

## RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$1,075,950,000
Committee recommendation .....	1,089,510,000

Research and Education programs administered by NIFA are USDA's principal entrée to the U.S. university system for the purpose of conducting agricultural research and education programs as authorized by the Hatch Act of 1887, as amended (7 U.S.C. 361a-361i); the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Act of 1962, as amended (Public Law 87–788); the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act, as amended (Public Law 89–106); the National Agricultural, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended (Public Law 95–113); the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note); the Agricultural Research, Extension and Education Reform Act of 1998 (Public Law 105–185), as amended; the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 (Public Law 101–624); the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–171); and the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–246). Through these authorities, USDA participates with States and other cooperators to encourage and assist State institutions in conducting agricultural research and education through the State Agricultural Experiment Stations of the 50 States and the territories; approved Schools of Forestry; the 1890 Land-Grant Institutions, Tuskegee University, and West Virginia State University; 1994 Land-Grant Institutions; Colleges of Veterinary Medicine; and other eligible institutions. The appropriated funds provide Federal support for research and education programs at these institutions.

The research and education programs participate in a nationwide system of agricultural research program planning and coordination among the State institutions, USDA, and the agricultural industry of America.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$1,089,510,000 for research and education activities of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, of which \$13,560,000 is for Congressionally Directed Spending.

The following table summarizes the Committee's recommendations for research and education activities:

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE—RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ACTIVITIES  
[Dollars in thousands]

Program/Activity	Authorization	Committee recommendation (\$)	Period of Availability
Hatch Act .....	7 U.S.C. 361a-i .....	265,000	12-1500 /26
McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Act .....	16 U.S.C. 582a through a-7 .....	38,000	12-1500 /26
Research at 1890 Institutions (Evans-Allen Program).	7 U.S.C. 3222 .....	89,000	12-1500 /26
Payments to the 1994 Institutions .....	534(a)(1) of Public Law 103-382 ..	7,000	12-1500 / X
Education Grants for 1890 Institutions .....	7 U.S.C. 3152(b) .....	30,000	12-1500 / X
Scholarships at 1890 Institutions .....	7 U.S.C. 3222a .....	10,000	12-1500 / X
Centers of Excellence at 1890's Institutions .....	7 U.S.C. 5926(d) .....	10,000	12-1500 /26
Education Grants for Hispanic-Serving Institutions.	7 U.S.C. 3241 .....	16,000	12-1500 / X
Education Grants for Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions.	7 U.S.C. 3156 .....	5,000	12-1500 /26
Research Grants for 1994 Institutions .....	536 of Public Law 103-382 .....	5,000	12-1500 / X
New Beginning for Tribal Students .....	7 U.S.C. 3222e .....	5,000	12-1500 /26
Capacity Building for Non Land-Grant Colleges of Agriculture.	7 U.S.C. 3319i .....	6,000	12-1500 / X
Resident Instruction and Distance Education Grants for Insular Areas.	7 U.S.C. 3362 and 3363 .....	2,000	12-1500 /26/27
Agriculture and Food Research Initiative .....	7 U.S.C. 450i(b) .....	445,200	12-1500 / X
Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment .....	7 U.S.C. 3151a .....	10,000	12-1500 / X
Veterinary Services Grant Program .....	7 U.S.C. 3151b .....	4,000	12-1500 /26
Continuing Animal Health and Disease Research Program.	7 U.S.C. 3195 .....	4,000	12-1500 /26
Supplemental and Alternative Crops .....	7 U.S.C. 3319d .....	2,000	12-1500 /26
Multicultural Scholars, Graduate Fellowship and Institutions Challenge Grants.	7 U.S.C. 3152(b) .....	10,000	12-1500 / X
Secondary and 2-year Post-Secondary Education	7 U.S.C. 3152(j) .....	750	12-1500 /26
Aquaculture Centers .....	7 U.S.C. 3322 .....	5,000	12-1500 /26
Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education.	7 U.S.C. 5811, 5812, 5831, and 5832.	48,000	12-1500 /26
Farm Business Management .....	7 U.S.C. 5925f .....	2,000	12-1500 /26
Sun Grant Program .....	7 U.S.C. 8114 .....	3,000	12-1500 /26
Research Equipment Grants .....	7 U.S.C. 3310 .....	5,000	12-1500 /26
Minor Crop Pest Management (IR-4) .....	7 U.S.C. 450i(c) .....	15,000	12-1500 /26
Alfalfa Forage and Research Program .....	7 U.S.C. 5925 .....	4,000	12-1500 /26
Agricultural Genome to Phenome Initiative .....	7 U.S.C. 5924 .....	2,000	12-1500 /26
Laying Hen and Turkey Research Program .....	7 U.S.C. 5925 .....	500	12-1500 /26
Open Data Standards for Neutral Data Repository.	Sec. 575 of Division A of Public Law 117-103.	1,000	12-1500 /26
Research Facilities Act .....	7 U.S.C. 390 et seq. ....	1,000	12-1500 /26
Congressionally Directed Spending .....	.....	13,560	12-1500 / X
Special Research Grants:			
Global Change/UV Monitoring .....	7 U.S.C. 450i(c) .....	1,000	12-1500 /26
Potato Research .....	7 U.S.C. 450i(c) .....	4,000	12-1500 /26
Aquaculture Research .....	7 U.S.C. 450i(c) .....	2,000	12-1500 /26
Total, Special Research Grants .....	.....	7,000	
Necessary Expenses of Research and Education Activities:			
Grants Management System .....	.....	7,000	12-1500 / X

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE—RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ACTIVITIES—  
Continued  
[Dollars in thousands]

Program/Activity	Authorization	Committee recommendation (\$)	Period of Availability
Federal Administration—Other Necessary Expenses for Research and Education Activities.	.....	11,500	12–1500 /26
Total, Necessary Expenses .....	.....	18,500	
Total, Research and Education Activities.	.....	1,089,510	

*Agricultural Research Enhancement Awards.*—The Committee remains determined to see that quality research and enhanced human resources development in the agricultural and related sciences be a nationwide commitment. Therefore, the Committee continues its direction that not less than 15 percent of the competitive research grant funds be used for USDA’s agricultural research enhancement awards program, including USDA Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research [EPSCOR].

*Agricultural Workforce Development.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of agriculture workforce training, education, research and outreach activities. The Committee also notes the important role of junior or community colleges, who are eligible for AFRI awards, in developing the next generation of our agricultural workforce. Within the AFRI Education and Workforce Development initiative, the Committee encourages the Secretary to give strong consideration to applications from junior or community colleges, as well as applications that establish or expand career and technical opportunities in meat and poultry processing considering specific gaps exist in this sector.

*Agriculture and Food Research Initiative.*—The Committee provides \$445,200,000 for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative [AFRI].

Section 7406 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–234) specifies priority areas within AFRI, including an emphasis on conventional (classical) plant and animal breeding. The Committee strongly supports providing farmers nationwide with greater access to cultivars that are locally and regionally adapted to their soils, climates, and farming systems. The Committee directs the agency to make regionally adapted, publicly held cultivar development a distinct funding priority within AFRI for fiscal year 2026 and directs the agency to continue tracking public cultivar projects within AFRI and report its progress in meeting this goal.

*Agroacoustics.*—The Committee recognizes the growing field of acoustics and the many positive impacts it may have in agriculture, particularly with respect to pest management. The Committee encourages AFRI to prioritize funding for agroacoustics in its basic and applied research program, as well as through the Food and Agricultural Science Enhancement Grants.

*Alfalfa Seed and Alfalfa Forage Systems Research.*—The Committee notes that research into alfalfa and forage has the potential to increase alfalfa and forage yields, increase milk production, and improve genetics. The Committee provides no less than fiscal year 2025 level to support research into the improvement of yields, water conservation, creation of new uses, and other research areas holding the potential to advance the alfalfa seed and alfalfa forage industry.

*Algae Research.*—The Committee recognizes the opportunities for innovation in food, fuel, animal feed, and aquaculture in algae research and development. The Committee encourages NIFA to support research into algae-based initiatives.

*Artificial Intelligence Research Institutes.*—The Committee supports the collaboration between USDA and the National Science Foundation to pursue advances in precision agriculture, food system security, and forestry. The ability to meet the critical needs of the future agricultural workforce, provide tools for resilient agriculture and food security are within the mission of the agency in providing opportunity through innovation. The Committee encourages NIFA to continue supporting the work of the Artificial Intelligence Research Institutes funded through USDA at current funding levels and to begin planning a process for renewal opportunities.

*Biomass for Carbon Dioxide Removal.*—The Committee recognizes the opportunities for novel approaches to use biomass in ways that optimize carbon storage and encourages NIFA to support research into these applications in a manner consistent with existing food and fiber objectives.

*Brucellosis Research.*—Federal and State animal health officials have made eradicating livestock disease with significant reservoirs a national animal health priority. This need is reflected in the Agriculture Act of 2014 which made the research and development of surveillance methods, vaccines, vaccination delivery systems or diagnostics tests a priority research area under the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act particularly for bovine brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis. The Committee recognizes the need for this research and encourages the agency to make competitive grants available to study improved management tools for zoonotic livestock diseases with significant wildlife reservoirs.

*Citrus Disease Research Program.*—The Emergency Citrus Disease Research and Extension Program is intended to discover and develop tools for early detection, control, and eradication of diseases and pests that threaten domestic citrus production and processing. In the past, the program has received \$25,000,000 per year in mandatory funding through the Specialty Crop Research Initiative. The Committee believes that research projects funded under this authority should be prioritized based on the critical threat of citrus greening and encourages NIFA, to the maximum extent practicable, to follow the recommendations of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Advisory Board's citrus disease subcommittee and to collaborate with the HLB MAC group. The Committee encourages NIFA to engage with growers in areas of emerging citrus production to provide extension services regarding citrus greening.



*Education Grants for Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions.*—The Committee continues to strongly support and maintains funding for the Alaska Native-Serving and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions Education Program.

*Enhanced Rock Weathering Research.*—The Committee notes that projects that focus on researching enhanced rock weathering and related monitoring, reporting, and verification efforts are eligible for Agriculture and Food Research Initiative [AFRI] awards. The Committee directs NIFA to prioritize funding for projects addressing carbon removal through enhanced rock weathering, including on monitoring, reporting, and verification [MRV] of carbon and non-climate agricultural benefits, among other priorities. NIFA shall report to the Committee 180 days after enactment of this act on grants awarded for such purposes in the previous fiscal year.

*Enteric Methane Innovation.*—The Committee recognizes the value of public research in supporting innovation. The Committee encourages AFRI to prioritize applications that focus on the advancement of enteric fermentation solutions, such as cattle feed additives, methane-inhibiting vaccines, and breeding for low-methane cattle, and direct-fed microorganisms.

*Food Safety.*—The Committee continues its recommendation that NIFA prioritize research on technologies to rapidly and effectively detect pathogens or contaminants in order to address foodborne illnesses and improve the safety of our Nation's food supply, including research of novel biodetection technologies.

*Forest Products.*—The Committee recognizes the important role of the forests products sector to the U.S. economy. The need to create new and improved value-added products and renewable energy from our Nation's wood supply is critical to the sustainability of the National economy. The Committee directs NIFA to support research on wood quality improvement and improvement in forest products evaluation standards and valuation techniques.

*Genome to Phenome.*—The Committee supports the Agricultural Genome to Phenome Initiative to support the development of tools and datasets for the analysis of phenotypes that can be used across multiple livestock and crop species to improve the output and efficiency of agriculture.

*Intermediate Crops.*—The Committee is aware of the nascent industry of “intermediate crops”, such as winter camelina, field pennycress, and carinata, that can be grown on existing farmland between primary crops to produce feedstocks for renewable biofuels. These intermediate crops offer similar soil health benefits to cover crops and represent a new source of income for agricultural producers. Within the funds provided for AFRI, the Committee encourages NIFA to prioritize funding for projects seeking to advance the development, adoption, and processing for intermediate crops, particularly under the Foundational and Applied Science, Supplemental and Alternative Crop, and Sustainable Agriculture Systems program areas.

*Laying Hen and Turkey Research Program.*—The Committee notes that research into laying hens and turkeys holds the potential to improve the efficiency and sustainability of laying hen and turkey production through integrated, collaborative research and technology transfer. The Committee continues to support research

into laying hen and turkey disease prevention, antimicrobial resistance, nutrition, gut health, and alternative housing systems under extreme weather conditions, all which hold the potential to advance the laying hen and turkey industry.

*Lowbush Blueberries.*—The Committee directs NIFA to work with research institutions to develop and refine predictive models and monitoring technologies for native and invasive pests for incorporation into integrated pest management programs for naturally seeded, native berry crops to increase the margin of food safety and product quality.

*Mental Health Support.*—The Committee encourages NIFA to expand programs that deliver peer-to-peer mental health support to individuals who are engaged in farming, ranching, farm work, and other occupations relating to agriculture.

*New Beginning for Tribal Students.*—The Committee is concerned that matching requirements often prevent Tribes, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and Tribal Organizations from applying for programs and grants at NIFA. The Committee directs the Secretary to waive matching requirements for New Beginning for Tribal Students in NIFA in order to reduce the burden on Tribal Communities and to increase Tribal participation in USDA programs and grants.

*Organic Research.*—USDA's National Organic Standards Board [NOSB] has identified key organic research priorities, many of which would help to address challenges that have limited the growth in organic production in this country. The Committee encourages NIFA to give strong consideration to the NOSB organic research priorities when crafting the fiscal year 2026 Request for Applications for AFRI and the Organic Transition Program. Given the growing demand for organic products, the Committee also encourages USDA to increase the number of organic research projects funded under AFRI and the Specialty Crop Research Initiative.

*Precision Management of Live Broiler Production.*—The Committee encourages NIFA to support research focused on improving animal welfare and health, food safety and food security through novel broiler chicken live production approaches and methods that drive transformational innovation in intelligent systems, automation, robotics, data science, and artificial technologies that could enable greater efficiencies, better resilience, and viable poultry enterprises at various scales of production.

*Potato Research.*—To minimize the application of pesticides and to maximize the yield and quality of harvested potatoes, the Committee directs the Secretary to support pest management programs in potato growing States. Such programs help scientists track potential pest outbreaks and provide growers and industry professionals with current information on specific and timely treatments. Additionally, these programs help identify serious diseases, such as late blight disease, in their early stages, allowing for preventive measures to be put in place quickly to avoid crop losses.

*Requests for Applications and Obligation of Awards.*—The Committee is concerned by NIFA's delays in issuing fiscal year 2025 Requests for Applications and subsequent grant awards. The Committee directs NIFA to report to the Committee within 30 days of enactment of this act and quarterly thereafter on the expected

timeline of fiscal year 2026 Requests for Applications and award announcements for each program.

*Specialty Crop Research Initiative.*—The Committee emphasizes the important role of the Specialty Crop Research Initiative in addressing the critical needs of the specialty crop industry through research and extension activities. The Committee encourages NIFA to prioritize proposals for, and enhance its overall commitment to the ability of farmers to extend their growing season through the use of winter growing techniques, including but not limited to high tunnel vegetable production. The Committee also encourages NIFA to support research that would boost mechanization and automation of labor-intensive tasks in specialty crop production and processing.

*Stray Voltage and Dairy Cattle Health.*—The Committee is aware of concerns from dairy producers and limited research regarding the potential impact of stray voltage on animal health and milk production. The Committee encourages NIFA to support research into the prevalence, detection, and effects of stray voltage on dairy cattle with the aim of improving diagnostic methods, assessing animal behavior and productivity, and evaluating mitigation strategies.

*Supplemental and Alternative Crops.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of nationally coordinated, regionally managed canola research and extension programs. The Committee encourages the Secretary to continue to seek input from stakeholders and to give priority consideration to proposals in the peer review process that address research needs in production areas with the greatest potential to expand, as well as those where canola production is established and needs to be maintained.

*Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education [SARE].*—The Committee appreciates the work SARE has done to improve soil health through cutting edge research, education, and extension on cover crops, diversified rotations, and managed grazing. The Committee expects the funding provided to be focused on increasing agricultural resilience, including, where appropriate, interdisciplinary systems research and education, farmer and rancher research and demonstration grants, and graduate student research grants.

#### NATIVE AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS ENDOWMENT FUND

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$11,880,000
Committee recommendation .....	11,880,000

The Native American Institutions Endowment Fund, authorized by the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act (Public Law 103–382), provides an endowment for the 1994 land-grant institutions (34 tribally-controlled colleges). This program enhances educational opportunity for Native Americans by building educational capacity at these institutions in the areas of student recruitment and retention, curricula development, faculty preparation, instruction delivery systems, and scientific instrumentation for teaching. Income funds are also available for facility renovation, repair, construction, and maintenance. On the termination of each fiscal year, the Secretary shall withdraw the income from the endowment fund for the fiscal year, and, after making adjustments for the cost of administering the endowment fund, distribute the adjusted income

as follows: 60 percent of the adjusted income from these funds shall be distributed among the 1994 land-grant institutions on a pro rata basis, the proportionate share being based on the Indian student count; and 40 percent of the adjusted income shall be distributed in equal shares to the 1994 land-grant institutions.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$11,880,000 for the Native American Institutions Endowment Fund.

#### EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$561,700,000
Committee recommendation .....	561,700,000

Cooperative extension work was established by the Smith-Lever Act of May 8, 1914, as amended (Public Law 63–95). USDA is authorized to provide, through the land-grant colleges, cooperative extension work that consists of the development of practical applications of research knowledge and the giving of instruction and practical demonstrations of existing or improved practices or technologies in agriculture and related subjects, and to encourage the application of such information by demonstrations, publications, through 4–H clubs, and other means to persons not in attendance or resident at the colleges.

To fulfill the requirements of the Smith-Lever Act (Public Law 63–95), State and county extension offices in each State, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Marianas, and Micronesia conduct educational programs to improve American agriculture and strengthen the Nation's families and communities.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$561,700,000 for extension activities of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

The following table summarizes the Committee's recommendations for extension activities:

#### NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE—EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

[Dollars in thousands]

Program/Activity	Authorization	Committee recommendation (\$)	Period of Availability
Smith-Lever Act, Section 3(b) and 3(c) and Cooperative Extension.	7 U.S.C. 343(b) and (c) and 208(c) of Public Law 93–471.	325,000	12–0502 /26
Extension Services at 1890 Institutions .....	7 U.S.C. 3221 .....	72,000	12–0502 /26
Extension Services at 1994 Institutions .....	7 U.S.C. 343(b)(3) .....	11,000	12–0502 / X
Facility Improvements at 1890 Institutions .....	7 U.S.C. 3222b .....	21,500	12–0502 / X
Renewable Resources Extension Act .....	16 U.S.C. 1671 et seq. ....	4,000	12–0502 /26
Rural Health and Safety Education Programs .....	7 U.S.C. 2662(i) .....	4,000	12–0502 /26
Food and Animal Residue Avoidance Database Program.	7 U.S.C. 7642 .....	2,000	12–0502 /26
Women and Minorities in STEM Fields .....	7 U.S.C. 5925 .....	2,000	12–0502 /26
Food Safety Outreach Program .....	7 U.S.C. 7625 .....	10,000	12–0502 /26
Food and Agriculture Service Learning .....	7 U.S.C. 7633 .....	1,000	12–0502 /26
Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network .....	7 U.S.C. 5936 .....	10,000	12–0502 /26
Enhancing Ag Opportunities for Veterans (AgVets) ..	Section 760 of Public Law 115–31	3,000	12–0502 /26

## NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE—EXTENSION ACTIVITIES—Continued

[Dollars in thousands]

Program/Activity	Authorization	Committee recommendation (\$)	Period of Availability
Smith-Lever Act, Section 3(d):			
Food and Nutrition Education .....	7 U.S.C. 343(d) .....	70,000	12–0502 /26
Farm Safety and Youth Farm Safety Education Programs.	7 U.S.C. 343(d) .....	5,000	12–0502 /26
New Technologies for Agricultural Extension ...	7 U.S.C. 343(d) .....	1,600	12–0502 /26
Children, Youth, and Families at Risk .....	7 U.S.C. 343(d) .....	8,000	12–0502 /26
Federally Recognized Tribes Extension Program.	7 U.S.C. 343(d) .....	4,000	12–0502 /26
Total, Section 3(d) .....		88,600	
Necessary Expenses of Extension Activities:			
Agriculture in the K–12 Classroom .....		500	12–0502 /26
Federal Administration—Other Necessary Expenses for Extension Activities.		7,100	12–0502 /26
Total, Necessary Expenses .....		7,600	
Total, Extension Activities .....		561,700	

*Cooperative Extension System.*—The Committee recognizes the essential function that extension plays in ensuring that farmers, ranchers, and communities of all sizes are empowered to meet the challenges they face, adapt to changing technology and a changing climate, improve nutrition and food safety, prepare for and respond to emergencies, and protect our environment. The Committee is concerned that the Federal investment in this critical Federal, State, and local partnership has lagged in recent years, just as extraordinary stresses have been placed on farmers, ranchers, rural businesses, and communities.

*Extension Design Initiative.*—The Committee recognizes that for decades, the foundation of traditional farm extension programs had researchers and educators working on the farms and fields alongside crop and livestock producers, but that changes are needed to develop a 21st century extension to meet the needs of today's farmers. The Committee notes that new efforts require USDA to use high-performance computing to develop, test, and deploy new digital infrastructure and platforms that can translate research into real-time interactive feedback, online modeling, demonstration, and simulations. The Committee directs NIFA to conduct meetings with producers, stakeholders, and policymakers to begin developing a framework for the next generation of farm extension programs.

*Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network.*—The Committee recognizes the farmers, ranchers, and individuals working in agriculture who face highly stressful working conditions. NIFA is encouraged to coordinate with the Department of Health and Human Services, including the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to assess the feasibility of a national farmer and farm worker crisis line. Within 180 days of enactment of this act, NIFA is directed to provide a report detailing the program's evolution since inception, types of programming provided, and FRSSAN's strategy for continuing outreach and services.

*Minority Outreach.*—The Committee is concerned that extension service resources do not reach minority, socially disadvantaged, and Tribal communities in proportion to their participation in the agricultural sector. All institutions that receive extension funding should seek to ensure that an equitable percentage of their overall extension work reaches minority, socially disadvantaged, and Tribal communities. The Committee directs NIFA to evaluate distribution of extension resources to these three populations and report to the Committee no later than 90 days after enactment of this act.

*Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program [VMLRP].*—The Committee recognizes the importance of the VMLRP in meeting the needs of rural ranchers, farmers, and rural communities across the country by incentivizing licensed veterinarians to practice in USDA-designated veterinary shortage areas. Within 90 days of enactment of this act and quarterly thereafter, NIFA is directed to provide a report to the Committee on the number of declared shortage areas, by State, and how many positions, by shortage area, remain unfilled.

#### INTEGRATED ACTIVITIES

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$41,100,000
Committee recommendation .....	41,100,000

Section 406, as amended, of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (Public Law 105–85) authorizes an integrated research, education, and extension competitive grants program.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$41,100,000 for integrated activities of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

The following table summarizes the Committee's recommendations for integrated activities:

#### NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE—INTEGRATED ACTIVITIES

[Dollars in thousands]

Program/Activity	Authorization	Committee recommendation (\$)	Period of Availability
Methyl Bromide Transition Program .....	7 U.S.C. 7626 .....	2,000	12–1502 /26
Organic Transition Program .....	7 U.S.C. 7626 .....	7,500	12–1502 /26
Regional Rural Development Centers .....	7 U.S.C. 450(c) .....	2,600	12–1502 /26
Food and Agriculture Defense Initiative .....	7 U.S.C. 3351 .....	8,000	12–1502 /26/27
Crop Protection/Pest Management .....	7 U.S.C. 343(d) .....	21,000	12–1502 /26
Total, Integrated Activities .....	.....	41,100	

*Food and Agriculture Defense Initiative.*—The Committee supports the important work being done through the publicly funded diagnostic laboratory network and encourages NIFA to prioritize funding to strengthen animal health diagnostic laboratories, taking into consideration the following: the degree to which the capacity for surveillance, monitoring, response, and capacity is enhanced; the concentration of human and animal populations that are directly at risk; trade, tourism, and cultural considerations; geog-

raphy, ecology, and climate; evidence of active collaboration with and support of the State animal health officials; those States with highest risk for the introduction of foreign and emerging pests and diseases; and evidence of stakeholder support and engagement.

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR MARKETING AND  
REGULATORY PROGRAMS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$1,617,000
Committee recommendation .....	1,617,000

The Office of the Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs provides direction and coordination in carrying out laws with respect to the Department's marketing, grading, and standardization activities related to grain; competitive marketing practices of livestock, marketing orders, and various programs; veterinary services; and plant protection and quarantine. The Office has oversight and management responsibilities for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service [APHIS] and Agricultural Marketing Service [AMS].

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$1,617,000 for the Office of the Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs.

ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$1,147,750,000
Committee recommendation .....	1,167,534,000

The Secretary of Agriculture established the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service on April 2, 1972, under the authority of reorganization plan No. 2 of 1953, and other authorities. The major objectives of APHIS are to protect the animal and plant resources of the Nation from diseases and pests. These objectives are carried out under the major areas of activity, as follows:

*Safeguarding and Emergency Preparedness/Response.*—The agency monitors plant and animal health worldwide and sets import policies to prevent the introduction of foreign plant and animal pests and diseases. Domestically, the agency works cooperatively to conduct plant and animal health monitoring programs, pursue eradication, or limit the spread of the threat. The agency also conducts diagnostic laboratory activities that support disease prevention, detection, control, and eradication programs. In addition, the agency protects agriculture from detrimental animal predators and through its regulatory structure helps advance genetic research while protecting against the release of harmful organisms.

*Safe Trade and International Technical Assistance.*—The agency helps resolve technical trade issues to ensure the smooth and safe movement of agricultural commodities into and out of the United States. The agency negotiates animal and plant health certification requirements and assists U.S. exporters in meeting foreign regulatory demands. In addition, the agency assists developing countries in improving their safeguarding systems to protect the United States from emerging plant and animal pests and diseases.

*Animal Care.*—The agency conducts regulatory activities that ensure the humane care and treatment of animals and horses as re-



quired by the Animal Welfare Act (Public Law 89–544) and Horse Protection Acts (Public Law 91–540). These activities include inspection of certain establishments that handle animals intended for research, exhibition, and as pets, and monitoring certain horse shows.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$1,167,534,000 for salaries and expenses of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service [APHIS], including \$11,384,000 for Congressionally Directed Spending.

The following table reflects the Committee's specific recommendations for APHIS:

#### ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE

[Dollars in thousands]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted (\$)	Committee recommendation (\$)	Period of Availability
Safeguarding and International Technical Assistance:			
Animal Health Technical Services .....	40,000	45,500	12–1600/ X
Aquatic Animal Health .....	4,500	4,500	12–1600/ 26
Avian Health .....	65,000	65,000	12–1600/ X
Cattle Health .....	106,010	106,010	12–1600/ 26
Cattle Health: Screwworm Program .....	4,990	4,990	12–1600/ X
Cervid and Small Ruminant Health .....	32,300	32,800	12–1600/ 26
Equine Health .....	2,700	2,450	12–1600/ 26
National Veterinary Stockpile .....	6,000	6,250	12–1600/ X
Swine Health .....	26,500	26,500	12–1600/ 26
Veterinary Biologics .....	21,000	21,000	12–1600/ 26
Veterinary Diagnostics .....	38,473	38,473	12–1600/ 26
National Bio- and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF) .....	24,527	24,527	12–1600/ X
Zoonotic Disease Management .....	21,000	21,000	12–1600/ X
Subtotal, Animal Health .....	393,000	399,000	
Agricultural Quarantine Inspection (Appropriated) .....	35,500	35,500	12–1600/ X
Cotton Pests .....	15,500	15,500	12–1600/ X
Field crop & Rangeland Ecosystems Pests .....	12,000	11,500	12–1600/ X
Pest Detection .....	29,000	29,000	12–1600/ 26
Plant Protection Methods Development .....	21,500	21,500	12–1600/ 26
Specialty Crop Pests .....	206,500	208,500	12–1600/ X
Multiple-Agency Response to Citrus Greening .....	8,500	8,500	12–1600/ 26/27
Tree & Wood Pests .....	59,000	58,650	12–1600/ X
Subtotal, Plant Health .....	387,500	388,650	
Wildlife Damage Management .....	120,000	121,000	12–1600/ 26
Wildlife Damage Management: Aviation Safety .....	2,500	2,500	12–1600/ X
Wildlife Services Methods Development .....	24,500	24,500	12–1600/ 26
Wildlife Services Methods Development Carryover .....	1,000	1,000	12–1600/ X
Subtotal, Wildlife Services .....	148,000	149,000	
Animal & Plant Health Regulatory Enforcement .....	18,500	18,500	12–1600/ 26
Biotechnology Regulatory Services .....	19,500	19,500	12–1600/ 26
Subtotal, Regulatory Services .....	38,000	38,000	
Contingency Fund .....	250	250	
Emergency Preparedness & Response .....	44,500	44,250	12–1600/ X

## ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE—Continued

[Dollars in thousands]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted (\$)	Committee recommendation (\$)	Period of Availability
Subtotal, Emergency Management .....	44,750	44,500	12–1600/ X
Subtotal, Safeguarding and Emergency Preparedness/Response.	1,011,250	1,019,150	
Safe Trade and International Technical Assistance:			
Agriculture Import/Export .....	18,750	18,750	12–1600/ 26
Overseas Technical & Trade Operations .....	25,500	25,500	12–1600/ 26
Subtotal, Safe Trade .....	44,250	44,250	
Animal Welfare:			
Animal Welfare .....	37,250	37,250	12–1600/ X
Horse Protection .....	3,500	3,500	12–1600/ X
Subtotal, Animal Welfare .....	40,750	40,750	
Agency Management:			
APHIS Information Technology Infrastructure .....	4,000	4,500	12–1600/ X
Physical/Operational Security .....	5,000	5,000	12–1600/ 26
Rent and DHS Security Payments .....	42,500	42,500	12–1600/ 26
Subtotal, Agency Management .....	51,500	52,000	
Congressionally Directed Spending .....		11,384	12–1600/ X
Total, Direct Appropriation .....	1,147,750	1,167,534	

*Agricultural Quarantine Inspection.*—The Committee recognizes that the prevention of infestations of pests and diseases is significantly more cost effective than subsequent control or eradication. This is an important Federal responsibility, and the Committee provides \$35,500,000 for the agricultural quarantine inspections [AQI] function, including pre-departure and interline inspections, and canine detection and surveillance activities.

*Animal Product Imports.*—APHIS Animal Products Import and Export division is responsible for keeping the U.S. safe from foreign animal disease while also promoting trade through negotiating science based health certificates and procedures with foreign governments to enhance U.S. agriculture exports. The Committee maintains funding consistent with fiscal year 2024 levels to support the APHIS Animal Products Import and Export activities, including sanitary and phytosanitary issues that arise between U.S. foreign governments and export destinations.

*Animal Welfare.*—The Committee is concerned about APHIS' Animal Care program and the steep decline in enforcement related to violations of the Animal Welfare Act urges the agency to reform its current licensing and enforcement scheme. While the agency has taken steps towards this goal, the Committee believes more progress can be made. This includes, but is not limited to: ensuring consistent, thorough, unannounced inspections on a regular basis; ensuring each failure to allow access for inspection and each violation or failure to comply with animal welfare standards is documented on an inspection report; and, requiring that inspection re-

ports which identify violations or failures of compliance be shared with relevant local, State, and Federal agencies.

The Committee continues to encourage APHIS to use its full enforcement capabilities under the AWA against chronic violators of the AWA. The Committee directs the agency to update the Committee within 60 days of enactment of the act on AWA enforcement activities, including the number of cases referred to the Office of the General Counsel, the Department of Justice, or both, when appropriate. The Secretary of Agriculture shall continue the March 2024 memorandum of understanding with the U.S. Attorney General to encourage greater collaboration on Animal Welfare Act enforcement and ensure that the Department of Justice has access to evidence needed to initiate cases.

In July 2023, USDA announced an independent review of the Animal Care program by a third-party entity. The Committee urges the Secretary to ensure that next phase of the review—stakeholder analysis—includes input from Congress and expert animal protection organizations, and that APHIS continues to strengthen its AWA enforcement efforts while this review is underway.

*Chronic Wasting Disease [CWD].*—The Committee is concerned about the growing threat of CWD and its impact on wild and farmed deer populations. As such, the Committee provides APHIS \$22,500,000 for CWD related activities. Specifically, of the amount provided for cervid health activities, \$12,500,000 shall be for APHIS to allocate funds directly to State departments of wildlife, State departments of agriculture, Native American Tribes, and research institutions and universities to further develop and implement CWD surveillance, testing, management, and response activities, and \$5,000,000 shall be for indemnity payments and associated costs to remove infected and exposed animals as expeditiously as possible. Of the amount provided for Wildlife Service Methods Development, \$5,000,000 shall be for CWD work at the National Wildlife Research Center, and the Committee directs APHIS to continue working with university collaborators to provide research support to the overall effort to detect, combat, and control CWD.

*Cogongrass Management and Control.*—The Committee maintains the fiscal year 2025 level to assist States with cogongrass management and control efforts.

*Congressionally Directed Spending [CDS].*—The Committee has provided CDS for certain activities and locations under APHIS. While the Committee has provided the funding, recipients of CDS are still required to apply for the funding. The Committee expects the agency to review the applications and fund projects in the same manner as in previous years.

*Contingency Fund.*—The term ‘contingency fund’ as referenced in the APHIS table shall be defined as a source of funding available for the control of outbreaks of insects, plant diseases, animal diseases and for control of pest animals and birds.

*Crop Threat Assessment.*—The Committee directs APHIS to deliver a report that assesses the threats to crops on the U.S. mainland from agricultural pests and diseases from Central and South America and the Asia Pacific region within 180 days of enactment of this act. The report should include an identification of how pests from these regions usually reach the U.S. mainland, and a descrip-

tion of how the Department prevents the introduction of new pests from these regions.

*Electronic Identification Tags.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of the electronic identification tags for certain cattle and bison moving across state lines for disease traceability. The Committee includes \$13,500,000 for APHIS to procure and distribute the requisite number of tags associated with the implementation of this rule, including brucellosis EID tags for States in and surrounding the Greater Yellowstone Area. APHIS is directed to provide the Committee an update on the use of these funds within 90 days of enactment of this act and quarterly thereafter.

*Equine Health Activities.*—The Committee provides \$2,450,000 for equine health activities, of which \$250,000 shall be used to support ongoing cooperative agreements with States impacted by Eastern Equine Encephalitis.

*Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza [HPAI].*—The Committee remains concerned with the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza and appreciates the Department's ongoing efforts to contain spread of the virus. The Committee encourages the Department to continue coordination with State animal health officials in order to proactively mitigate spread of the virus. The Committee also urges the Department to increase outreach and engagement with poultry producers to educate on proactive measures individuals can take to further mitigate the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza.

Additionally, the Committee recognizes the extreme economic hardship posed to gamebird and egg farmers when flocks are determined to be infected by high and low pathogenic avian influenza and acknowledges the severe limitations on controlled marketing available to producers of live game birds, as well as the income loss from egg production. The Committee encourages APHIS to provide full indemnity coverage for gamebird and egg operations and cease attempts to limit coverage. The Committee directs the Secretary to provide a report within 90 days of enactment of this act regarding the economic impact of avian influenza on the whole gamebird supply chain, including small businesses and preserve customers, and proposals for insurance or indemnity options for the impacted businesses and preserves.

While the Committee agrees that the transfer of CCC funds to APHIS to address HPAI was warranted to continue to address the ongoing outbreak among poultry and the transmission to dairy cattle, to ensure that these funds are used effectively, APHIS is directed to brief the Committee within 30 days of enactment of this act and monthly thereafter on the use of these funds. This brief shall include both budgetary and operational data on APHIS' efforts to address HPAI in both dairy cattle and poultry, complemented with a monthly HPAI obligation report, progress update on APHIS' 5-pronged strategy to combat HPAI, as well as how APHIS is working with other Federal partners such as the Centers for Disease Control and the Food and Drug Administration, and State and local entities.

*Horse Protection.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for enforcement of the Horse Protection Act of 1970, as amended (15 U.S.C. 1831), and reminds the Secretary that Congress granted the agency primary responsibility to enforce this

law, including the training of all inspectors. The Committee directs APHIS to ensure that all official warning letters, administrative complaints, stipulations, and consent decisions are made publicly available in a searchable format, consistent with 7 U.S.C. 2146a.

*Inspection of Research Facilities.*—The Committee is aware that Veterinary Medical Officers [VMOs] and Improved Training for Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees [IACUC] members play a significant role in the administration of animal protection programs at research facilities. Therefore, proper training of such personnel is essential. The Committee directs APHIS to provide on-demand, publicly available training for IACUC members and VMOs on how to perform adequate inspections of research facilities. The training should inform VMOs and IACUC members, as relevant to their respective roles in providing oversight of research facilities, how to review, monitor, and approve research facilities' protocols; verify the accuracy of annual reports submitted by research facilities to confirm the correct number of animals used in every experiment and that animals are reported in the correct pain category; and review and monitor experiments performed on animals by research facilities to ensure the humane care and use of animals in compliance with the AWA and IACUC-approved protocols.

APHIS shall report to the Committee on an annual basis about the trainings it has offered to VMOs and IACUC members on how to perform adequate research facility inspections. In addition, all training materials used and distributed by APHIS should be publicly accessible online.

*Lacey Act Implementation.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of the Lacey Act (16 U.S.C. 3371–3378) in addressing trafficking of illegally taken wildlife, fish, and plants, including illegal deforestation activities. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support the implementation of the Lacey Act within the Safe Trade and International Technical Assistance program. APHIS is directed to submit a report within 180 days of enactment of this act outlining potential ways to address all outstanding plant and wood product categories covered by the 2008 Amendment to the Lacey Act.

*Los Alamitos Sterile Insect Release Facility.*—The Committee urges APHIS and local and State cooperators to develop a comprehensive plan for much needed facility enhancements at the Sterile Insect Release Facility in Los Alamitos, California.

*Marine Mammals in Captivity.*—The Committee is concerned that USDA's handling, care, treatment, and transportation standards for marine mammals in captivity are outdated. Marine mammal science has progressed significantly in the almost 40 years since the most important of these regulations were last updated, and the current standards do not adequately protect the welfare of captive marine mammals. The Committee directs APHIS to prioritize the development and finalization of a humane and science-based rule to modernize its marine mammal regulations and directs the agency to report back within 90 days of enactment of this Act on its progress in achieving that goal.

*National Animal Health Laboratory Network.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level for the National Animal Health Laboratory Network.

*National Aquatic Animal Health Plan.*—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2025 level to support the continued implementation of the 2025–2027 National Aquaculture Health Plan and the Comprehensive Aquaculture Health Program Standards.

*National Bio- and Agro-Defense Human Capital Development.*—The Committee provides \$3,000,000 for APHIS to ensure necessary steps are taken to develop a qualified workforce comprised of subject matter experts in foreign, emerging, and zoonotic diseases and capable of developing, validating, and conducting needed diagnostics, performing epidemiologic studies, and completing bioinformatics analyses. The Committee encourages APHIS to establish cooperative agreements with academic research institutions, particularly non-land grant Hispanic-Serving Institutions, to support the next generation of the NBAF workforce, including facilities and equipment.

*National Detector Dog Training Center.*—The Committee supports the work of the National Detector Dog Training Center in protecting the domestic agriculture sector from invasive pests and diseases. The Committee requests USDA, within 1 year after enactment of this act, to submit a report to Congress regarding the Center's role in protecting the domestic agriculture sector from pests and diseases. The Committee requests that the report include a description of domestic pest and disease programs that use canine detector teams, coordination between APHIS and U.S. Customs and Border Protection on use of canine teams for agricultural quarantine inspections, and the Center's current capacity level.

Additionally, the Committee encourages USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service to consider and prioritize the growing use of canine teams nationally and within territories of the U.S. by exploring ways to expand the number of canine detection training facilities across the country, to include areas on the West Coast with high detection needs.

*National Clean Plant Network.*—APHIS is directed to allocate no less than fiscal year 2025 levels to the National Clean Plant Network.

*National Veterinary Stockpile.*—The Committee provides \$6,250,000 for the National Veterinary Stockpile to protect the Nation's food supply by maintaining enough countermeasures capable of deployment against the most damaging animal diseases. The Committee urges USDA to continue to stock and make available U.S.-manufactured reusable respirators in the National Veterinary Stockpile [NVS]. Doing so is critical to support the availability of tools that can protect Federal and State emergency responders. Reusable respirators provide enhanced protection and have a longer shelf-life compared to disposable masks like N95s. Stockpiled access to reusable respirators during a crisis can pre-empt shortages that result from high demand or supply chain disruptions. The Committee emphasizes the critical need to protect all Federal and State animal disease emergency responders from infectious agents.

*Navel Orangeworm.*—The Committee recognizes the challenges the navel orangeworm poses to tree nut production and provides no

less than fiscal year 2024 levels to continue managing the pest. Additionally, the Committee encourages APHIS to partner with commodity organizations or private companies to combat navel orangeworm by developing alternatives to traditional irradiation sterile insect technique, including genetic engineering.

*New World Screwworm.*—The Committee is concerned by the rapidly growing New World Screwworm [NWS] infestation in Mexico and Central America, which threatens to infect our domestic livestock industry. The Committee recognizes that past efforts to eradicate this parasite in the United States were very costly, and if an infestation were to occur within our borders today the burden on taxpayers and private industry to eradicate would be far costlier still. The Committee supports efforts by the Department to provide the sterile insects necessary to prevent and control NWS and encourages the Department to construct a new sterile fly facility in the United States to provide the sterile insects necessary to prevent and control NWS.

*Nitrogen-Based Depopulation Methods.*—The Committee directs the USDA to continue to utilize available funds through the National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program to facilitate and invest in research and development of large-scale depopulation technologies, including whole house gassing with nitrogen and high expansion nitrogen gas-filled foam as methods of large-scale depopulation during animal disease emergency response events. Further, the Committee directs the Secretary to provide a report to the Committee within 90 days on inclusion of the method in the American Veterinarian Medical Association [AVMA] Depopulation Guidelines and on the barriers to widespread use of nitrogen-based depopulation methods during animal disease emergency response events.

*Non-Lethal Strategies.*—The Committee is aware that Wildlife Services has worked with landowners to deploy non-lethal strategies, such as fladry, electric fencing, and livestock guardian dogs, to reduce predator depredation on livestock. The Committee provides \$5,000,000 for Wildlife Services to hire personnel exclusively to promote and implement non-lethal human-predator conflict deterrence techniques in interested States, with a focus on reducing human-wildlife conflicts related to predators and beavers in the Western Region and Great Lakes States and to assist in providing training in these techniques to agricultural producers, landowners, and other agency personnel in collaboration with the National Wildlife Research Center.

Additionally, APHIS is directed to provide an annual report within 120 days of the end of the fiscal year, detailing how these additional funds were dispersed; including regional distribution, wild and domestic species impacted, number and size of livestock/agricultural operations impacted, and nonlethal tools and methods implemented and supported.

*Online Dog Dealers.*—The Committee is concerned about the lack of enforcement of the law with respect to online dog dealers and other types of pet dealers, which has allowed many online operations to continue selling puppies without the necessary USDA licensing under the Animal Welfare Act. The Secretary is directed to prioritize the enforcement of the 2013 rule that requires that deal-

ers who APHIS has determined to be selling animals sight-unseen to consumers must have the necessary license to do so.

*Pathogen Transmission Reduction for Agricultural Producers.*—The Committee is concerned about the current and potential future impacts of H5N1 influenza and other biological threats to agriculture, and the needs of producers in protecting livestock from these threats. The Committee directs the Secretary of Agriculture, in coordination with the Department of Health and Human Services, the Environmental Protection Agency, and agricultural producers, to conduct an assessment of pathogen transmission reduction needs in farm facilities that house and process livestock to protect animals and humans from the spread of zoonotic diseases. These structures include, but are not limited to poultry barns, dairy barns and milking parlors, and swine barns. The assessment should determine minimum air quality standards for reducing pathogen transmission among livestock and agricultural workers. The assessment should also identify and detail the methods for enhancing indoor air quality in these facilities and associated costs. The Secretary shall fund this assessment using borrowing authority from the Commodity Credit Corporation. The Secretary shall submit this assessment to Congress no later than 180 days after enactment of this Act, and make the assessment publicly accessible digitally, such as on a website or online portal.

*Poultry Indemnity Payments.*—The Committee directs USDA to coordinate amongst all relevant agencies under its authority to update, and where applicable, develop consistent, easily replicated formulas on an annual basis to estimate market values of livestock and poultry categories for indemnity purposes. In developing and updating these annual values, USDA should ensure that they reflect applicable modern production practices, and relevant livestock and poultry markets so that payments by USDA represent average fair market values for the category of animal that the compensation payment is intended to cover.

*Rangeland Grasshopper and Mormon Cricket Program.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of APHIS' Rangeland Grasshopper and Mormon Cricket Program and includes an increase of \$500,000 to administer this program. APHIS is encouraged to administer these funds based on need and infestation severity rather than on a first-come, first-serve basis due the season variation of grasshopper infestations across the West.

*Roseau Cane.*—The Committee remains concerned with the invasive species scale insect pest that is destroying Roseau cane in the Mississippi River's Delta region along the Gulf of Mexico. An estimated 225,000 acres of wetlands in the Delta have been affected with the die-off, and Roseau cane is important in maintaining a healthy marsh and preventing erosion. The Committee directs APHIS to work with ARS and stakeholders and provides no less than the fiscal year 2025 level to develop an integrated management program for control of the Roseau cane scale insect pest infestation.

*Rotary Fleet.*—The Committee recognizes the increasing demands on the aging APHIS Wildlife Services rotary aircraft fleet to assist the agricultural and livestock sectors. The Committee directs APHIS to submit a report assessing the fleet's current status and



future rotary aircraft needs to operate efficiently and effectively to the Committees on Appropriations of the House and Senate no later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this act.

*Soring.*—The Committee has consistently recognized the need for the equine industry and APHIS to cooperate in order to eliminate the soring of horses. In 2021, the National Academy of Sciences [NAS] recognized the importance of continuing to develop an objective science-based inspection to ensure accuracy and fairness. The Committee directs APHIS to continue swabbing and other proven objective science-based inspection techniques for its horse soring inspection protocol and to address remaining findings of the NAS report as the agency deems warranted.

*Sudden Oak Death.*—The European strain 1 [EU1] and the North American strain 1 [NA1] of the sudden oak death pathogen are major threats to western Douglas-fir/tanoak forests, resulting in quarantine restrictions that threaten U.S. forests and export markets for log shipments and lily bulbs. The Committee recommendation includes no less than the fiscal year 2024 funding level to improve understanding of EU1 and NA1 strains of the sudden oak death pathogen and treatment methods to inform control and management techniques in wildlands.

*Twenty-Eight Hour Law.*—The Committee is concerned that the regular feeding, watering, and rest required, by 49 U.S.C. 80502, to be provided by animal carriers is not being effectively enforced. The Committee still awaits the report on barriers to successful implementation of this law.

*Wildlife Damage Management.*—APHIS is responsible for providing Federal leadership in managing problems caused by wildlife. The Committee provides \$123,500,000 for wildlife damage control to maintain priority initiatives, including preventing the transport of invasive snakes and other harmful species. The Committee provides \$500,000 for the agency to reduce blackbird depredation in the Northern Great Plains.

The Committee maintains support for assistance to catfish producers to help mitigate wildlife depredation, particularly as it pertains to fish-eating and disease-carrying birds. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2025 level for damage management efforts and the development of methods to assist producers in combatting the persistent threat and economic hardship caused by cormorants, pelicans, and other birds.

The Committee recognizes the importance of the National Feral Swine Damage Management Program in reducing adverse ecological and economic impacts caused by feral swine across the country and encourages the use of all approved measures as a force multiplier and to prioritize areas with the most populous swine population.

The Committee directs APHIS to provide within 90 days of enactment of this act, and annually thereafter, a report to include the state, most utilized methods, and most common reasons for lethal removal of beavers on private and Federal land by the APHIS and its partners.

The Committee provides \$29,000,000, an increase of \$1,000,000, for the National Rabies Management Program to fortify existing barriers and advance prevention and eradication efforts.

*Wildlife Services Cost Share.*—The Committee is concerned about the increasing inequitable Federal amount of cost share in cooperative service agreements between APHIS–Wildlife Services and/or political subdivisions of States responsible for Wildlife Service programs that protect agriculture, property, human life, and natural resources. The Committee expects Wildlife Services to strive for an equitable 50/50 cost share to the extent that funding is available to do so.

*Wildlife Services Education and Training.*—The Committee is aware of the wide range of hazardous procedures and materials utilized by APHIS personnel in the conduct of daily duties. In addition, a recent comprehensive study noted the critical need to provide standardized safety training, certification, and database management for tracking to ensure the safest working environment possible. As such, the Committee provides \$2,000,000 within Wildlife Damage Management to maintain a National Training Academy focused on those areas of greatest concern such as pyrotechnics, firearms, hazardous materials, immobilization and euthanasia drugs, pesticides, animal care and handling, land vehicles, watercraft, and zoonotic diseases.

#### BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$1,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	1,000,000

The APHIS appropriation for Buildings and Facilities funds major nonrecurring construction projects in support of specific program activities and recurring construction, alterations, preventive maintenance, and repairs of existing APHIS facilities.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommendation includes an appropriation of \$1,000,000 for buildings and facilities of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

This funding is necessary to allow APHIS to maintain existing facilities and perform critically needed repairs to and replacements of building components, such as heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning on a prioritized basis at APHIS facilities. The Committee notes that due to the environmentally sensitive nature of many APHIS facilities, closure of a facility could result if APHIS is unable to complete the required repairs.

#### AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

##### MARKETING SERVICES

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$222,887,000
Committee recommendation .....	222,887,000

The Agricultural Marketing Service was established by the Secretary of Agriculture on April 2, 1972. AMS carries out programs authorized by more than 50 different statutory authorities, the primary ones being the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621–1627, 1635–1638); the U.S. Cotton Standards Act (7 U.S.C. 51–65); the Cotton Statistics and Estimates Act (7 U.S.C. 471–476); the Tobacco Inspection Act (7 U.S.C. 511–511q); the Perishable Ag-

gricultural Commodities Act (7 U.S.C. 499a–499t); the Egg Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 1031–1056); and section 32 of the act of 1935 (Public Law 74–320, 7 U.S.C. 612c).

Programs administered by this agency include the market news services, standardization, grading, classing, shell egg surveillance services, transportation services, wholesale farmers and alternative market development, grant payments to States for marketing activities, the Federal administration of marketing agreements and orders, commodity purchases, the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (7 U.S.C. 499a–499t), the Plant Variety Protection Act (Public Law 71–325), and market protection and promotion activities.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$222,887,000 for Marketing Services of the Agricultural Marketing Service.

The following table summarizes the Committee's recommendations for marketing services activities:

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Market News .....	35,457	35,457
Shell Egg Surveillance .....	2,656	2,656
Standardization .....	5,356	5,356
Federal Seed Act Program .....	2,445	2,445
Country of Origin Labeling .....	4,872	4,872
Pesticide Data Program .....	15,269	15,269
National Organic Standards .....	22,782	22,782
GSA Rent and DHS Security .....	4,365	4,365
National Bioengineered Food Disclosure .....	2,028	2,028
Transportation and Market Development .....	9,960	9,960
Farmers Market and Local Food Program .....	7,307	7,307
Acer Access and Development .....	6,000	6,000
Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives .....	12,000	12,000
Packers & Stockyards .....	32,631	32,631
Hemp Production Program .....	14,996	14,996
Grain Regulatory .....	19,342	19,342
U.S. Warehouse Activities .....	10,777	10,777
Cattle Contract Library .....	1,000	1,000
Micogrants for Food Security .....	5,000	5,000
International Food Procurement .....	8,644	8,644
<b>Total Marketing Services .....</b>	<b>222,887</b>	<b>222,887</b>
Federal State Marketing Improvement Program		
Total Discretionary Appropriations .....	1,000	1,000
	1,000	1,000

*Cattle Contract Library.*—Smaller cattle producers often find themselves to be price takers in the market for fed cattle and lack the volume of large producers to negotiate unique and advantageous marketing agreements with large meatpackers. The Cattle Contracts Library helps bring transparency into the marketplace.

*Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives.*—The Committee is concerned about the uptake of existing resources directed to dairy farmers for the purpose of mitigating the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza in dairy cows. The Committee urges AMS to direct Commodity Credit Corporation investments into innovative

and existing dairy programs that capture both dairy farmers and dairy processors through the Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives.

*Dairy Sanitary Export Certificate Software.*—The Committee is concerned with the USDA dairy sanitary export certificate program software ATLAS has caused US dairy exporters significant export delays and detentions in foreign ports. USDA is directed to report to the Committee on the status of its improvements to the ATLAS program including reporting on the quantity errors in certificates issued by the end of this fiscal year and to include in such report, status of Department and AMS funding from existing and relevant funds, such as CCC funds, and if necessary, inclusion within the Department's fiscal year 2027 budget request.

*Domestic Shrimp.*—The Committee is concerned that the domestic shrimp fishing and processing industry is on the brink of collapse due to the overproduction and oversupply of imported shrimp to the U.S and global markets at unprecedented levels. The Committee recognizes that this surplus of imported shrimp in U.S. inventory has driven prices offered to U.S. shrimp fishermen to historically low levels that fall below that which can sustain shrimp fishing operations. The Committee is also aware that a substantial portion of the U.S. shrimp fishing fleet remains tied to the dock and many small, family-owned shrimp businesses are going out of business. To help reduce this unprecedented surplus of shrimp in the U.S. market, the Committee encourages AMS to maximize its section 32 program purchases of domestic warm-water shrimp.

*Dry Edible Beans.*—The Committee is aware that dry edible beans are an important part of a nutritious and well-balanced diet. However, the Committee is concerned that dry edible beans have not played an adequate role in addressing nutrition needs under U.S. international food aid programs as well as domestic feeding programs and encourages the Department to enhance the amount and frequency of dry edible bean purchases for use in such programs.

*Equivalency Agreements.*—The Committee is concerned that there have been imports of critical foods, including infant formula, that do not meet equivalency agreements made with other countries. Within 90 days of the enactment of this act, the Committee directs AMS to provide a report to the Committees on Appropriations in the House and Senate that touches on changes to all existing Equivalency Agreements that would need to be made in order to be in compliance with the 2022 Origin of Livestock Rule. The Committee also directs AMS to provide a list within the report to the Committees of infant formula products that do not meet the 2022 Origin of Livestock Rule. To ensure that the industry is compliant with the 2022 Origin of Livestock Rule, AMS is directed to post the report publicly within 30 days of transmitting the report to the Committees and is also directed to provide copies of the report to the Food and Drug Administration and the Customs and Border Protection.

*Honey.*—The Committee directs the department to provide a report on the necessary resources and authorities needed to ensure a fairer market for domestic honey producers and more transparent market for American consumers. The Department is encouraged to collaborate with Customs and Border Protection, the Food and

Drug Administration, and domestic commercial honey producer stakeholders.

*Local Agriculture Market Program.*—The Committee continues to urge the Department to simplify the application and reporting process for the Local Agriculture Market Program. The Committee is aware AMS implemented a turnkey grant application in fiscal year 2023 for Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Grants but that applications were restricted to specific project types, and the list was not inclusive of common needs in direct marketing and intermediary local market settings. The Committee encourages the agency to expand the turnkey application to include other common activities, including vendor and customer outreach activities, farmers market manager staff time, regional food chain coordination, and special purpose equipment.

*Local Meat Processing.*—The Committee recognizes and supports investments in local meat processing. These investments are an opportunity to combat agricultural market concentration and increase market access for American farmers and ranchers. The Committee directs the Department to submit a report to the Committee within 90 days of enactment of this act that includes the total amount of Federal investments made in local meat processing across departmental programs, the current status of plants receiving funding, whether the Department has reviewed any potential sales of plants receiving funding, and, to the extent practicable, an assessment of the economic impact of departmental programs on local meat processing.

*Local Food Procurement.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of strengthening local and regional food systems to enhance food security, support producers, and stimulate rural economies. The Committee directs the Department to work in coordination with State agencies, Tribal governments, local educational authorities, and emergency food providers, including food banks and pantries, to facilitate the use of Federal nutrition and food assistance funds—including but not limited to funds under the Child Nutrition Programs, The Emergency Food Assistance Program [TEFAP] (including TEFAP Fresh Produce Box Program), Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations [FDPIR] and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program [CSFP]—for the direct purchase of food from small and mid-sized local and regional producers. The Committee also directs the Department of Defense Logistics Agency, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service [AMS] and Food and Nutrition Service to review current practices to identify opportunities to increase local food purchases in the DoD Fresh and the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. The committee encourages the Department to use best value evaluation criteria, other flexibilities within the Federal Acquisition Regulations [FAR] including local set-asides, to add language to the AMS agency supplement to the FAR prioritizing local purchasing, and to streamline administrative requirements to ensure highest quality food purchases and opportunities for local and regional procurement. USDA should collaborate with State agencies (and their associations) to share local purchasing best practices and to ensure that institutions and providers can easily identify and procure from local producers. The Committee further directs USDA (Economic Research Service in co-

operation with the Office of Contracts and Procurement, Agricultural Marketing Service and Food and Nutrition Service) to report within 180 days of enactment of this act on barriers to local procurement, pathways to overcome the barriers, and recommendations to enhance access to and affordability of locally grown foods across nutrition assistance programs.

*Meat Pricing Concerns.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of ensuring that meat pricing mechanisms are transparent and provide reliable price discovery for cattle producers and the rest of the supply chain nationwide. The Committee notes that the Nation's food supply chain is an issue of national security, and emphasizes that our farmers, ranchers, processors, and consumers must have a fair and competitive marketplace. The Committee directs the Secretary, to analyze these issues including economic disruptions associated with public health emergencies.

*Micro-Grants for Food Security.*—The Committee urges AMS to administer the Micro-Grants for Food Security program in a manner that will ensure that low-income, disadvantaged, and minority individuals are able to submit applications and receive funding for projects such as animal processing and slaughter facilities, including reindeer herders, greenhouses, and hydroponic growing facilities that would increase the amount and quality of locally produced foods. When practicable, the Committee directs AMS to waive or amend how it applies the regulatory requirements of 2 CFR 200.206, 200.313, 200.328, and 200.329 to ensure that this program addresses food insecurity challenges.

*National Organic Program.*—The Committee recognizes that organic regulations are a valuable market development tool for U.S. agriculture and provides no less than the fiscal year 2025 level for the National Organic Program [NOP]. A healthy market for organic products requires a clear product distinction backed by a trusted, verified, and consistently enforced label. The Committee also recognizes that regular updates to the regulations are crucial. The Committee directs USDA to provide all resources needed for the NOP to deliver the strongest possible oversight before allowing the USDA organic seal to be granted to domestic and international operations and products, including a continued focus on proactive risk-based investigations and oversight, enhanced training for certifiers, and practice standards development. In addition, within 60 days of enactment of this act, AMS is directed to provide a full report outlining the breakdown of the National Organic Program's key expenditures such as compliance and enforcement activities, practice standards development, and technology upgrades.

*Native American Foods and Tourism.*—The Committee recognizes that enhanced Native American tourism creates important job opportunities in Native American communities while showcasing their heritage, food, traditions, history, and continuing vitality. The Committee encourages USDA to support the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act (Public Law 114–221) by prioritizing projects that market, promote, or expand Native American foods, markets, and enterprises.

*Organic Dairy.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of consumer confidence in the integrity of the USDA Organic Seal and notes the work that USDA has done to increase training and cer-

tifier consistency with respect to dairy operations. The Committee directs AMS to seek strong enforcement of organic dairy production standards and resolve significant variations in standard interpretation that exists among organic certifiers, as well as among organic dairy producers. AMS shall continue to conduct critical risk-based oversight, particularly for large, complex dairy operations, as it has in the past four fiscal years.

*Organic Data Initiative.*—The Committee recognizes that accurate data for the production, pricing, and marketing of organic products is essential to maintaining stable markets, identifying fraud, creating risk management tools, tracking production trends, and increasing exports. Therefore, the Committee directs the Secretary to require mandatory reporting on an annual basis by accredited certifying agents on aggregate production areas certified by crop and location in order to accurately calculate organic acreage and yield estimates on a country-by-country basis.

*Pecans.*—The Committee is aware that pecans are nutritious, and value-added markets offer new potential sources of revenue for U.S. pecan producers. The Committee encourages the USDA to support U.S. pecan producers through the development of new domestic and international markets for pecan and pecan-based products including but not limited to shelling and packing, pressing for oil, bioprocessing, and usage as ingredients in other products.

*Regional Food Business Centers.*—The Committee recognizes the important role the North Coasts Region plays for various seafood products in the National and regional food systems across the country and supports efforts to strengthen supply chains and increase and diversify market access for North Coasts Region industry partners, who are responsible for seventy percent of the Nation's seafood. Therefore, the Committee encourages the Secretary to explore the establishment of a North Coasts Regional Food Business Center and where practicable, direct the existing Regional Food Business Centers to identify ways to strengthen seafood networks, increase market access for small and mid-sized food entities, and improve the viability of the industry and its products.

*Soil Health.*—The National Organic Standards require farmers that voluntarily chose to certify their operation as meeting organic practices to use farming practices that improve soil health, such as crop rotations, cover cropping, and pasture-based livestock practices. By improving soil health, these farming practices also increase the carbon sequestration potential of the soil and improve the farm's resilience to extreme weather events and patterns. To maximize the climate benefits of organic agriculture, the Committee urges the National Organic Program to increase enforcement efforts to ensure full compliance with the soil health and pasture requirements of USDA organic standards.

*Sugar Inspection.*—In carrying out molasses testing required by the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2025, the Committee is concerned that progress is delayed. To ensure timely determinations of whether there is circumvention of the Tariff Rate Quotas on imported sugar and sugar containing products, the Committee directs that AMS methodology and protocols specifically evaluate whether product entering the United States under Heading 1703.20, HTSUS, as molasses, or Heading 1702.90.40, HTSUS, as sugar

syrup blends, fails to meet any one of the following criteria: derived from sugar cane or beet containing soluble non-sugar solids (excluding any foreign substance that may have been added or developed in the product) greater than 6 percent by weight of the total soluble solids, derived from sugar cane or beet with a Brix value of 78.5 degrees or greater (determined by ICUMSA Method GS4-15 (1994), derived from sugar cane with reducing sugar of 15 percent or greater (determined by ICUMSA Method GS4/3-3 (2007), or derived from sugar beet with a total sugar value of less than 55 percent (determined by ICUMSA Method GS4/3-7 (2011)). Each criterion is a practical means of delineating between proper and improper product entry, and the Committee directs AMS to report the agency's findings based on these criteria to the Committee and appropriate agencies.

*Wild Game Processing Technical Assistance.*—The Committee recognizes the important role of wild game processing in rural food supply chains, especially in the business models of small and very-small processors. The Committee encourages AMS to expand the scope of the existing Meat and Poultry Processing Capacity-Technical Assistance Program to include assistance for processors interested in opening or expanding facilities that conduct custom-exempt wild game processing.

#### LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

Limitation, 2025 .....	\$62,596,000
Committee recommendation .....	62,596,000

The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 (Public Law 97-35) initiated a system of user fees for the cost of grading and classing cotton and tobacco. These activities, authorized under the U.S. Cotton Standards Act (7 U.S.C. 51 et seq.), the Tobacco Inspection Act (7 U.S.C. 511 et seq.), and other provisions of law are designed to facilitate commerce and protect participants in the industry.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends a limitation of \$62,596,000 on administrative expenses of the Agricultural Marketing Service.

#### FUNDS FOR STRENGTHENING MARKETS, INCOME, AND SUPPLY (SECTION 32)

##### (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$21,501,000
Committee recommendation .....	23,880,000

Under section 32 of the act of August 24, 1935, (Public Law 74-320), an amount equal to 30 percent of customs receipts collected during each preceding calendar year and unused balances are available for encouraging the domestic consumption and exportation of agricultural commodities. An amount equal to 30 percent of receipts collected on fishery products is transferred to the Department of Commerce. Additional transfers to the child nutrition programs of the Food and Nutrition Service have been provided in recent appropriations acts.



## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends a transfer from section 32 funds of \$23,880,000 for the formulation and administration of marketing agreements and orders.

The following table reflects the status of this fund for fiscal years 2025–2026:

ESTIMATED TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE AND BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD  
FISCAL YEARS 2025–2026

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Appropriation (30% of Customs Receipts) .....	24,446,809	25,208,991
Less Transfers:		
Food and Nutrition Service .....	– 22,392,516	– 23,040,457
Commerce Department .....	– 345,293	– 413,534
Total, Transfers .....	– 22,737,809	– 23,453,991
Budget Authority, Farm Bill .....	1,657,384	1,755,000
Appropriations Permanently Reduced—Sequestration .....	(85,728)	(87,951)
Appropriation (Previously Unavailable in FY 2025) .....		49,224
Budget Authority, Appropriations Act .....	1,571,656	1,716,273
Less Obligations:		
Child Nutrition Programs (Entitlement Commodities) .....	485,000	485,000
State Option Contract .....	5,000	5,000
Removal of Defective Commodities .....	1,600	2,500
Disaster Relief .....	5,000	5,000
Additional Fruits, Vegetables, and Nuts Purchases .....	206,000	206,00
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program .....	205,000	212,000
Estimated Future Needs .....	605,377	735,942
Total, Commodity Procurement .....	1,512,977	1,651,422
Administrative Funds:		
Commodity Purchase Support .....	37,178	40,971
Marketing Agreements and Orders .....	21,501	23,880
Total, Administrative Funds .....	58,679	64,851
Total Obligations .....	1,571,656	1,716,273

*Section 32 Authorities.*—Under the authority described in clause 3 of 7 U.S.C. 612c, the Secretary is able to direct funds from the section 32 account to increase the purchasing power of producers. This practice has been used on various occasions to provide direct assistance to producers when market forces or natural conditions adversely affect the financial condition of farmers and ranchers. The Committee notes the importance of the ability of the Secretary to utilize this authority but believes that communication between USDA and Congress should be improved when this practice is used. Therefore, the Committee directs the Secretary to provide notification to the Committee in advance of any public announcement or release of section 32 funds under the specific authorities cited above.

## PAYMENTS TO STATES AND POSSESSIONS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$1,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	1,000,000

The Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program is authorized by section 204(b) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621–1627, 1635–1638) and is also funded from appropriations. Matching grants are awarded on a competitive basis to State marketing agencies to identify and test market alternative farm commodities, determine methods of providing more reliable market information, and develop better commodity grading standards. This program has made many types of projects possible, such as electronic marketing and agricultural product diversification. Current projects are focused on the improvement of marketing efficiency and effectiveness and seeking new outlets for existing farm produced commodities. The legislation grants USDA authority to establish cooperative agreements with State departments of agriculture or similar State agencies to improve the efficiency of the agricultural marketing chain. The States perform the work or contract it to others and must contribute at least one-half of the cost of the projects.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$1,000,000 for Payments to States and Possessions for Federal-State marketing projects and activities.

## LIMITATION ON INSPECTION AND WEIGHING SERVICES EXPENSES

Limitation, 2025 .....	\$55,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	55,000,000

The agency provides an official grain inspection and weighing system under the U.S. Grain Standards Act [USGSA] (Public Law 64–190, and official inspection of rice and grain-related products under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621–1627, 1635–1638). The USGSA was amended in 1981 to require the collection of user fees to fund the costs associated with the operation, supervision, and administration of Federal grain inspection and weighing activities.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends a limitation of \$55,000 on inspection and weighing services expenses.

## OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOOD SAFETY

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$1,117,000
Committee recommendation .....	1,117,000

The Office of the Under Secretary for Food Safety provides direction and coordination in carrying out the laws enacted by the Congress with respect to the Department's inspection of meat, poultry, and processed egg products. The Office has oversight and management responsibilities for the Food Safety and Inspection Service [FSIS].

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$1,117,000 for the Office of the Under Secretary for Food Safety.

## FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$1,214,009,000
Committee recommendation .....	1,226,000,000

The major objectives of the FSIS are to ensure that meat and poultry products are wholesome, unadulterated, and properly labeled and packaged, as required by the Federal Meat Inspection Act (Public Law 59–242) and the Poultry Products Inspection Act (Public Law 85–172), as amended; and to provide continuous in-plant inspection to egg processing plants under the Egg Products Inspection Act (Public Law 91–597).

The Food Safety and Inspection Service was established on June 17, 1981, by Secretary's Memorandum No. 1000–1, issued pursuant to Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1953.

The inspection program of the Food Safety and Inspection Service provides in-plant inspection of all domestic plants preparing meat, poultry, or egg products for sale or distribution; reviews foreign inspection systems and establishments that prepare meat or poultry products for export to the United States; and provides technical and financial assistance to States which maintain meat and poultry inspection programs.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$1,226,000,000 for the Food Safety and Inspection Service.

The following table represents the Committee's specific recommendations for the FSIS as compared to the fiscal year 2025 levels:

## FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE SALARIES AND EXPENSES

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Food safety inspection:		
Federal .....	1,089,208	1,085,999
State .....	67,641	82,841
International .....	21,888	21,888
PHDCIS .....	35,272	35,272
Total .....	1,214,009	1,226,000

*Brazilian Beef.*—The Committee urges FSIS to maintain current rates of reinspection tasks for raw beef imports from Brazil and to adjust rates of import inspection as necessary and consistent with import compliance history. The Committee also requests FSIS to continue conducting routine onsite verification audits of the Brazilian inspection system.

*Good Commercial Practices.*—The Committee recognizes that the handling of birds at slaughter according to Good Commercial Practices [GCP] reduces the occurrence of adulterated poultry products

that meet the definition of adulteration in the Poultry Products Inspection Act [PPIA] (21 U.S.C. 453(g)(5)) from entering the marketplace. The Committee directs the USDA to track the GCP verification activities in FSIS' Public Health Information System, which are intended to reduce instances of adulteration.

*Humane Slaughter.*—The Committee directs FSIS to continue to provide annual reports to the Committee on the implementation of objective scoring methods undertaken by FSIS to enforce the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act (Public Law 85–765). The report shall also include whether funding opportunities, including grants and cost share opportunities, exist under current USDA programs and initiatives that can be utilized by producers for the purpose of obtaining and maintaining third-party certification of animal-raising practices.

The Committee further directs FSIS to continue preparation and online publication of the Humane Handling Quarterly Reports, to include the number of humane handling verification procedures performed, the number of administrative enforcement actions taken, time spent on Humane Handling Activities Tracking System activities, and comparisons of these measurements by plant size and FSIS district.

The Committee also directs FSIS to ensure that personnel hired with funding previously provided specifically for Humane Methods of Slaughter Act (Public Law 85–765) enforcement focus their attention on overseeing compliance with humane handling rules for live animals as they arrive and are offloaded and handled in pens, chutes, and stunning areas and that all inspectors receive robust training.

*Non-Ambulatory Livestock.*—The Secretary of Agriculture shall submit to Congress, 90 days after enactment of this act, a report on the scope of non-ambulatory livestock at slaughter establishments; the causes that render livestock non-ambulatory at slaughter establishments; the humane treatment of non-ambulatory livestock at slaughter establishments; the public health threat of non-ambulatory pigs entering the food system, including, at minimum, the impact on public health from pathogens associated with non-ambulatory pigs including, but not limited to Salmonella and Campylobacter.

*State Meat and Poultry Inspection [MPI] Programs.*—The Committee is supportive of MPI Programs and recognizes the key role they play in maintaining the integrity of the Nation's food supply, and as such, the Committee provides an additional \$15,000,000 to ensure that the Federal reimbursement rate is 50 percent. As the Department carries out its responsibilities in administering the MPI programs, the Committee encourages the department to work with participating States to ensure that funds are provided in a timely manner.

## TITLE II

### FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

#### OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$1,527,000
Committee recommendation .....	1,527,000

The Office of the Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation [FPAC] provides direction and coordination in carrying out the laws enacted by the Congress with respect to the Department's commodity programs, farm loans, disaster assistance, crop insurance, natural resources conservation and environment programs, and certain energy programs. The Office has oversight and management responsibilities for the Farm Service Agency [FSA] (including the Commodity Credit Corporation), Risk Management Agency [RMA], and the Natural Resources Conservation Service [NRCS].

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$1,527,000 for the Office of the Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation.

*Communication.*—The Committee is committed to supporting the mission and values of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, including through critical investments to protect our land, water, and soil. The Committee directs NRCS to continue to brief the Committee on ongoing and upcoming initiatives on a monthly basis, as well as resources necessary for continued success of the Service.

*Emergency Conservation Program.*—The Committee is encouraged by the Department's work to provide advance cost-share payments under the emergency conservation loan program and emergency forest restoration program. The committee encourages USDA to further expand advance cost share payments as well as clarify that wildfires which are not caused naturally but the spread of the wildfire is due to natural causes or which are caused by the Federal Government are eligible for the program. Additionally, the Department should explore flexibility in the timeline for utilizing funding to implement necessary conservation work following a disaster.

*Internships.*—The Committee understands the importance of recruiting the next generation of staff for both FSA and NRCS. The Committee directs the Department to provide a report on how interns can be better utilized, including converting interns that work for third-party partners and any statutory or regulatory changes that may be necessary.

*USDA–Customer and Producer Farm Delivery Systems Modernization.*—The Committee directs the Secretary to submit a plan within 60 days of enactment of this act that accelerates the continued implementation and expansion of the Farmers.gov application and Enterprise Data Analytics Platform and Toolset [EDAPT]. De-

spite the continued direction and funding provided by Congress in previous fiscal years for these modernization applications, the Committee is aware that the Farm Service Agency, the Farm Production and Conservation Business Center, and the Office of the Chief Information Officer continue to maintain numerous legacy mission support systems that should be decommissioned and transitioned to applications and mission support services systems that are interoperable, facts-based, data driven, and are provided efficiently, effectively, and professionally with a commitment to excellent customer service for USDA customers, including farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners.

#### FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION BUSINESS CENTER

##### SALARIES AND EXPENSES

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$244,183,000
Committee recommendation .....	238,500,000

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$238,500,000 for the Farm Production and Conservation Business Center.

#### FARM SERVICE AGENCY

The Farm Service Agency was established October 13, 1994, pursuant to the Federal Crop Insurance Reform and Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–354). The FSA administers a variety of activities, such as the commodity price support and production adjustment programs financed by the Commodity Credit Corporation [CCC]; the Conservation Reserve Program [CRP]; the Emergency Conservation Program [ECP]; the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-raised Fish Program [ELAP]; the Commodity Operation Programs, including the warehouse examination function; farm ownership, farm operating, emergency disaster, and other loan programs; and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program [NAP], which provides crop loss protection for growers of many crops for which crop insurance is not available. In addition, FSA currently provides certain administrative support services to the Foreign Agricultural Service [FAS] and RMA.

##### SALARIES AND EXPENSES

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

[In thousands of dollars]

	Appropriations	Transfers from program accounts	Total, FSA, salaries and expenses
Appropriations, 2025 .....	1,209,307	305,803	1,515,110
Committee recommendation .....	1,209,307	305,803	1,515,110

The account Salaries and Expenses, Farm Service Agency, funds the administrative expenses of program administration and other functions assigned to FSA. The funds consist of appropriations and transfers from the CCC export credit guarantees, Food for Peace loans, and Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund program accounts,

as well as miscellaneous advances from other sources. All administrative funds used by FSA are consolidated into one account. The consolidation provides clarity and better management and control of funds and facilitates accounting, fiscal, and budgetary work by eliminating the necessity for making individual allocations and allotments and maintaining and recording obligations and expenditures under numerous separate accounts.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$1,515,110,000 for salaries and expenses of the Farm Service Agency, including a direct appropriation of \$1,209,307,000.

*Acequia Irrigated Land.*—The Committee recognizes that acequias serve as the primary method of irrigation in many rural and underserved communities in New Mexico and that acequias remain an integral aspect of New Mexican cultural identity. Recent changes administered by FSA changed eligibility of drought on farms and ranches irrigated by acequias for the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program [NAP]. Given the Farm Service Agency has historically considered drought on acequia-irrigated land eligible for Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance and the ongoing severe drought conditions in New Mexico and throughout the west, the Committee urges the Department to maintain their position that drought on acequia-irrigated land is an eligible cause of loss for NAP.

*Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act.*—USDA is responsible for monitoring foreign purchases of agricultural land under the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act [AFIDA] and for assessing penalties on entities that have failed to make disclosures as required. The Committee is concerned that USDA failed to assess penalties for a failure to disclose foreign investments in American agricultural land. The Committee directs the Secretary to report to the Committee within 90 days of enactment of this act on USDA's efforts to ensure that foreign investments are being accurately disclosed, including an analysis of any barriers USDA faces in conducting oversight of these purchases and planned steps for overcoming these challenges.

*Agricultural Production and Farms.*—The Committee is concerned about the loss of agricultural production and farms, particularly in New England. Within 180 days of enactment, FSA is directed to provide a report to the Committee on what factors are leading to agricultural production and farm loss in New England, to include historical and projected data on acreage and crops types.

*Aquaculture Training.*—The Committee encourages FSA to dedicate resources to train all county staff on aquaculture farming practices and aquaculture product eligibility for USDA programs, as applicable. The Committee also encourages FSA to dedicate resources to assist county staff with aquaculture data and information collection necessary to inform disaster assistance determinations.

*Disaster Preparedness.*—The Committee recognizes that millions of farm animals die each year due to the effects of adverse weather. The Committee is also aware that veterinary and agricultural trade associations recognize the importance of disaster planning in pre-

venting the extent of livestock deaths. For these reasons, the USDA has been directed by the Committee during several of the past fiscal years to work with producers to develop disaster plans. The Committee directs USDA to provide a report on the number or percentage of producers receiving payments under the Livestock Indemnity Program who have disaster plans in place at the time of loss, and additional activities conducted by the Department to promote disaster planning and ensure that livestock and poultry producers have adequate disaster plans in place to reduce animal deaths and injuries within 90 days of enactment of the act.

*FSA Staffing.*—The Committee commends FSA for the analytical and data-driven work that it has done to identify the appropriate staffing levels at county offices and how to most effectively serve their constituents. The Committee looks forward to continuing to work with FSA on ensuring county offices are staffed accordingly. Within 90 days of enactment of this Act and quarterly thereafter, FSA is directed to brief the Committee on its workload analysis and staffing, and to include planned versus actual hires.

*Information Technology.*—The Committee remains dedicated to ensuring FSA has reliable and functioning IT systems because it is critical that farmers and ranchers have access to the tools they need to succeed. The Committee has invested significant taxpayer dollars to modernize outdated systems and continues to provide resources for this effort. The Committee continues statutory language that allows funds for IT to be obligated only after the Secretary meets certain reporting requirements. The Committee expects the agency to follow the recommendations of the third party IT analysis where applicable. FSA is directed to provide timely updates for future IT needs.

#### STATE MEDIATION GRANTS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$6,500,000
Committee recommendation .....	6,500,000

This program is authorized under title V of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1987 (Public Law 100–233). Originally designed to address agricultural credit disputes, the program was expanded by the Federal Crop Insurance Reform and Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–354) to include other agricultural issues such as wetland determinations, conservation compliance, rural water loan programs, grazing on National Forest System lands, and pesticides. Grants are made to States whose mediation programs have been certified by the FSA. Grants will be solely for operation and administration of the State’s agricultural mediation program.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$6,500,000 for State Mediation Grants.

#### GRASSROOTS SOURCE WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$7,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	7,000,000



This program is intended to assist in the protection of ground-water through State rural water associations.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$7,000,000 for Grassroots Source Water Protection.

#### DAIRY INDEMNITY PROGRAM

##### (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$500,000
Committee recommendation .....	500,000

Under the program, the Department makes indemnification payments to dairy farmers and manufacturers of dairy products who, through no fault of their own, suffer income losses because they are directed to remove their milk from commercial markets due to contamination of their products by registered pesticides. The program also authorizes indemnity payments to dairy farmers for losses resulting from the removal of cows or dairy products from the market due to nuclear radiation or fallout.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of such sums as may be necessary, estimated in fiscal year 2026 to be \$500,000, for indemnity payments to dairy farmers.

#### GEOGRAPHICALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCHERS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$3,500,000
Committee recommendation .....	3,500,000

This program is authorized under Title I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8792). Under the Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment Program for Geographically Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers, the Department offsets a portion of the costs of transporting agricultural inputs and products over long distances for farmers and ranchers outside the contiguous United States that face tremendously high costs for transporting agriculture products and inputs.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$3,500,000 for the Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment Program for Geographically Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers.

#### AGRICULTURAL CREDIT INSURANCE FUND PROGRAM ACCOUNT

##### (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

The Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund Program Account [ACIF] is used to provide direct and guaranteed farm ownership, farm operating, conservation, Indian highly fractioned land, and emergency loans to individuals, as well as the following types of loans to associations: irrigation and drainage, grazing, Indian Tribe land acquisition, and boll weevil eradication.

FSA is also authorized to provide financial assistance to borrowers by guaranteeing loans made by private lenders having a contract of guarantee from FSA as approved by the Secretary of Agriculture and to establish Beginning Farmer and Rancher Individual Development grant accounts.

The following programs are financed through this fund:

*Boll Weevil Eradication Loans.*—Made to assist foundations in financing the operations of the boll weevil eradication programs provided to farmers.

*Emergency Loans.*—Made to producers to aid recovery from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding, other natural disasters, or quarantine. The loans may be used to restore or replace essential property; pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year; pay essential family living expenses; reorganize the farming operation; and refinance certain debts.

*Farm Operating Loans.*—Provide short-to-intermediate term production or chattel credit to farmers who cannot obtain credit elsewhere, to improve their farm and home operations, and to develop or maintain a reasonable standard of living. The term of the loan varies from one to 7 years.

*Farm Ownership Loans.*—Made to borrowers who cannot obtain credit elsewhere to restructure their debts, improve or purchase farms, refinance nonfarm enterprises which supplement but do not supplant farm income, or make additions to farms. Loans are made for 40 years or less.

*Indian Tribe Land Acquisition Loans.*—Made to any Indian Tribe recognized by the Secretary of the Interior or Tribal corporation established pursuant to the Indian Reorganization Act (Public Law 93–638) which does not have adequate uncommitted funds to acquire lands or interest in lands within the Tribe’s reservation or Alaskan Indian community, as determined by the Secretary of the Interior, for use of the Tribe or the corporation or the members thereof.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends a total loan level of \$10,477,388,000 for programs within the Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund Program Account.

The following table reflects the program levels for farm credit programs administered by the Farm Service Agency recommended by the Committee, as compared to the fiscal year 2025 levels:

#### AGRICULTURAL CREDIT PROGRAMS—LOAN LEVELS

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Farm Ownership:		
Direct .....	2,578,667	3,100,000
Guaranteed .....	3,500,000	3,500,000
Farm Operating:		
Direct .....	1,633,000	1,633,000
Guaranteed unsubsidized .....	2,118,491	2,000,000
Emergency Loans .....	30,129	14,388
Indian Tribe Land Acquisition .....	20,000	20,000

## AGRICULTURAL CREDIT PROGRAMS—LOAN LEVELS—Continued

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Conservation Loans:		
Guaranteed .....	150,000	150,000
Indian Highly Fractionated Land Loans .....		
Boll Weevil Eradication .....		60,000
Relending Program .....		
Total, Loan Authorizations .....	10,030,287	10,477,388

The Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (Public Law 101–508) established the program account. Appropriations to this account are used to cover the lifetime subsidy costs associated with the direct loans obligated and loan guarantees committed, as well as for administrative expenses.

The following table reflects the cost of programs under credit reform:

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Farm Ownership:		
Direct .....	50,284	39,370
Farm Operating:		
Direct .....		
Guaranteed unsubsidized .....		
Emergency Loans .....	3,507	1,000
Indian Highly Fractionated Land Loans .....		
Boll Weevil Eradication .....		84
Relending Program .....		
Total, Loan Subsidies .....	53,791	40,454
ACIF Expenses:		
Salaries and Expenses .....	305,803	305,803
Administrative Expenses .....	20,250	20,250
Total, ACIF Expenses .....	326,053	326,053

## RISK MANAGEMENT AGENCY

## SALARIES AND EXPENSES

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$65,637,000
Committee recommendation .....	65,637,000

The Risk Management Agency performs administrative functions relative to the Federal Crop Insurance program that is authorized by the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508), as amended by the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000 [ARPA] (Public Law 106–224), the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–79), and the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–334).

ARPA authorized significant changes in the crop insurance program. This act provides higher government subsidies for producer premiums to make coverage more affordable; expands research and development for new insurance products and under-served areas through contracts with the private sector; and strengthens compliance. Functional areas of risk management are: research and de-

velopment; insurance services; and compliance, the functions of which include policy formulation and procedures and regulations development.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$65,637,000 for Risk Management Agency, Salaries and Expenses.

The Committee recognizes that there are many research priorities that competitive funding may be used to address, including the feasibility of insurance programs to cover business interruption due to integrator bankruptcy and catastrophic loss in the poultry industry. The Committee encourages RMA to support research into these priorities.

*Administrative and Operating Expenses.*—The Committee encourages the RMA to provide an annual inflation adjustment to administrative and operating [A&O] reimbursements and to provide equitable relief for specialty crop policies in a manner similar to a previous adjustment that was initiated without renegotiation of the Standard Reinsurance Agreement.

*Alfalfa.*—The Committee recognizes alfalfa to be an important domestic forage crop valued for nitrogen fixation, soil conservation, crop rotation, and as a natural habitat. From 2004 through 2025, alfalfa acreage has declined 27.8 percent. The Committee encourages RMA to explore the creation of a revenue and/or quality alfalfa crop insurance policy to ensure producers have a safety net that they need to produce this important crop.

*Biofuels.*—The Committee directs the Secretary of Agriculture, within 12 months after the date of the enactment of this act, and in consultation with the Risk Management Agency, the Farm Service Agency, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service, to submit to Congress a written report on how the Department can streamline opportunities for farmers to insure primary and secondary crops with revenue streams resulting from biofuel use, including but not limited to sustainable aviation fuel, with particular reference to carinata, pennycress, camelina, and other oilseeds.

*Crop Insurance in New England.*—The Committee is concerned that growers in New England are underserved by the Federal crop insurance program. The Committee emphasizes RMA's authority to design actuarially sound crop insurance policies that reflect regional differences in growing practices and conditions, as well as crop diversity and marketing practices. The Committee appreciates RMA's decision to convene a working group of New England apple growers to help better inform future policies and encourages RMA to consider convening similar working groups for regional growers of other crops. RMA is directed to report to the Committee within 180 days on its outreach efforts on this issue as well as its plans for additional working groups.

#### NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

The Natural Resources Conservation Service was established pursuant to the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (Public Law 103-354). The NRCS works with conservation districts, watershed groups, and Federal and State agencies to

bring about physical adjustments in land use that will conserve soil and water resources, provide for agricultural production on a sustained basis, and reduce flood damage and sedimentation.

#### CONSERVATION OPERATIONS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$895,754,000
Committee recommendation .....	895,754,000

Conservation operations are authorized by Public Law 74–46 (16 U.S.C. 590a-590f). Activities include:

Conservation Technical Assistance provides assistance to district cooperators and other land users in the planning and application of conservation treatments to control erosion and improve the quantity and quality of soil resources; improve and conserve water; enhance fish and wildlife habitat; conserve energy; improve woodland, pasture, and range conditions; and reduce upstream flooding to protect and enhance the natural resource base.

Resource appraisal and program development ensures that programs administered by the Secretary for the conservation of soil, water, and related resources shall respond to the Nation's long-term needs.

Plant Materials Centers assemble, test, and encourage increased use of plant species which show promise for use in the treatment of conservation problem areas.

Snow Survey and Water Forecasting provides estimates of annual water availability from high mountain snow packs and summer stream flow in the Western States and Alaska. Information is used by agriculture, industry, and cities in estimating future water supplies.

Soil Surveys inventory the Nation's basic soil resources and determine land capabilities and conservation treatment needs. Soil survey publications include interpretations useful to cooperators, other Federal and State agencies, and local organizations.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The following table reflects the Committee's recommendation for the NRCS Conservation Operations, as compared to fiscal year 2025 levels:

#### NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE—CONSERVATION OPERATIONS

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Conservation Operations:		
Conservation Technical Assistance .....	776,495	775,495
Snow Survey and Water Forecasting .....	14,751	16,751
Plant Materials Centers .....	10,751	10,751
Soil Surveys Program .....	86,757	86,757
Urban Agriculture Office .....	7,000	6,000
Total, Conservation Operations .....	895,754	895,754

*Acre-for-Acre Wetlands Mitigation.*—The Secretary is encouraged to use mitigation with the conversion of a natural wetland and equivalent wetlands functions at a ratio which does not exceed 1-to-1 acreage.

*Agricultural Open Burning Alternatives.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of the Environmental Quality Incentive Program [EQIP], which provides Federal funding and technical assistance to farmers throughout the Nation. The Committee urges USDA to prioritize EQIP awards to projects that enable the purchase of equipment to process agricultural woody waste generated from orchard and vineyard removals as an alternative to open burning.

*Bio-Diverse Microbial Soil Health.*—The Committee recognizes that research and data continue to show that improved soil health via bio-diverse microbial soil amendments has a significant positive impact for American farm and ranch lands, supporting an essential domestic asset in a global market. The Committee encourages USDA to support the expanded and continued use of these multi-kingdom biologic soil health solutions across a broad range of Natural Resources Conservation Service programs, including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, to address soil health benefits related to yield increase, advanced root development, input efficiency, improved water efficacy, catastrophic soil damage restoration, and catalysts to other soil health practices such as reduced tillage.

*Code 590.*—The Committee recognizes the need for NRCS to update the Nutrient Management Conservation Practice Standard (Code 590) and related practices to enhance nutrient efficiency and reduce environmental impacts. Scenario #27 under Practice Standard 441 supports manure application via dripline systems and has enabled “SDI, Manure” cost-share programs in California, Oregon, and Washington through EQIP. However, this scenario is not broadly applicable, and the 2-in-5-year Irrigation History Requirement under Standard 441 poses a barrier for non-irrigated farmers, inadvertently encouraging inefficient irrigation solely to qualify for funding. To address this, the Committee encourages USDA to expand eligibility for SDI (subsurface drip irrigation) systems in nutrient management beyond current geographic and operational limits and to incorporate them under Code 590.

*Critical Conservation Areas [CCA].*—The Committee supports CCAs and the collaborative regional approach to address common natural resources goals while maintaining or improving agricultural productivity. The Committee urges NRCS to provide sufficient Conservation Technical Assistance funds to CCAs to address conservation planning backlogs. The Committee also encourages NRCS to leverage all possible resources to identify nutrient loss and reduce runoff to achieve the goals of the 2015 Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan.

*Drought Resilience.*—The Committee applauds the passage of the Colorado River Basin Drought Contingency Plans, appreciates efforts to increase efficiencies, and expects NRCS to utilize all available opportunities to assist producers, irrigators, and irrigation districts in addressing drought resiliency and mitigation while maintaining strong rural and agriculture communities and protecting natural resources. NRCS is expected to prioritize implementation of Drought Contingency Plans, agreements, or programs that conserve surface or ground water, improve drought resiliency, and ad-

dress current and anticipated conservation needs and drought-related resource concerns.

Furthermore, the Committee encourages NRCS to enter into additional cooperative agreements with the Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas program to develop additional state or region specific healthy soil and water management best practice guides to support drought resilience and soil health in the western United States.

*Fencing.*—The Committee directs the agency to explore ways to maximize assistance to producers with wildlife exclusion fencing within the authority provided by the Environmental Quality Incentive Program.

*Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative.*—The Committee provides \$10,000,000 for the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (16 U.S.C. 3839bb), of which \$8,000,000 shall be provided through State allocations as competitive grants to diverse partnerships, including socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and their organizations, to provide technical assistance to producers for grazing planning and implementation, conferences and other education, demonstrations, producer networks, workforce training, research, and outreach projects to improve agricultural resilience. NRCS is directed to provide the remaining \$2,000,000 through a cooperative agreement with a national grazing lands conservation coalition to establish diverse State-based coalitions and to undertake grazing education.

*Interagency Coordination.*—The Committee directs the Natural Resources Conservation Service to work with the Bureau of Reclamation to expand interagency coordination of Federal investments in communities that need help addressing water conservation and drought resilience issues.

Additionally, the Committee encourages NRCS to work more closely with the Fish and Wildlife Service for all volunteer programs that promote fish and wildlife conservation efforts, through cooperative agreements, to continue to provide free technical and financial assistance to landowners, managers, tribes, corporations, schools, and nonprofits interested in improving wildlife habitat on their land. Both agencies should continue to collaborate on streamlining ESA listings and consultations especially for large-ranged species and for geographies where multiple listed species overlap in their ranges.

*Land Grants and Acequias.*—The Committee recognizes that section 2304(e) of Public Law 115–334 allows acequias and land grant mercedes to apply directly to the Environmental Quality Incentives Program [EQIP], which provides Federal funding and technical assistance to farmers throughout the Nation. The Committee appreciates that there are hundreds of acequias and dozens of land grants in New Mexico that can now gain direct access to this important conservation program. The Committee urges USDA to develop EQIP guidance that ensures timely input from local communities, including listening sessions with land grants and acequias and directs NRCS to update the Committee on these efforts within 90 days of enactment of this Act.

*Migratory Big Game Initiative.*—The Committee recognizes that working farms and ranches can provide important migratory habi-

tat for big game and other wildlife species and commends NRCS and FSA on their collaboration with State Governments and other partners to conserve these important working lands. The innovative application of Grassland CRP and EQIP in tandem is especially important. Leveraging the unique payments, cost-share, and technical assistance that these programs provide against one another-as is being done through the USDA Migratory Big Game Initiative in Wyoming, Montana and Idaho-provides expanded support and management flexibility for producers stewarding wildlife habitat while keeping lands in production. The NRCS and FSA are encouraged to cooperate in expanding this innovative model to other States. The Committee directs NRCS to submit a report to the Committee within 90 days of enactment of this act on the progress made in implementing the Migratory Big Game Initiative, outlining plans for expanding the Migratory Big Game Initiative into additional States, and identifying barriers to achieving the goals outlined by the initiative.

*National Resources Inventory.*—In reinstating the National Resources Inventory in Alaska, the Committee expects NRCS to take into account sample design, data collection software, and data processing capability in order to collect and produce scientifically credible information on the status, condition, and trends of Alaska's lands, soils, waters, and related resources.

*Private Land Conservation.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of providing private land owners with ready access to the many Federal, State, and local government and private resources available to support conservation efforts on private lands. The Committee directs NRCS to implement a multi-year cooperative agreement with appropriate funding support to an organization that can make conservation solutions and best practices accessible daily to private land owners. This organization should also support efforts to conserve the lesser-prairie chicken and implement carbon sequestration conservation programs nationwide.

*Soil Health.*—The Committee recognizes that improving soil health on agricultural lands is key to achieving both meaningful conservation and economic benefits for producers. The Committee is pleased to see strong stakeholder interest in the new on-farm conservation innovation trials to test new or innovative conservation approaches and the soil health demonstration trial, which provides incentives to producers to implement practices that improve soil health and increase carbon levels in the soil. The Committee encourages the Secretary to dedicate more technical assistance funds to establish standard protocols for measuring and testing carbon levels to evaluate gains in soil health that will help producers to create positive economic, environmental, and social outcomes through ecosystem service markets. The Committee believes the Secretary should provide additional technical assistance related to healthy soil planning, soil carbon sequestration, and conservation activity planning. NRCS is urged to support the expansion of existing State soil health programs and to assist interested States in establishing new State soil health programs.

*SNOTEL.*—The Committee continues to be concerned by documented changes in winter weather across the country, and the impact of those changes on local ecologies and economies. The Com-



mittee continues to fund the NRCS Snow Telemetry Network and provides an additional \$2,000,000 to complete a multi-phased feasibility study for SNOTEL in the Northeast that includes regional collaboration with State agencies, land-grant universities, non-governmental organizations, private landowners, and private industries and to begin implementation of the Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting Program to serve the Northeastern United States. The Secretary is directed to brief the Committee on next steps once the feasibility study is completed.

*Streamlined Conservation Planning.*—The Committee directs NRCS to develop a streamlined conservation planning and application process for small acreage operations to reduce the time and effort required by both the applicant and local NRCS staff to process conservation program applications.

*Technical Assistance.*—The Committee directs NRCS to maintain a record of total technical assistance dollars for the past 3 years and annually in the future and to provide the data to the Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture and the Committee on Agriculture Nutrition and Forestry. This report should differentiate between mandatory and discretionary allocations.

*Technical Service Providers.*—The Committee urges NRCS to re-evaluate the current matching requirements for the Technical Service Provider program supporting State and Tribal soil health programs.

*Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Grants.*—It is the Committee's understanding that grant recipients may offer sub-awards to agricultural producers so long as they meet relevant regulatory requirements. The committee supports this usage of grant funds and encourages the agency to inform potential applicants of this approved use in all relevant application materials using plain language.

*Virtual Fencing Technologies.*—The Committee supports further investments in research regarding the positive impacts and benefits of virtual fencing compared to traditional fencing on grazing lands. The Committee directs the Natural Resources Conservation Service to compile all available research data and submit a report, within 90 days of enactment of this act, on the positive impacts of precision agriculture grazing technologies, including virtual fencing, to improve soil health, grazing outcomes, and profitability.

*Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program.*—The Committee recognizes the important role of the Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program [VPA–HIP] in creating and enhancing fish and wildlife habitat and addressing a major barrier to hunting and fishing participation: lack of access to quality places to hunt and fish, including lakes, streams, wetlands, grasslands, forests, and agricultural land. VPA–HIP uses a locally led, voluntary framework to incentivize willing private landowners to allow access for wildlife dependent recreation. This stimulates rural economies by increasing hunting and fishing participation and enhances outdoor recreational opportunities nationwide. Recognizing this, the Natural Resources Conservation Service is encouraged to expedite the distribution of any funds allocated to this program and to support program continuity by issuing 5-year grant awards.

*Western States Conservation Partnership Initiative.*—The Committee recognizes the value of collaborative, locally-led conservation practices and remains concerned about the ongoing extreme drought and related water issues in the American West. NRCS is encouraged to explore the creation of a partnership initiative, similar to the recently created Chesapeake Bay States' Partnership Initiative, to allow Western States and partners to leverage financial and technical assistance to address regional water issues and help build resilience to drought. Within 90 days of enactment of this act, NRCS is directed to brief the Committee on the feasibility of such an initiative, as well as efforts undertaken to this end.

*Western Water and Working Lands.*—The Committee welcomes additional progress in operationalizing Western Water and Working Lands Framework for Conservation Action, and encourages NRCS to dedicate financial and technical assistance resources to support the framework, with a priority on projects with multiple benefits. The Secretary is directed to keep the Committee apprised of progress toward this end, beginning with a briefing 90 days after enactment of this act.

*White Oak Initiative.*—White oak forests are critical for wildlife, biodiversity, and forest products, and without swift action by private landowners and land management agencies, there will be a significant decline of white oak forests in the future. The Committee commends NRCS for its work to encourage white oak conservation and promote white oak reforestation practices and encourages NRCS to expand and coordinate these efforts across its programs with the U.S. Forest Service.

*Wildlife Habitat on Private Lands.*—The Committee recognizes that conservation of wildlife habitat on private lands is essential for the recovery of many threatened and endangered species. While Federal programs that provide direct conservation assistance can be important contributors to species recovery efforts, such programs might not be available to, or appropriate for, all private landowners. Private landowners interested in habitat conservation must be empowered with access to the full range of conservation resources that exist across the Federal Government, State and local governments, non-profit organizations, and private entities. The Committee encourages NRCS to provide grants to, or enter into cooperative agreements with, non-profit organizations with expertise and experience in amalgamating and providing public access to information and resources pertaining to the conservation of wildlife habitat on private lands.

*Working Lands for Wildlife.*—The Committee reminds NRCS that supporting wildlife habitat is an important part of its mission, and encourages NRCS to continue expanding the Working Lands for Wildlife [WLFW] Initiative. The Committee directs NRCS to dedicate sufficient staff positions to WLFW, and to coordinate with the Farm Service Agency on WLFW. The Committee further directs the Under Secretary of Farm Production and Conservation to provide a report to the Committee within 120 days of enactment of this act on the current activities and expansion of WLFW, including identification of barriers or challenges to further expansion in areas such as western migratory big game, northeastern deciduous forests, Southern pines, SE aquatics, and overall habitat

connectivity across framework geographies. The report should cover work within existing biome frameworks and identify a path towards expanding to new biomes in the United States where priority resource concerns are identified.

#### WATERSHED AND FLOOD PREVENTION OPERATIONS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$14,650,000
Committee recommendation .....	52,360,000

The Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (Public Law 83–566) (16 U.S.C. 1000–1005, 1007–1009) provides for cooperation between the Federal Government and the States and their political subdivisions in a program to prevent erosion, floodwater, and sediment damages in the watersheds or rivers and streams and to further the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water and the conservation and proper utilization of land in authorized watersheds.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$52,360,000 for the Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations Program [WFPO], of which the Committee provides \$32,360,000 for congressionally directed projects, as specified in the table at the end of the report, for new and ongoing watershed and flood prevention activities.

The Committee recognizes the critical challenges facing rural water resource management and protection and supports needed investments in watershed operations. These Federal-State-local partnerships are uniquely positioned to identify critical watershed protection and flood prevention needs in rural communities and implement projects that deliver multiple streams of benefits for homes, businesses, transportation infrastructure, and natural resources. In selecting projects for funding, the Committee expects the agency to balance the needs of addressing the project backlog, remediation of existing structures, and new projects.

*Congressionally Directed Spending [CDS].*—The Committee has provided CDS for certain activities and locations under Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations. While the Committee has provided the funding, recipients of CDS are still required to apply for the funding and must meet all statutory and regulatory requirements. The Committee expects the agency to review the applications and fund projects in the same manner as in previous years.

*Multiple Benefit Projects.*—The Committee is concerned with the funding distribution of Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations, in particular NRCS' resistance to supporting drought resiliency and mitigation in the western United States. Therefore, the Committee continues to support funding for irrigation modernization projects that provide multiple benefits which are primarily found in the West, including but not limited to reduction of drought impact, improvement of water quality or in-stream flow, off-channel renewable energy production, and increased fish or wildlife habitat. NRCS is directed to keep the Committee apprised of streamlining and modernization efforts for the watershed planning process, and of efforts to coordinate with stakeholders and other agencies to en-

sure that this program is utilized in an efficient and equitable manner to maximize its effect.

*Technical Assistance Flexibility.*—The Committee directs the Secretary to provide greater flexibility to State Conservationists to be able to utilize technical assistance dedicated for certain WFPO funds for administration and planning Statewide for all WFPO projects.

#### WATERSHED REHABILITATION PROGRAM

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$1,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	1,000,000

The Watershed Rehabilitation Program account provides for technical and financial assistance to carry out rehabilitation of structural measures, in accordance with section 14 of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act, approved August 4, 1954 (16 U.S.C. 1012, U.S.C. 1001, et seq.), as amended by section 313 of Public Law 106–472, November 9, 2000, and by section 2803 of Public Law 110–246.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$1,000,000 for the Watershed Rehabilitation Program.

The Committee recognizes the large backlog of community infrastructure projects eligible for financial and technical assistance from the Watershed Rehabilitation Program to address safety concerns, public health, and environmental impacts of aging dams. NRCS is urged to prioritize the rehabilitation of dams that pose the greatest risk to public safety.

## CORPORATIONS

## FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE CORPORATION FUND

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$14,581,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	14,264,000,000

The Federal Crop Insurance Act, as amended by the Federal Crop Insurance Reform Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–354), authorizes the payment of expenses, which may include indemnity payments; loss adjustment; delivery expenses; program-related research and development; startup costs for implementing this legislation, such as studies, pilot projects, data processing improvements, and public outreach; and related tasks and functions.

All program costs, except for Federal salaries and expenses, are mandatory expenditures subject to appropriation.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of such sums as may be necessary, estimated to be \$14,264,000,000 in fiscal year 2026, for the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation Fund.

## COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION FUND

The Commodity Credit Corporation is a wholly owned Government corporation created in 1933 to stabilize, support, and protect farm income and prices; to help maintain balanced and adequate supplies of agricultural commodities, including products, foods, feeds, and fibers; and to help in the orderly distribution of these commodities. CCC was originally incorporated under a Delaware charter and was reincorporated June 30, 1948, as a Federal corporation within USDA by the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (Public Law 80–806), approved June 29, 1948.

The Commodity Credit Corporation engages in buying, selling, lending, and other activities with respect to agricultural commodities, their products, food, feed, and fibers. Its purposes include stabilizing, supporting, and protecting farm income and prices; maintaining the balance and adequate supplies of selected commodities; and facilitating the orderly distribution of such commodities. In addition, the Corporation makes available materials and facilities required in connection with the storage and distribution of such commodities. The Corporation also disburses funds for sharing of costs with producers for the establishment of approved conservation practices on environmentally sensitive land and subsequent rental payments for such land for the duration of CRP contracts.

Corporation activities are primarily governed by the following statutes: the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (Public Law 80–806), as amended; the Agricultural Act of 1949 (Public Law 81–439), as amended (1949 Act); the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 (Public Law 75–430), as amended (the 1938 Act); the Food Security Act of 1985 (Public Law 99–198), as amended (1985 Act); the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–246); the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–79); and the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–334).

Management of the Corporation is vested in a board of directors, subject to the general supervision and direction of the Secretary of

Agriculture, who is an ex officio director and chairman of the board. The board consists of seven members, in addition to the Secretary, who are appointed by the President of the United States with the advice and consent of the Senate. Officers of the Corporation are designated according to their positions in USDA.

The activities of the Corporation are carried out mainly by the personnel and through FSA facilities and FSA State and county committees. The Foreign Agricultural Service, the General Sales Manager, other agencies and offices of the Department, and commercial agents are also used to carry out certain aspects of the Corporation's activities.

Under Public Law 87-155 (15 U.S.C. 713a-11, 713a-12), annual appropriations are authorized for each fiscal year, commencing with fiscal year 1961. These appropriations are to reimburse the Corporation for net realized losses.

#### REIMBURSEMENT FOR NET REALIZED LOSSES

##### (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$13,863,086,000
Committee recommendation .....	13,491,380,000

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of such sums as may be necessary, estimated in fiscal year 2026 to be \$13,491,380,000, for the payment to reimburse the Commodity Credit Corporation for reimbursement for net realized losses.

*CRP Wetland Restoration and Wildlife Enhancement.*—The Committee notes that agricultural commodity crops, if left unharvested, may help reduce degradation of wetlands and improve sediment trapping, surface and ground water supply, erosion control, and wildlife habitat while providing winter food for waterfowl and other wildlife. The Committee directs CCC, within 60 days of enactment of this act, to amend its program policies and guidelines for CRP conservation practices CP23 and CP23A, to provide that current and future participants are permitted to plant, but not harvest, agricultural commodity crops as wildlife food plots on up to 10 percent of the enrolled land to enhance waterfowl and upland bird food and habitat.

#### HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT

##### (LIMITATION ON EXPENSES)

Limitation, 2025 .....	\$15,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	15,000,000

The CCC's hazardous waste management program is intended to ensure compliance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (Public Law 96-510) and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (Public Law 94-580). The CCC funds operations and maintenance costs as well as site investigation and cleanup expenses. Investigative and cleanup costs associated with the management of CCC hazardous waste are also paid from USDA's hazardous waste management appropriation.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends a limitation of \$15,000,000 for the Commodity Credit Corporation's hazardous waste management program.

## TITLE III

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

The Federal Crop Insurance Reform and Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–354) abolished the Farmers Home Administration, Rural Development Administration, and Rural Electrification Administration and replaced those agencies with the Rural Housing and Community Development Service, (currently, the Rural Housing Service), Rural Business and Cooperative Development Service (currently, the Rural Business-Cooperative Service), and Rural Utilities Service and placed them under the oversight of the Under Secretary for Rural Economic and Community Development, (currently, Rural Development [RD]). These agencies deliver a variety of programs through a network of State and field offices.

## OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$1,620,000
Committee recommendation .....	1,620,000

The Office of the Under Secretary for Rural Development provides direction and coordination in carrying out laws with respect to the Department's rural economic and community development activities. The Office has oversight and management responsibilities for the Rural Housing Service [RHS], Rural Business-Cooperative Service [RBS], and the Rural Utilities Service [RUS].

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$1,620,000 for the Office of the Under Secretary for Rural Development.

*PAWS Act.*—The Committee directs the Secretary of Agriculture to continue coordinating with the Departments of Justice, Housing and Urban Development, and Health and Human Services to efficiently implement the grant program for providing emergency and transitional shelter options for domestic violence survivors with companion animals.

*Persistent Poverty Areas.*—The Committee supports targeted investments in impoverished areas, particularly in persistent poverty counties, and directs the Department to complete the report requested on this matter, which is now several years overdue. The report shall include both the historic data requested in the original directive as well as data for fiscal years 2025 and 2026.

*Substantially Underserved Trust Area [SUTA].*—The Committee directs Rural Development to define the term ‘substantially underserved trust area’ in the State of Hawaii to include land located within the same county as a community located on trust lands as defined in section 3765 of title 38, United States Code. The term ‘substantially underserved trust area’ means a community in trust land (as defined in section 3765 of title 38, United States Code) with respect to which the Secretary determines has a high need for the benefits of an eligible program. SUTA related investments within the same county as a community located on trust lands must primarily benefit Native Hawaiians.



RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
SALARIES AND EXPENSES  
(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Appropriation .....	351,087	351,087
Transfer from:		
Rural Housing Insurance Fund Loan Program Account .....	412,254	412,254
Rural Electrification and Telecommunications Program Account .....	33,270	33,270
Rural Development Loan Program Account .....	4,468	4,468
Total, Rural Development salaries and expenses .....	801,079	801,079

These funds are used to administer the loan and grant programs of RHS, RBS, and RUS, including reviewing applications, making and collecting loans, providing technical assistance and guidance to borrowers, and assisting in extending other Federal programs to people in rural areas.

Under the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (Public Law 101–508), administrative costs associated with loan programs are appropriated to the program accounts. Appropriations to the salaries and expenses account will be for costs associated with grant programs.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends \$801,079,000 for salaries and expenses of Rural Development, including a direct appropriation of \$351,087,000.

*Field Office Analysis.*—The Committee directs Rural Development to complete a comprehensive analysis of their field offices. This analysis shall include an initial data pull of all field offices by county and the number of employees working in each office, as well as which offices are co-located with FSA and NRCS. Rural Development shall brief the Committee within 60 days of enactment of this act on this initial analysis. Following this initial analysis, Rural Development shall conduct an analysis in the same manner as FSA has done.

*Quarterly Reviews.*—The Committee directs the Department to continue to provide quarterly briefings to the Committees and to send reports ahead of the briefings covering the following topics: information technology report with updates on retiring legacy systems, making improvements to existing systems, and moving programs away from paper-based applications; staffing report that breaks out staffing by program, including planned versus actual hiring by pay period; a commitment and obligation report; and Congressionally Directed Spending obligation report. The quarterly reports should also include key operational metrics to ensure the Committee receives a complete picture of how RD is implementing its programs and using its funding to do so.

## RURAL HOUSING SERVICE

The Rural Housing Service was established under the Federal Crop Insurance Reform and Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–354).

## RURAL HOUSING INSURANCE FUND PROGRAM ACCOUNT

## (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

Appropriations, 2025 (budget authority) .....	\$565,858,000
Committee recommendation (budget authority) .....	612,206,000

This fund was established in 1965 (Public Law 89–117) pursuant to section 517 of title V of the Housing Act of 1949 (Public Law 87–171). This fund may be used to insure or guarantee rural housing loans for single-family homes, rental and cooperative housing, farm labor housing, and rural housing sites. Rural housing loans are made to construct, improve, alter, repair, or replace dwellings and essential farm service buildings that are modest in size, design, and cost. Rental housing insured loans are made to individuals, corporations, associations, trusts, or partnerships to provide low-cost rental housing and related facilities in rural areas. These loans are repayable in terms up to 30 years. The Multi-family Housing Preservation and Revitalization Program [MPR] includes revitalization tools for maintenance of existing units. The Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (Public Law 101–508) established the Rural Housing Insurance Fund [RHIF] program account. Appropriations to this account will be used to cover the lifetime subsidy costs associated with the direct loans obligated and loan guarantees committed in fiscal year 2026, as well as for administrative expenses.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$199,952,000, excluding the transfer of funds, for the Rural Housing Insurance Fund Program Account.

The following table presents the loan subsidy levels as compared to the 2025 levels:

## RURAL HOUSING INSURANCE FUND PROGRAM ACCOUNT

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Loan Levels:		
Single-Family Housing (sec. 502):		
Direct .....	715,932	1,000,000
Direct Tribal Relending Pilot .....	4,633	5,000
Guaranteed .....	25,000,000	25,000,000
Housing repair (sec. 504) .....	20,271	25,000
Direct rental housing (sec. 515) .....	47,138	50,000
Guaranteed rental housing (sec. 538) .....	400,000	400,000
Site development loans (sec. 524) .....	5,470	5,000
Credit sales of acquired property .....	10,000	10,000
Self help land development loans (sec. 523) .....	3,697	5,000
Farm labor housing loans (sec. 514) .....	13,473	15,000
Total, loan levels .....	26,220,614	26,515,000

## RURAL HOUSING INSURANCE FUND PROGRAM ACCOUNT—Continued

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Loan Subsidies and Grants:		
Single-Family Housing (sec. 502):		
Direct .....	84,480	130,600
Direct Tribal Relending Pilot .....	2,288	2,469
Housing repair (sec. 504) .....	4,338	4,333
Direct rental housing (sec. 515) .....	18,662	15,130
Site development loans (sec. 524) .....	477	502
Self help land development loans (sec. 523) .....	637	657
Farm labor housing loans (sec. 514) .....	5,222	4,761
Farm labor housing grants (sec. 516) .....	5,500	7,500
Multi-Family housing revitalization demonstration .....	32,000	34,000
Total, loan subsidies and grants .....	153,604	199,952
Administrative Expenses .....	412,254	412,254
Total, loan subsidies and administrative expenses .....	565,858	612,206

*Fair Housing Protections.*—The Committee supports efforts to strengthen the protections of the Fair Housing Act, but understands that more action is needed to ensure these protections reach every community. The Committee is still awaiting information on what resources are needed to ensure Rural Development has the resources to collaborate with the Department of Housing and Urban Development in order to conduct outreach and raise awareness of the rights and protections under the Fair Housing Act for all protected classes.

*Farm Labor Housing.*—The Committee urges the Rural Housing Service [RHS] to release farm labor housing funding announcements on an annual basis and expects RHS to increase consultation with stakeholders.

*Multifamily Housing Technical Assistance.*—The Committee provides \$2,000,000 for the multifamily housing technical assistance pilot and directs the Department to prioritize maturing mortgages. The Committee intends for this technical assistance to assist in preservation beyond just non-profit transfer deals, including for maturing properties looking to decouple their mortgage and rental assistance.

*Relending Program.*—The Committee provides \$5,000,000 in loan level for the Section 502 Direct Tribal Relending Pilot, and to the extent practicable, encourages the Rural Housing Service to expand the current pilot to the Southwest and to Native CDFIs that are partnered with Regional Housing Authorities which receive block grant funds under Public Law 104–330. The Committee recognizes that there is a tremendous need for safe and affordable housing in American Indian and Alaska Native communities, and Native American CDFIs have deep ties to the local communities they serve, and are better equipped to more effectively reach potential homebuyers.

The Committee directs the Secretary to allow Tribally Designated Housing Entities [TDHEs] and other entities, such as Native Community Development Financial Institutions [NCDIFIs], to act as intermediary lenders for the purposes of the demonstration program.

*Section 502 Manufactured Home Loans.*—The Committee directs USDA to continue to update Section 502 procedures and regulations to clearly allow for Section 502 home loans to be made to finance manufactured homes sited in resident-owned communities, and to brief the Committee on its work to do so within 90 days of enactment of this act.

*Section 523 and 524 Site Development Loans.*—The Committee recognizes the extreme need for more housing in many rural areas across the country and believes the changes made to extend the term of Section 523 and 524 site development loans in the Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations bill could help meet that demand. The Committee directs the Department to work to support rural housing stakeholders in understanding and utilizing the revised loans and to brief the Committee on any changes to demand for Section 523 and 524 loans within 180 days of enactment of this act.

*Single Family Housing Program Access.*—The Committee is concerned that there are unnecessary impediments facing individuals who utilize Single Family Housing Direct Loans and the Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program to purchase homes or property in rural areas. The Committee reminds the Department that efficient review and approval of these applications is essential to the success of these programs, especially in the current housing market. Additionally, the Committee directs the Department to submit a report, within 60 days of enactment, on the current appraisal requirements for these homes and how they compare to requirements used by the Department of Housing and Urban Development or the Department of Veterans Affairs.

*Tribal Property Valuation Project.*—The Committee directs the Secretary to increase outreach to Tribal, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian communities to increase awareness and utilization of the 502 Guaranteed Loans Tribal Property Valuation Project. The Committee directs the Secretary to report to Congress before the pilot program is terminated, including on the pilot program's impacts on breaking down barriers in lending on Tribal lands and in assisting more eligible very low to moderate income applicants seeking to purchase or rehabilitate affordable housing on Tribal lands.

#### RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$1,642,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	1,715,000,000

Rental assistance is authorized under section 521(a)(2) of the Housing Act of 1949 (Public Law 87–171). The objective of the program is to reduce rents paid by low-income families living in RHS-financed rental projects and farm labor housing projects. Under this program, low-income tenants will contribute the higher of: (1) 30 percent of monthly adjusted income; (2) 10 percent of monthly income; or (3) designated housing payments from a welfare agency.

Payments from the fund are made to the project owner for the difference between the tenant's payment and the approved rental rate established for the unit.

The program is administered in tandem with RHS section 515 rural rental housing program and the farm labor loan and grant programs. Priority is given to existing projects for rental units oc-

cupied by over-burdened low-income families and projects experiencing financial difficulties beyond the control of the owner.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$1,715,000,000 for the Rental Assistance Program. Housing vouchers continue to be addressed in the Rural Housing Voucher Account.

*Decoupling of Rental Assistance.*—The Committee continues to provide authority for the Department to decouple the rental assistance program from Section 515 direct loans. The Committee reminds the Department that this strategy should only be used when all other methods of preservation are exhausted and directs the Department to provide the Committee with quarterly updates on the implementation of this policy. Additionally, the Committee provides \$1,000,000 for the Department to make the necessary information technology upgrades to facilitate its decoupling efforts.

The Committee also supports uniform standards for any sale or transfer of a property financed with a loan under section 515 to any entity, including a non-profit organization, that is seeking to acquire such property through section 515 financing or any low-income housing tax credit under section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

*Multifamily Housing Preservation Strategy.*—The Committee directs the Department to consider all preservation tools at its disposal and to develop a report within 6 months of enactment of this act with its multifamily housing preservation strategy including goals, objectives, timeline, resources required, and tools to be utilized.

*Rental Assistance Priority.*—The Secretary is encouraged to prioritize multi-family housing properties acquired by means of a section 515 loan within the current fiscal year when determining current rental assistance needs.

#### RURAL HOUSING VOUCHER ACCOUNT

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$48,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	48,000,000

The Rural Housing Voucher Program was authorized under the Housing Act of 1949 (Public Law 81–171) to assist very low-income families and individuals who reside in rental housing in rural areas. Housing vouchers may be provided to residents of rental housing projects financed by section 515 loans that have been pre-paid or paid off after September 30, 2005. Voucher amounts reflect the difference between comparable market rents and tenant-paid rent prior to loan pre-payment. Vouchers allow tenants to remain in existing projects or move to other rental housing.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$48,000,000 for the Rural Housing Voucher Program. The Committee requests historic data and projections of dollars and units served for rural housing vouchers and rental assistance with the assumption that the decoupling authority will continue to stay in place.

## MUTUAL AND SELF-HELP HOUSING GRANTS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$25,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	25,000,000

The Mutual and Self-Help Housing Grants Program is authorized by title V of the Housing Act of 1949 (Public Law 81–171). Grants are made to local organizations to promote the development of mutual or self-help programs under which groups of usually 6 to 10 families build their own homes by mutually exchanging labor. Funds may be used to pay the cost of construction supervisors who work with families in the construction of their homes and for administrative expenses of the organizations providing the self-help assistance.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$25,000,000 for Mutual and Self-Help Housing Grants.

## RURAL HOUSING ASSISTANCE GRANTS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$35,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	35,000,000

The Rural Housing Assistance Grants Program consolidates funding for rural housing grant programs. This consolidation of housing grant funding provides greater flexibility to tailor financial assistance to applicant needs.

*Very Low-Income Housing Repair Grants.*—The Very Low-Income Housing Repair Grants Program is authorized under section 504 of title V of the Housing Act of 1949 (Public Law 81–171). The rural housing repair grant program is carried out by making grants to very low-income families to conduct necessary repairs to their homes in order to make such dwellings safe and sanitary and to remove hazards to the health of the occupants, their families, or the community.

These grants may be made to cover the cost of improvements or additions, such as repairing roofs, providing toilet facilities, providing a convenient and sanitary water supply, supplying screens, repairing or providing structural supports, or making similar repairs, additions, or improvements, including all preliminary and installation costs in obtaining central water and sewer service. A grant can be made in combination with a section 504 very low-income housing repair loan.

No assistance can be extended to any one individual in the form of a loan, grant, or combined loans and grants in excess of \$7,500,000, and grant assistance is limited to persons or families headed by persons who are 62 years of age or older.

*Supervisory and Technical Assistance Grants.*—Supervisory and technical assistance grants are made to public and private non-profit organizations for packaging loan applications for housing assistance under sections 502, 504, 514/516, 515, and 533 of the Housing Act of 1949 (Public Law 81–171). The assistance is directed to very low-income families in underserved areas where at least 20 percent of the population is below the poverty level and at least 10 percent or more of the population resides in sub-standard housing. In fiscal year 1994, a Homebuyer Education Pro-

gram was implemented under this authority. This program provides low-income individuals and families with education and counseling on obtaining and/or maintaining occupancy of adequate housing and supervised credit assistance to become successful homeowners.

*Compensation for Construction Defects.*—Compensation for construction defects provides funds for grants to eligible section 502 borrowers to correct structural defects or to pay claims of owners arising from such defects on a newly constructed dwelling purchased with RHS financial assistance. Claims are not paid until provisions under the builder's warranty have been fully pursued. Requests for compensation for construction defects must be made by the owner of the property within 18 months after the date financial assistance was granted.

*Rural Housing Preservation Grants.*—Rural housing preservation grants (section 533) of the Housing and Urban-Rural Recovery Act of 1983 (Public Law 98–181) authorizes the Rural Housing Service to administer a program of home repair directed at low- and very low-income people.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$35,000,000 for the Rural Housing Assistance Grants Program.

The following table compares the grant program levels recommended by the Committee to the fiscal year 2025 levels:

#### RURAL HOUSING ASSISTANCE GRANTS

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Very low-income housing repair grants .....	25,000	25,000
Housing preservation grants .....	10,000	10,000
Total .....	35,000	35,000

#### RURAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES PROGRAM ACCOUNT

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$29,080,000
Committee recommendation .....	217,546,000

Community facility loans were created by the Rural Development Act of 1972 (Public Law 92–419) to finance a variety of rural community facilities. Loans are made to organizations, including certain Indian Tribes and corporations not operated for profit and public and quasi-public agencies, to construct, enlarge, extend, or otherwise improve community facilities providing essential services to rural residents. Such facilities include those providing or supporting overall community development, such as fire and rescue services, healthcare, transportation, traffic control, and community, social, cultural, and recreational benefits. Loans are made for facilities which primarily serve rural residents of open country and rural towns and villages of not more than 20,000 people. Healthcare, fire and rescue facilities, and educational facilities are the priorities of the program and receive the majority of available funds.

The Community Facility Grant Program authorized in the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–127) is used in conjunction with the existing direct and guaranteed loan programs for the development of community facilities such as hospitals, fire stations, and community centers. Grants are targeted to the lowest income communities. Communities that have lower population and income levels receive a higher cost-share contribution through these grants with a maximum contribution of 75 percent of the cost of developing the facility.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$217,546,000 for the Rural Community Facilities Program Account, of which \$199,546,000 is for Congressionally Directed Spending.

The following table provides the Committee's recommendations, as compared to the fiscal year 2025 levels:

#### RURAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES PROGRAM ACCOUNT

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Loan Levels:		
Community facilities direct loans .....	989,286	1,250,000
Community facilities guaranteed loans .....	650,000	650,000
Total, loan levels .....	1,639,286	1,900,000
Budget Authority:		
Direct loan subsidy .....	11,080	.....
Community facilities grants .....	5,000	5,000
Congressionally directed spending .....	.....	199,546
Rural community development initiative .....	5,000	5,000
Tribal college grants .....	8,000	8,000
Total, budget authority .....	29,080	217,546

*Community Facility Guaranteed Loan Program.*—The committee encourages USDA to reduce Federal exposure to risk and expedite the delivery of capital through the inclusion of guaranteed loans when direct loans are offered as part of facility projects. USDA should additionally assume that the test for credit elsewhere is satisfied when the partnering guarantor sees a need for direct Federal lending assistance consistent with existing regulatory framework, 7 CFR 1942.2(a)(1).

*Congressionally Directed Spending [CDS].*—The Committee has provided CDS for certain activities and locations under Rural Community Facilities Program. While the Committee has provided the funding, recipients of CDS are still required to apply for the funding. The Committee expects the agency to review the applications and fund projects in the same manner as in previous years.

*Income-based Matches.*—The Committee awaits the Department's analysis of its methodology to calculate income-based matches for the Community Facilities Grant program and its development of three alternative methodologies. The Department is directed to brief the Committees upon completion of this analysis. If warranted, the Department is directed to make changes to its methodology based on this analysis.



*Loan Program Appraisals.*—The committee directs USDA to consistently apply collateral requirements between direct and guaranteed loan products within rural development. This may include business and/or going concern value to be discounted from the loan-to-value calculations. Additionally, the USDA must consistently apply appraisal timing requirements with an aim of reducing the need for new appraisals during later stages of a construction project.

*Technical Assistance.*—The Committee encourages RHS to allow national organizations to participate in the Community Facilities Technical Assistance program and to increase the grant cap to ensure that the technical assistance need in rural areas is met.

#### RURAL BUSINESS-COOPERATIVE SERVICE

The Rural Business-Cooperative Service was established by the Federal Crop Insurance Reform and Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–354), dated October 13, 1994. Its programs were previously administered by the Rural Development Administration, the Rural Electrification Administration, and the Agricultural Cooperative Service.

#### RURAL BUSINESS PROGRAM ACCOUNT

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$31,861,000
Committee recommendation .....	55,575,000

The Rural Business and Industry Loan Program was created by the Rural Development Act of 1972 (Public Law 92–419), and finances a variety of rural industrial development loans. Loans are made for rural industrialization and rural community facilities under Rural Development Act amendments to the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932 et seq.) authorities. Business and industrial loans are made to public, private, or cooperative organizations organized for profit; to certain Indian tribes; or to individuals for the purpose of improving, developing, or financing business, industry, and employment or improving the economic and environmental climate in rural areas. Such purposes include financing business and industrial acquisition, construction, enlargement, repair or modernization; financing the purchase and development of land, easements, rights-of-way, buildings, and payment of startup costs; and supplying working capital.

Rural business development grants were authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–79) and can be made to governmental and nonprofit entities and Indian Tribes. Up to 10 percent of appropriated funds may be used to identify and analyze business opportunities; identify, train, and provide technical assistance to existing or prospective rural entrepreneurs and managers; assist in the establishment of new rural businesses and the maintenance of existing businesses; conduct economic development planning, coordination, and leadership development; and establish centers for training, technology, and trade. The balance of appropriated funding may be used for projects that support the development of business enterprises that finance or facilitate the development of small and emerging private business enterprise; the establishment, expansion, and operation of rural distance learning net-

works; the development of rural learning programs; and the provision of technical assistance and training to rural communities for the purpose of improving passenger transportation.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$55,575,000 for the Rural Business Program Account.

The following table provides the Committee's recommendations, as compared to the fiscal year 2025 levels:

#### RURAL BUSINESS PROGRAM ACCOUNT

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Loan levels:		
Business and industry guaranteed loans loan levels .....	1,663,000	1,750,000
Total, loan levels .....	1,663,000	1,750,000
Budget Authority:		
Business and industry guaranteed loans .....	3,326	15,575
Rural business development grants .....	20,535	30,000
DRA, NBRC, SBRC, and ARC .....	8,000	10,000
Total, budget authority .....	31,861	55,575

*Federal Regional Commissions and Authorities.*—The Committee recognizes that strong partnerships exist between RD and Federal Regional Commissions and Authorities. The Committee encourages RD to coordinate with the Regional Commissions to promote efficiency during the grant planning and review process. Additionally, the Committee encourages RD to ensure flexible processes are available for each Regional Commission as appropriate.

*High Energy Cost Grants.*—The Committee directs the Rural Utilities Service to permit the repair or replacement of bulk fuel storage tanks under the High Energy Cost Grants program. The Committee notes that such fuels are the only source of electricity generation in certain rural and Native communities where energy costs are excessively high and there is a significant deferred maintenance cost for Bulk Fuel in Tribal communities. The longstanding purpose of the program is to assist families and individuals in communities with extremely high per-household energy costs that are 275 percent of the National average or higher. The Committee directs the Secretary to make \$2,000,000 available for Indian Tribes for the repair or replacement of bulk fuel storage tanks under the Grants program, in addition to providing no less than fiscal year 2025 levels for the Denali Commission.

*Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program.*—The Committee encourages Rural Development to prioritize proposals for the Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program that support the processing of invasive wild-caught catfish.

*Rural Business Program Account.*—The Committee recommends \$500,000 for transportation technical assistance.

The Committee directs that of the \$4,000,000 recommended for grants to benefit federally Recognized Native American Tribes, \$250,000 shall be used to implement an American Indian and Alas-

ka Native passenger transportation development and assistance initiative. Additionally, the Committee encourages the Department to improve information sharing about Rural Development's business support programs with local small business advisory organizations.

*Rural Business Program Delivery.*—The Rural Business Cooperative Programs increase economic opportunity in rural America through the delivery of necessary programs including the Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program, the Rural Business Investment Program, and the Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program, among others. The Committee recognizes that the needs of businesses and communities in rural America are unique and commends Rural Development on its continued commitment to meet the specific challenges. It is the sense of the Committee that Rural Development remains the most well-positioned agency to administer such programs, and that RD should continue to seek means of improving program access and effectiveness.

The Committee encourages the Department to continue collaborating with the Small Business Administration as outlined in the memorandum of understanding signed on November 20, 2023. The Committee directs the Department, in collaboration with the SBA, to report on the activities undertaken as a result of the memorandum, including opportunities to collaborate on technical assistance, especially with respect to exportation and procurement.

*Sustainable Aviation Fuels.*—The Committee notes that sustainable aviation fuel [SAF] has the potential to decarbonize the aviation industry by utilizing several feedstocks, such as ethanol, soy, tallow, wood biomass, agricultural residue, and cover crops. The cultivation of these feedstocks could provide a significant economic opportunity in rural communities across the Nation. The Biorefinery, Renewable Chemical, and Biobased Product Manufacturing Assistance Program, also known as the 9003 Program, has the potential to scale up the volume of SAF by providing loans and financial support to burgeoning enterprises in rural America. Therefore, the Committee directs the Secretary of Agriculture to provide a report to Congress that includes 9003 program loan metrics and if converting current loan authority into grants could be used to accelerate and scale SAF research and development and biorefinery construction.

*Tribal Buffalo Restoration.*—The Committee encourages the Department to set aside a portion of the rural business development grants to benefit federally-chartered Tribal organizations with demonstrable expertise in Tribal buffalo restoration efforts, for the purchase and operation of mobile buffalo meat processing units to support federally recognized Native American Tribes' activities related to buffalo meat production.

#### INTERMEDIARY RELENDING PROGRAM FUND ACCOUNT

##### (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Estimated loan level .....	10,000	13,000

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Direct loan subsidy .....	3,406	2,954
Administrative expenses .....	4,468	4,468
Total, loan subsidies and administrative expenses .....	7,874	7,422

The Rural Development Intermediary Relending Loan program was originally authorized by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Public Law 88–452). The making of rural development loans by USDA was reauthorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–79).

Loans are made to intermediary borrowers (small investment groups) who in turn will reloan the funds to rural businesses, community development corporations, private nonprofit organizations, public agencies, et cetera, for the purpose of improving business, industry, community facilities, employment opportunities, and diversification of the economy in rural areas.

The Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (Public Law 74–605) established the program account. Appropriations to this account will be used to cover the lifetime subsidy costs associated with the direct loans obligated in 2026, as well as administrative expenses.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$7,422,000 for the Intermediary Relending Program Fund, including \$4,468,000 to be merged with salaries and expenses.

#### RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LOANS PROGRAM ACCOUNT

The Rural Economic Development Loans program was established by the Reconciliation Act of December 1987 (Public Law 100–203), which amended the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 901), by establishing a new section 313. This section of the Rural Electrification Act (7 U.S.C. 901) established a cushion of credit payment program and created the rural economic development subaccount. The Administrator of RUS is authorized under the act to utilize funds in this program to provide zero interest loans to electric and telecommunications borrowers for the purpose of promoting rural economic development and job creation projects, including funding for feasibility studies, startup costs, and other reasonable expenses for the purpose of fostering rural economic development.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee recommends a loan program level of \$50,000,000 and \$10,000,000 in grants to be funded from earnings on the Cushion of Credit and fees on guaranteed underwriting loans made pursuant to section 313A of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 901).

## RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LOANS PROGRAM ACCOUNT

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 level	Committee recommendation
Estimated loan level .....	50,000	50,000
Grants .....	10,000	10,000

## RURAL COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$24,600,000
Committee recommendation .....	24,800,000

Rural cooperative development grants are authorized under section 310B(e) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (Public Law 113–79), as amended. Grants are made to fund the establishment and operation of centers for rural cooperative development with the primary purpose of improving economic conditions in rural areas. Grants may be made to nonprofit institutions or institutions of higher education. Grants may be used to pay up to 75 percent of the cost of the project and associated administrative costs. The applicant must contribute at least 25 percent from non-Federal sources, except 1994 institutions, which only need to provide 5 percent. Grants are competitive and are awarded based on specific selection criteria.

Cooperative research agreements are authorized by 7 U.S.C. 2204b. The funds are used for cooperative research agreements, primarily with colleges and universities, on critical operational, organizational, and structural issues facing cooperatives.

Cooperative agreements are authorized under 7 U.S.C. 2201 to any qualified State departments of agriculture, universities, and other State entities to conduct research that will strengthen and enhance the operations of agricultural marketing cooperatives in rural areas.

The Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas [ATTRA] program was first authorized by the Food Security Act of 1985 (Public Law 99–198). The program provides information and technical assistance to agricultural producers to adopt sustainable agricultural practices that are environmentally friendly and lower production costs.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The following table provides the Committee's recommendation as compared to the fiscal year 2025 levels:

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 level	Committee recommendation
Rural Cooperative Development Grants .....	5,800	5,800
Appropriate Technology Transfer .....	2,800	3,500
Grants to Assist Minority Producers .....	3,000	3,000
Value-Added Producer Grants .....	11,500	11,500
Agriculture Innovation Center Demonstration Grants .....	1,500	1,000
Total Rural Cooperative Development Grants .....	24,600	24,800

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$5,800,000 for Rural Cooperative Development Grants.

Of the funds recommended, \$3,500,000 is for the Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas program.

The Committee includes bill language directing that not more than \$3,000,000 be made available to cooperatives or associations of cooperatives whose primary focus is to provide assistance to small, minority producers.

*Agriculture Innovation Centers.*—The Committee recommends \$1,000,000 for Agriculture Innovation Center funding, as authorized in section 6402 of Public Law 107–171. Prior year or current grant awardees shall be eligible for these funds.

*Value-Added Producer Grants [VAPG].*—The Committee directs that Value-Added Producer Grants be prioritized to support the production of value-added agricultural products, including dairy and small farms, with significant potential to expand production and processing in the United States.

The Committee encourages USDA to promote awareness among potential applicants of the availability of VAPG funds for eligible projects that modify animal housing systems to comply with state requirements, such as States that require animal products to come from cage-free and crate-free housing systems, or facilitate the sale of compliant products to new markets.

#### RURAL MICROENTREPRENEUR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$4,629,000
Committee recommendation .....	5,000,000

The Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program is authorized under section 379E(d) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2008s). This program provides direct loans and grants to microentrepreneur development organizations with the skills necessary to establish new rural microenterprises and provide technical assistance to maintain the successful operation of rural microenterprises.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$5,000,000 for the Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program.

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Estimated Loan Level .....	12,708	19,515
Direct Loan Subsidy .....	2,769	3,140
Grants .....	1,860	1,860
Total, loan subsidies and grants .....	4,629	5,000

#### RURAL ENERGY FOR AMERICA PROGRAM

Appropriations, 2025 .....	
Committee recommendation .....	

The Rural Energy for America Program is authorized under section 9007 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–171). This program may fund energy audits, di-

rect loans, loan guarantees, and grants to farmers, ranchers, and small rural businesses for the purchase of renewable energy systems and for energy efficiency improvements.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee does not recommend a discretionary appropriation for the Rural Energy for America Program, as the program has a negative subsidy rate. The Committee recommends a loan level of \$100,000,000.

#### HEALTHY FOOD FINANCING INITIATIVE

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$500,000
Committee recommendation .....	500,000

The Healthy Food Financing Initiative is authorized under section 4206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014. This program provides financial and technical assistance to regional, State and local partnerships, and helps fund projects to improve access to fresh, healthy foods in underserved rural areas.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$500,000 for the Healthy Food Financing Initiative and notes the funding provided through the American Rescue Plan Act.

#### RURAL UTILITIES SERVICE

The Rural Utilities Service was established under the Federal Crop Insurance Reform and Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–354). RUS administers the electric and telephone programs of the former Rural Electrification Administration and the water and waste programs of the former Rural Development Administration.

#### RURAL WATER AND WASTE DISPOSAL PROGRAM ACCOUNT

##### (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$478,487,000
Committee recommendation .....	443,776,000

The water and waste disposal program is authorized by sections 306, 306A, 309A, 306C, 306D, 306E, and 310B of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (Public Law 87–128). This program makes loans for water and waste development costs. Development loans are made to associations, including corporations operating on a nonprofit basis, municipalities, and similar organizations generally designated as public or quasi-public agencies, that propose projects for the development, storage, treatment, purification, and distribution of domestic water or the collection, treatment, or disposal of waste in rural areas. Such grants may not exceed 75 percent of the development cost of the projects and can supplement other funds borrowed or furnished by applicants to pay development costs.

The solid waste grant program is authorized under section 310B(b) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (Public Law 87–128). Grants are made to public entities and pri-

vate nonprofit organizations to provide technical assistance to local and regional governments for the purpose of reducing or eliminating pollution of water resources and for improving the planning and management of solid waste disposal facilities.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$443,776,000 for the Rural Water and Waste Disposal Program Account.

The Committee recommends \$65,000,000 for water and waste disposal systems grants for Native Americans, including Native Alaskans, Hawaiian Homelands, and the Colonias. The Committee recognizes the special needs and problems for delivery of basic services to these populations and encourages the Secretary to distribute these funds in line with the fiscal year 2014 distribution to the degree practicable. In addition, the Committee makes \$23,900,000 available for the Circuit Rider Program. The Committee commends Circuit Riders, who have provided assistance to small communities for the operation of safe and clean drinking water supplies and compliance with water regulations since 1980. The Circuit Rider Program has long been one of USDA's most successful public-private partnerships and one of the most efficient and effective use of appropriated funds.

*Black Belt Region Water Systems.*—The Committee commends the work of Rural Development on the implementation of the pilot program to support Black Belt Region Water Systems funded in fiscal year 2020 and fiscal year 2021. Within 90 days of enactment of this act and quarterly thereafter, Rural Development is directed to brief the Committee on the use of these funds.

*Technical Assistance.*—The Committee provides \$35,000,000 for technical assistance and directs no less than \$1,000,000 to be used to support manufactured homes.

The following table provides the Committee's recommendations, as compared to the fiscal year 2025:

#### RURAL WATER AND WASTE DISPOSAL PROGRAM ACCOUNT

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Loan levels:		
Water and waste disposal direct loans .....	851,499	1,000,000
Water and waste disposal direct one percent loans .....	8,502	15,000
Water and waste disposal guaranteed loans .....	50,000	50,000
Total, loan levels .....	910,001	1,065,000
Budget authority:		
Water and waste disposal direct loans .....	88,045	47,600
Water and waste disposal direct one percent loans .....	2,661	3,876
Water and waste disposal grants .....	237,964	240,400
Solid waste management grants .....	4,000	4,000
Water well systems grants .....	5,000	5,000
Colonias, AK, HI and Native American grants .....	65,000	65,000
Water and waste water revolving funds .....	1,000	1,000
High energy cost grants .....	8,000	8,000
Circuit rider .....	21,817	23,900
Emergency community water assistance grants .....	10,000	10,000



## RURAL WATER AND WASTE DISPOSAL PROGRAM ACCOUNT—Continued

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Technical assistance grants .....	35,000	35,000
Total, budget authority .....	478,487	443,776

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS LOANS PROGRAM  
ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$38,568,000
Committee recommendation .....	41,040,000

The Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (Public Law 74–605) provides the statutory authority for the electric and telecommunications programs.

The Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (Public Law 101–508) established the program account. An appropriation to this account will be used to cover the lifetime subsidy costs associated with the direct loans obligated and loan guarantees committed in fiscal year 2026, as well as administrative expenses.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The following table reflects the Committee's recommendation for the Rural Electrification and Telecommunications Loans Program Account, the loan subsidy and administrative expenses, as compared to the fiscal year 2025 levels:

## RURAL ELECTRIFICATION AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS LOANS PROGRAM ACCOUNT

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Loan authorization:		
Electric:		
Direct FFB .....	2,167,000	2,667,000
Electric Direct, Treasury Rate .....	4,333,000	4,333,000
Guaranteed underwriting .....	900,000	900,000
Telecommunications:		
Direct, Treasury Rate .....	154,955	350,000
Direct, FFB .....		200,000
Rural Energy Savings Program .....	17,748	25,000
Total, Loan authorization .....	7,572,703	8,475,000
Direct, Treasury Rate Telecomm Subsidy .....	1,720	3,570
Rural Energy Savings Program .....	3,578	4,200
Administrative Expenses .....	33,270	33,270
Total budget authority .....	38,568	41,040

## DISTANCE LEARNING, TELEMEDICINE, AND BROADBAND PROGRAM

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$150,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	95,500,000

The Distance Learning, Telemedicine, and Broadband Program is authorized by the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 (Public Law 101–624), as amended by the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–127). This program provides incentives to improve the quality of phone services, provide access to advanced telecommunications services and computer networks, and improve rural opportunities.

This program provides the facilities and equipment to link rural education and medical facilities with more urban centers and other facilities, providing rural residents access to better healthcare through technology and increasing educational opportunities for rural students. These funds are available for loans and grants.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$95,500,000 for the Distance Learning, Telemedicine, and Broadband Program account, including \$500,000 for congressionally directed spending.

The Committee provides \$3,000,000 to address critical healthcare needs, as authorized by section 379G of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (Public Law 115–334).

The following table reflects the Committee’s recommendation for the Distance Learning, Telemedicine, and Broadband Program, as compared to fiscal year 2025:

#### DISTANCE LEARNING, TELEMEDICINE, AND BROADBAND PROGRAM

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program:		
Grants .....	40,000	40,000
Congressionally Directed Spending .....		500
Broadband Program:		
Community Connect Grants .....	20,000	20,000
Re-Connect .....	90,000	35,000
Total, DLT and Broadband budget authority .....	150,000	95,500

*Congressionally Directed Spending [CDS].*—The Committee has provided CDS for certain activities and locations under Distance Learning, Telemedicine, and Broadband Program. While the Committee has provided the funding, recipients of CDS are still required to apply for the funding. The Committee expects the agency to review the applications and fund projects in the same manner as in previous years.

*ReConnect.*—The Committee provides \$35,000,000 for the ReConnect pilot, which was established in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115–141), and again reminds USDA that funding should not be used in areas that are already largely served and should be focused in areas where at least 90 percent of households lack access. In doing so, the Committee intends that USDA should avoid efforts that could duplicate existing or planned broadband networks, including avoiding granting funding in areas where another provider already has received funding from another Federal, State or local funding program to build, has otherwise committed to a government entity to build, or has invested private

risk capital to build in an area and has obtained necessary permits to do so, even if construction is not yet complete. To achieve these goals, we urge USDA to continue coordinating closely with the National Telecommunications Information Administration and the Federal Communications Commission in a transparent manner to ensure that there is a common agreement about which areas are currently unserved, to utilize a common map to reach those conclusions that is updated each time a new funding decision is announced, and to have a clear and understandable challenge process.

In addition, while the pilot is intended to be technology neutral, it is critical that Federal broadband investments support projects that are both scalable and adequate for both current and future technological requirement and consumer needs. In carrying out the Reconnect program, the Committee directs USDA to support qualified projects that will provide the highest upload and download speeds possible to ensure rural America is receiving the same quality broadband services as their non-rural counterparts.

# TITLE IV

## DOMESTIC FOOD PROGRAMS

### OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOOD, NUTRITION, AND CONSUMER SERVICES

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$1,127,000
Committee recommendation .....	1,127,000

The Office of the Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services provides direction and coordination in carrying out the laws enacted by the Congress with respect to the Department's nutrition assistance activities. The Office has oversight and management responsibilities for the Food and Nutrition Service [FNS].

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$1,127,000 for the Office of the Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services.

*Application Process.*—The Committee is concerned that the application process for organizations which participate in both the Summer Food Service Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program diverts resources away from serving people in need. The Committee directs USDA to determine ways to streamline the application process to reduce the administrative burden to providers. USDA is specifically directed to consider allowing organizations in good standing for 3 years participating in both programs to file only one application to administer both programs each year.

*Communication.*—The Committee is committed to supporting the mission and values of the Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services at the USDA, including through critical investment in nutrition programs to support the American people. The Committee directs the FNCS to provide quarterly briefings to the Committee, which should commence 30 days after the enactment of this act and continue quarterly, to provide updates on key nutrition programs, including participation.

*Meals-to-You.*—The Committee recognizes the benefits the Meals-to-You [MTY] demonstration program has had in reducing food insecurity, particularly for children and youth in rural and frontier areas who are unable to access congregate feeding sites. The Committee encourages FNS to continue providing meal delivery services through the MTY demonstration project through a grant or cooperative agreement to a non-profit provider that works with local service institutions to enroll eligible low-income children.

#### FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE

The Food and Nutrition Service represents an organizational effort to eliminate hunger and malnutrition in this country. Nutrition assistance programs provide access to a nutritionally adequate diet for low-income individuals and families and encourage better eating patterns among the Nation's children. These programs include:

*Child Nutrition Programs [CNP].*—The National School Lunch and School Breakfast, Summer Food Service, and Child and Adult Care Food programs provide funding to the States, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and Guam for use in serving nutritious lunches and breakfasts to children attending schools of high school grades and under, to children of preschool age in child care centers, and to children in other institutions in order to improve the health and well-being of the Nation's children and broaden the markets for agricultural food commodities. Through the Special Milk Program, assistance is provided to the States for making reimbursement payments to eligible schools and child care institutions which institute or expand milk service in order to increase the consumption of fluid milk by children. Funds for this program are provided by direct appropriation and transfer from section 32.

*Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children [WIC].*—This program safeguards the health of pregnant, postpartum, and breast-feeding women, and infants and children up to age five who are at nutritional risk because of inadequate nutrition and income by providing supplemental foods. The delivery of supplemental foods may be done through health clinics, vouchers redeemable at retail food stores, or other approved methods which a cooperating State health agency may select. Funds for this program are provided by direct appropriation.

*Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program [SNAP].*—This program seeks to improve nutritional standards of needy persons and families. Assistance is provided to eligible households to enable them to obtain a better diet by increasing their food purchasing capability, usually by furnishing benefits in the form of electronic access to funds. The program includes Nutrition Assistance to Puerto Rico [NAP]. The program also includes the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations [FDPIR], which provides nutritious agricultural commodities to low-income persons living on or near Indian reservations who choose not to participate in SNAP.

*Commodity Assistance Program [CAP].*—This program provides funding for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program [CSFP], the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program [FMNP], Disaster Assistance, Pacific Island Assistance, and administrative expenses for the Emergency Food Assistance Program [TEFAP]. CSFP provides supplemental foods to low-income elderly persons age 60 and over. TEFAP provides commodities and grant funds to State agencies to assist in the cost of storage and distribution of donated commodities. Nutritious agricultural commodities are provided to residents of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands. Cash assistance is provided to distributing agencies to assist them in meeting administrative expenses incurred. CAP also provides funding for use in non-presidentially declared disasters and for FNS's administrative costs in connection with relief for all disasters. Funds for this program are provided by direct appropriation.

*Nutrition Programs Administration.*—Most salaries and Federal operating expenses of FNS are funded from this account. Also included is the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, which oversees improvements in and revisions to the food guidance systems and serves as the focal point for advancing and coordinating

nutrition promotion and education policy to improve the health of all Americans.

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS  
(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

Appropriations, 2025 ..... \$33,266,226,000  
Committee recommendation ..... 36,285,902,000

Child Nutrition Programs, authorized by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (Public Law 79–396) and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (Public Law 89–642), provide Federal assistance to State agencies in the form of cash and commodities for use in preparing and serving nutritious meals to children while they are attending school, residing in service institutions, or participating in other organized activities away from home. The purpose of these programs is to help maintain the health and proper physical development of America's children. Milk is provided to children either free or at a low cost, depending on their family income level. FNS provides cash subsidies to States for administering the programs and directly administers the program in the States which choose not to do so. Grants are also made for nutritional training and surveys and for State administrative expenses. Under current law, most of these payments are made on the basis of reimbursement rates established by law and applied to lunches and breakfasts actually served by the States. The reimbursement rates are adjusted annually to reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index for food away from home.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends \$36,285,902,000 for the Child Nutrition Programs.

The Committee's recommendation provides for the following annual rates for the child nutrition programs.

TOTAL OBLIGATIONAL AUTHORITY  
(In thousands of dollars)

Child nutrition programs	Committee recommendation
School Lunch Program .....	17,183,209
School Breakfast Program .....	6,675,168
Child and Adult Care Food Program .....	4,484,213
Summer Food Service Program .....	888,956
Special Milk Program .....	4,655
Summer EBT Benefits .....	4,046,066
Summer EBT Admin .....	283,225
State Administrative Expenses .....	509,927
Commodity Procurement .....	2,028,385
Team Nutrition .....	18,004
Food Safety Education .....	4,378
Coordinated Review .....	10,000
Computer Support .....	35,204
Training and Technical Assistance .....	53,212
CNP Studies and Evaluation .....	21,918
Farm to School Team .....	6,693
Payment Accuracy .....	16,189
School Meal Equipment Grants .....	10,000
Child Nutrition Training .....	1,500

## TOTAL OBLIGATIONAL AUTHORITY—Continued

[In thousands of dollars]

Child nutrition programs	Committee recommendation
Farm to School Grants .....	5,000
Total .....	36,285,902

The Committee expects FNS to utilize the National Food Service Management Institute to carry out the food safety education program.

*Costs of Producing School Meals in Outlying Areas.*—The Committee acknowledges that USDA provided a temporary increase in the National average payment rate for the outlying areas at a rate equal to the National average payment rate for Alaska until the School Nutrition Cost Study II is completed and updated adjustments for school meal reimbursements for these areas are subsequently made, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1760(f). The Committee directs USDA to provide technical assistance and flexibility to school food authorities and school staff in the outlying areas to ensure the collection of complete and accurate data for the School Nutrition Cost Study II.

*Crediting System.*—The Committee recognizes that the current crediting system used by FNS in administering the School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program has not been updated to keep pace with products in the marketplace. Specifically, Greek yogurt receives the same protein crediting as other products with less protein. The Committee directs the Secretary to update the system of crediting high-protein yogurt to accurately reflect scientifically demonstrated higher protein content in strained yogurt.

*Farm to School Program.*—Successful implementation of Farm to School programs requires broad-based knowledge of best practices regarding coordination among farmers, processors, distributors, students, teachers, dietary and food preparation staff, and USDA professionals. Since the scope of some Farm to School projects has expanded in recent years, the Committee has included language to allow maximum grant amounts to increase to \$500,000.

*Local School Wellness Policies.*—The Committee acknowledges that difficulty accessing a variety of foods can cause significant issues, including poor physical health and eating disorders. The Committee directs the Secretary to update local school wellness policy guidance to incorporate eating disorder prevention and education into the existing local school wellness policy framework. The Committee requests a report within 120 days of the enactment of this act on the agency's progress to update State Education Agencies on the inclusion of eating disorders education and prevention within Local School Wellness Policies.

*Pulse Crops.*—The Committee recognizes the nutritional value of pulse crops for children and encourages FNS to support school food authorities in sourcing and serving pulse crops.

*Seafood Consumption in the National School Lunch Program.*—The Committee directs the department, in coordination with NOAA, to address factors limiting seafood consumption in school per the recommendations in GAO report “National School Lunch

Program: USDA Could Enhance Assistance to States and Schools in Providing Seafood to Students” (GAO–23–105179).

*Non-Congregate Meals.*—The Committee recognizes that the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program served healthy meals to over 44 million students in fiscal year 2024. The Committee also recognizes that access to such meals is critically important to the physical and behavioral health of pre-K–12 students and to their academic performance in school. The Committee supports the Food and Nutrition Service [FNS] and its efforts to provide daily free and reduced cost meals to millions of food insecure students. The Committee is concerned that access to such meals is not available to all full-time public school students and encourages the FNS to allow States the flexibility to explore innovative solutions (e.g., EBT cards) to reach all income-eligible students enrolled in public schools regardless of learning modality. The Committee directs FNS to expand access to non-congregate meal programs for students who do not have access to such benefits in a congregate setting and are otherwise eligible for free and reduced cost meals under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966.

*Whole Grains.*—The Committee encourages USDA to continue to support the inclusion of nutrient-dense whole grain foods in child nutrition and feeding programs and nutrition guidance. The Department should recognize the importance of nutrient-dense whole grains in the American diet and the economic importance to the agricultural economy.

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN, INFANTS,  
AND CHILDREN [WIC]

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$7,597,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	8,200,000,000

The WIC program is authorized by section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966. Its purpose is to safeguard the health of pregnant, breast-feeding, and postpartum women and infants and children up to age five who are at nutritional risk because of inadequate nutrition and inadequate income.

The WIC program food packages are designed to provide foods which studies have demonstrated are lacking in the diets of the WIC program target population. The authorized supplemental foods are iron-fortified breakfast cereal, fruit or vegetable juice which contains vitamin C, dry beans, peas, and peanut butter.

There are three general types of delivery systems for WIC foods: (1) retail purchase in which participants obtain supplemental foods through retail stores; (2) home delivery systems in which food is delivered to the participant’s home; and (3) direct distribution systems in which participants pick up food from a distribution outlet. The food is free of charge to all participants.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$8,200,000,000 for the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children. The Committee recommendation fully funds estimated WIC participation in fiscal year 2026. The Committee pro-



vides no less than \$90,000,000 for breastfeeding support initiatives and \$14,000,000 for infrastructure.

*Allergenic Foods.*—The Committee recognizes that section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act (42 U.S.C. 1786(c)(11)(C)) directs the Secretary to conduct a scientific review of the WIC food packages no fewer than every 10 years, and that the next scientific review is set to be released in 2027. Given the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommendation of early introduction of potentially allergenic foods to infants, especially peanuts and egg, to prevent allergies later in life, the Committee directs the Secretary to include a review and recommendations for the early introduction of food allergens in the upcoming review of the WIC infant food packages.

*Dairy Allowance in the WIC Food Package.*—The Dietary Guidelines for Americans [DGA] have identified dairy products as nutrient-dense while also noting that a high percentage of the U.S. population, including WIC's at-risk population, are not consuming the recommended level of dairy. The Committee remains concerned about the reduction of the maximum monthly allowance with respect to milk in the April 18, 2024, final rule, "Revisions to the WIC Food Packages", and encourages the Secretary to allow state WIC directors to return to or continue the previous recommended levels of dairy in the WIC program that were in place on April 17, 2024.

*Infant Formula.*—The Committee is concerned that Infant Formula Rebates for the WIC Program have become less generous since the 2022 Infant Formula Crisis. The Committee is concerned that this has resulted in participants having less support to purchase other food with WIC. The Committee directs the Food and Nutrition Service to provide a report within 90 days of the enactment of this act, that outlines the changes in Infant Formula Rebates since fiscal year 2022, and recommendations so that Infant Formula Rebates continue to meet the needs of the WIC program.

*Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome Recommendations.*—WIC designated Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome [NAS] as a nutrition risk factor in 2017, and WIC agencies across the country actively screen for symptoms of substance use, referring mothers who may be struggling with substance use disorder to appropriate services. The Committee encourages USDA to collaborate with the Department of Health and Human Services on the development of uniform, evidence-based nutrition education materials in order to best serve WIC-eligible pregnant women and caregivers to infants impacted by NAS. Uniform materials will enhance WIC's ongoing efforts to screen and support infants exhibiting symptoms of NAS.

*Yogurt Fortification.*—The Committee recognizes that the final rule entitled "Revisions in the WIC Food Packages" is requiring vitamin D fortification of yogurt to address shortfalls. The Committee understands that a majority of yogurts in the marketplace do not contain vitamin D fortification and that manufacturers require additional time to reformulate and relabel products to meet such requirements. The Committee encourages the Secretary to extend the compliance date in the final rule requiring vitamin D fortification of yogurts for an additional 36 months.

## SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Appropriations, 2025 .....\$122,382,521,000  
 Committee recommendation ..... 118,139,341,000

SNAP attempts to alleviate hunger and malnutrition among low-income persons by increasing their food purchasing power. Eligible households receive SNAP benefits with which they can purchase food through regular retail stores.

Other programs funded through SNAP include Nutrition Assistance to Puerto Rico and American Samoa, the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, the Emergency Food Assistance Program, and the Community Food Projects program.

SNAP is currently in operation in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, and Guam. Participating households receive food benefits, the value of which is determined by household size and income. The cost of the benefits is paid by the Federal Government. As required by law, FNS annually revises household benefit allotments to reflect changes in the cost of the thrifty food plan.

*Administrative Costs.*—All direct and indirect administrative costs incurred for certification of households, issuance of benefits, quality control, outreach, and fair hearing efforts are shared by the Federal Government and the States on a 50–50 basis.

*State Antifraud Activities.*—Under the provisions of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–246), States are eligible to be reimbursed for 50 percent of the costs of their fraud investigations and prosecutions.

States are required to implement an employment and training program for the purpose of assisting members of households participating in SNAP in gaining skills, training, or experience that will increase their ability to obtain regular employment. USDA has implemented a grant program to States to assist them in providing employment and training services.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends \$118,139,341,000 for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Of the amount recommended, \$3,000,000,000 is made available as a contingency reserve.

## SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

[In thousands of dollars]

	Committee recommendation
Benefits .....	103,545,886
Contingency .....	3,000,000
Administrative Costs	
State Administrative Costs .....	6,197,133
Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Grant Program .....	550,000
Employment and Training .....	696,266
Mandatory Other Program Costs .....	418,743
Discretionary Other Program Costs	
Tribal Demonstration .....	3,000
Healthy Fluid Milk .....	3,000
Tribal Nutrition Education .....	998

## SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM—Continued

[In thousands of dollars]

	Committee recommendation
Administrative Costs Subtotal .....	7,869,140
Nutrition Assistance for Puerto Rico (NAP) .....	2,993,543
American Samoa .....	12,022
Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations .....	235,000
TEFAP Commodities .....	473,750
Community Food Project .....	5,000
Program Access .....	5,000
Subtotal .....	3,724,315
Total .....	118,139,341

**Disaster SNAP.**—The Secretary of Agriculture, in coordination with the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, shall coordinate food benefit allotments under section 412 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5179) and section 5(h) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2014(h)) with respect to individuals and households adversely affected by a major disaster to minimize delays in receiving temporary food assistance, improve information sharing, and prevent redundancy of assistance.

**FDPIR Pilot Program.**—The Committee is concerned that FNS has prohibited tribes and Tribal organizations that participate in the FDPIR pilot program from including traditional food items unless such items replace a USDA-provided item, and prohibited such substitutions unless the producer of the traditional food is able to provide sufficient quantities for all FDPIR participants nationwide. Allowing tribes participating in the pilot to source new traditional foods from small, indigenous producers without requiring a substitution will result in the inclusion of more traditional foods and help small, indigenous producers to expand. The Committee therefore directs FNS to allow tribes participating in the pilot program to include traditional foods without substitutions and to allow participating tribes to purchase traditional foods from producers that may not be able to provide sufficient quantities to serve all participating tribes across the Nation.

**Hot Foods.**—The Committee directs the Secretary to study the impact of allowing hot foods to be purchased with SNAP benefits at different types of SNAP retail food stores, including retail food stores with co-located entities.

**National Accuracy Clearinghouse.**—The Committee supports the full implementation of the National Accuracy Clearinghouse [NAC] that uses a third-party electronic data matching system, data analytics, and public data to determine the correct state to issue SNAP benefits. The Committee encourages FNS to expand NAC to all SNAP agencies. In addition, the Committee reiterates that States must administer a robust appeals process to ensure individuals are not automatically removed from receiving benefits.

**Online Purchasing Pilot.**—The Committee is encouraged by USDA's successful implementation of SNAP Online Purchasing Pilot. The Pilot, as directed in the last two Farm Bills, has proven

to be successful and was expanded nationwide during the pandemic. The Committee encourages USDA's further work in this area as it benefits recipients in rural and hard to reach areas or those with limited mobility.

*Skimming.*—The Committee understands USDA's efforts to support States in efforts to make whole SNAP recipients after they are victims of skimming. The Committee recognizes that authority for States to repay skimming victims expires on September 30, 2025. No later than 30 days after enactment of this act, the Committee directs USDA to provide a report on progress toward making skimming victims whole.

*SNAP Fraud.*—The Committee remains concerned about data discrepancies that allowed retailers to provide benefits to individuals using fraudulent credentials, as outlined in a January 2017 OIG report. The Committee encourages FNS, as part of their work to implement controls to address these problems, to consider how advanced analytics is used to improve analysis across multiple systems mentioned in the report. This could include integrating data mining and machine learning into source systems such as STARS and ALERT, applying computer vision to enhance FNS investigations, and deploying new predictive analytics to help detect emerging fraud schemes. The Committee requests USDA to continue to update Congress on its progress in addressing the issues outlined in the report.

*SNAP Pilot.*—The Committee directs the Secretary to submit a report, within 180 days of enactment, to the Committee, compiled in consultation with stakeholders and the appropriate State and Federal officials, describing how any waiver or pilot program will improve SNAP participant experience. The report shall include the approximate cost, to include the administration, of the implementation of and SNAP authorized retailer compliance with any waiver or pilot program. The report shall also include an explanation of how the Department will communicate to States and SNAP authorized retailers which foods are SNAP eligible and ensure retailers can implement and comply with food restriction requirements in their point-of-sale [POS] systems and ongoing technical support.

*Thrifty Food Plan.*—The Committee is concerned that USDA's Thrifty Food Plan adjustment for Hawaii omits the price of food in rural and remote regions of the state. The Committee directs USDA to finalize the proposed rule published at 2024–27853 (89 FR 95724) to update 7 CFR 273.10(e)(4) to include the price of food throughout the state of Hawaii.

#### COMMODITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$516,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	516,000,000

The Commodity Assistance Program includes funding for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and funding to pay expenses associated with the storage and distribution of commodities through The Emergency Food Assistance Program.

*The Commodity Supplemental Food Program.*—Authorized by section 4(a) of the Agricultural and Consumer Protection Act of 1973 (7 U.S.C. 612c note), as amended in 1981 by Public Law 97–98 and in 2014 by Public Law 113–79, this program provides sup-

plemental food to low-income senior citizens and, in some cases, low-income infants and children up to age six and low-income pregnant and postpartum women. The Agricultural Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–79) discontinued the admission of new pregnant and postpartum women and children into the program. Those already in the program can continue to receive assistance until they are no longer eligible.

The foods for CSFP are provided by USDA for distribution through State agencies. The authorized commodities include iron-fortified infant formula, rice cereal, cheese, canned juice, evaporated milk and/or nonfat dry milk, canned vegetables or fruits, canned meat or poultry, egg mix, dehydrated potatoes, farina, peanut butter, and dry beans. Elderly participants may receive all commodities except iron-fortified infant formula and rice cereal.

*The Emergency Food Assistance Program.*—Authorized by the Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983 (7 U.S.C. 7501 et seq.), as amended, the program provides nutrition assistance to low-income people through prepared meals served on site and through the distribution of commodities to low-income households for home consumption. The commodities are provided by USDA to State agencies for distribution through State-established networks. State agencies make the commodities available to local organizations, such as soup kitchens, food pantries, food banks, and community action agencies, for their use in providing nutrition assistance to those in need.

Funds are administered by FNS through grants to State agencies which operate commodity distribution programs. Allocation of the funds to States is based on a formula which considers the States' unemployment rate and the number of persons with income below the poverty level.

*Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.*—The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program provides WIC or WIC-eligible participants with coupons to purchase fresh, nutritious, unprepared foods, such as fruits and vegetables, from farmers' markets. This benefits both participants and local farmers by increasing the awareness and use of farmers' markets by low-income households.

*Pacific Island and Disaster Assistance.*—This program provides funding for assistance to the nuclear-affected islands in the form of commodities and administrative funds. It also provides funding for use in non-presidentially declared disasters and for FNS's administrative costs in connection with relief for all disasters.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$516,070,000 for the Commodity Assistance Program. The Committee continues to encourage the Department to distribute Commodity Assistance Program funds equitably among the States, based on an assessment of the needs and priorities of each State and the State's preference to receive commodity allocations through each of the programs funded under this account.

*Commodity Supplemental Food Program.*—The Committee recommends \$425,000 for CSFP. The Committee is concerned about barriers eligible Commodity Supplemental Food Program applicants, including those residing in smaller and more rural commu-

nities, face in participating in the program. The Committee directs the Secretary to submit a report to study barriers to program participation and strategies that States have utilized to increase CSFP participation rates. The Committee also requests that USDA publish an update to guidance document FNS-GD-2020-0078 reiterating that current CSFP program flexibilities give State and local agencies discretion to allow for home delivery, including contracting with third-party delivery.

*Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.*—The Committee is aware that FMNP provides fresh fruits and vegetables to low-income mothers and children, benefiting not only WIC participants, but local farmers as well. Therefore, the Committee recommends \$10,000 for FMNP and directs the Secretary to obligate these funds within 45 days of enactment of this act.

*The Emergency Food Assistance Program.*—The Committee provides \$80,000 in discretionary funding for TEFAP transportation, storage, and program integrity. In addition, the Committee recommendation grants the Secretary authority to transfer up to an additional 20 percent from TEFAP commodities for this purpose and urges the Secretary to use this authority.

The Committee encourages the Secretary to identify opportunities for increasing the supply of TEFAP commodities in the coming fiscal year through bonus and specialty crop purchases. The Department shall make available to the States domestically produced catfish fillets for distribution to local agencies.

*TEFAP Local Foods Pilot.*—The Committee directs FNS to conduct a pilot program to provide funds for States to purchase locally-grown priority agricultural products-including fruits, vegetables, dairy, meats, seafood, grains, poultry, or other commodity food products-sourced from small and underserved producers to be distributed to low-income households through emergency feeding organizations. In piloting the program, the Committee encourages FNS to select States that work with emergency feeding organizations to serve geographically-isolated, food import-dependent areas. The Committee directs FNS to submit a report to Congress following the conclusion of the pilot to assess project effectiveness in providing nutritious and culturally-relevant food to individuals in need, improving agricultural supply chain resiliency, and expanding economic opportunity for small and underserved local agricultural producers.

*Wild Game.*—The Committee recognizes that The Emergency Food Assistance Program and the “Farm to Food Bank Projects” allows for the use of funds for the repackaging and processing of donated wild game. The “Farm to Food Bank Projects” also allow funds to be used for wild game. The Committee encourages the Department to educate and publicize to State agencies on these innovative and sustainable program to provide nutrition assistance to low-income Americans.

#### NUTRITION PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATION

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$177,348,000
Committee recommendation .....	177,348,000

The Nutrition Programs Administration appropriation provides for most of the Federal operating expenses of FNS, which includes CNP, the Special Milk Program, WIC, SNAP, NAP, and CAP.

The major objective of Nutrition Programs Administration is to efficiently and effectively carry out the nutrition assistance programs mandated by law. This is to be accomplished by the following: (1) giving clear and consistent guidance and supervision to State agencies and other cooperators; (2) assisting the States and other cooperators by providing program, managerial, financial, and other advice and expertise; (3) measuring, reviewing, and analyzing the progress being made toward achieving program objectives; and (4) carrying out regular staff support functions.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$177,348,000 for Nutrition Programs Administration.

## TITLE V

## FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AND RELATED PROGRAMS

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND FOREIGN  
AGRICULTURAL AFFAIR

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$932,000
Committee recommendation .....	932,000

The Office of the Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs provides direction and coordination in carrying out the laws enacted by the Congress with respect to the Department's international affairs (except for foreign economic development). The Office has oversight and management responsibilities for the Foreign Agricultural Service [FAS].

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$932,000 for the Office of the Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs.

*Food Chain Systems.*—The Committee is aware that the lack of comprehensive cold food chain systems is one of the main causes of food loss and results in a significant percentage of food spoilage from farm-to-market. Preventing food loss and implementing a robust cold food chain results in substantial benefits such as increased nutrition, a safer food supply, greater economic opportunity, and increased resilience. In order to maximize the benefit investment in the agricultural productivity of the developing world, the Committee encourages the Department to give strong consideration to the use of cold chain technologies and include the development of appropriate cooling technologies in programs, policies, and strategic plans aimed at hunger prevention and food security in developing agricultural markets.

*Improvements and Efficiencies.*—The Food for Peace program supports American farmers by purchasing U.S.-grown commodities to distribute as aid to developing nations, promoting food security and providing market opportunities for farmers. The McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program provides American agricultural commodities to help feed children and support school meals in other countries. This program benefits both the recipients in need and American farmers by creating demand for U.S. agricultural products. The Committee is concerned by delays affecting both programs. Within 60 days of the enactment of this Act, the Committee directs USDA, in coordination with the Department of State where appropriate, to brief the Committee on the status of both programs, including any proposed improvements and opportunities for efficiencies for the Committee to consider. The Committee is committed to working with stakeholders and the Administration to ensure that these longstanding programs support American farmers while working to eliminate hunger and malnutrition abroad.

*International Agricultural Education Fellowship Program [IAEFP].*—The Committee urges USDA to prioritize IAEFP grants



to multi-year programs or to continue existing programs, including programs previously awarded IAEFP funds. Further, the Committee is concerned about regional limitations on eligible programs in previous funding opportunities and encourages USDA to avoid limiting eligibility of applicants to specific countries or regions.

*Market Access Program [MAP] and Foreign Market Development Program [FMD] Reporting.*—The Committee directs the Department to publish an annual report describing the recipients of funds, including the quantity and specific uses of such funding awards, granted through MAP and FMD for the purpose of promoting agricultural sales in Cuba, to ensure compliance with Sec. 3201 of Public Law 115–334.

*Peanut Exports.*—The Committee remains concerned with persistent non-tariff trade barriers faced by the domestic peanut industry when attempting to export peanuts to the European Union. The Committee encourages the Department to prioritize interagency coordination with the Office of the United States Trade Representative and industry engagement in order to develop effective and lasting solutions that will allow increased market access for domestic peanuts into the European Union.

*Pecan Exports.*—The Committee directs the Department to prioritize interagency coordination and industry engagement to develop effective strategies to allow for increased market access of domestic pecans into India.

*Reimbursements.*—The Committee is concerned by the administration's delays in providing reimbursements for activities previously performed to partners in the distribution of foreign food assistance. The Secretary is directed to consult with the Secretary of State on ways to best improve timeliness within the reimbursement process and improve the agency's payments system to eliminate delays in the future. The Secretary is further required to provide a report to the Committee within 30 days of enactment of this act on progress related to this directive.

#### OFFICE OF CODEX ALIMENTARIUS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$4,922,000
Committee recommendation .....	4,922,000

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$4,922,000 for the Office of Codex Alimentarius.

#### FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE

##### SALARIES AND EXPENSES

##### (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

[In thousands of dollars]

	Appropriations	Transfers from loan accounts	Total
Appropriations, 2025 .....	237,330	6,063	243,393
Committee recommendation .....	227,330	6,063	233,393

The Foreign Agricultural Service was established March 10, 1953, by Secretary's Memorandum No. 1320, supplement 1. Public

Law 83-690, approved August 28, 1954, transferred the agricultural attachés from the Department of State to FAS.

The mission of FAS overseas is to represent U.S. agricultural interests, promote export of domestic farm products, improve world trade conditions, and report on agricultural production and trade in foreign countries. FAS staff are stationed at 98 offices around the world, where they provide expertise in agricultural economics and marketing, as well as attaché services.

FAS carries out several export assistance programs to counter the adverse effects of unfair trade practices by competitors on U.S. agricultural trade. The Market Access Program [MAP] conducts both generic and brand-identified promotional programs in conjunction with nonprofit agricultural associations and private firms financed through reimbursable CCC payments.

The General Sales Manager was established pursuant to section 5(f) of the charter of the Commodity Credit Corporation and 15 U.S.C. 714-714p. The funds allocated to the General Sales Manager are used for conducting the following programs: (1) CCC Export Credit Guarantee Program (GSM-102), including facilities financing guarantees; (2) Food for Peace; (3) section 416b Overseas Donations Program; (4) Market Access Program; and (5) programs authorized by the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (Public Law 87-155) including barter, export sales of most CCC-owned commodities, export payments, and other programs as assigned to encourage and enhance the export of U.S. agricultural commodities.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends \$227,330 for the Foreign Agricultural Service.

*Borlaug Fellows Program.*—The Committee provides no less than \$4,000,000 for the Borlaug International Agricultural Science and Technology Fellows Program. This program provides training for international scientists and policymakers from selected developing countries. The fellows work closely with U.S. specialists in their fields of expertise and apply that knowledge in their home countries. The Committee recognizes the importance of this program in helping developing countries strengthen their agricultural practices and food security.

*Cochran Fellowship Program.*—The Committee provides no less than \$5,000,000 for the Cochran Fellowship Program. The Committee encourages the Secretary to continue to provide additional support for the program through the CCC Emerging Markets Program.

*Disparate Effect of Hunger on Women and Girls.*—The Committee acknowledges the disparate impact of hunger on women and girls and the fact of the 333 million people who are severely hungry in the world right now, nearly 60 percent are women and girls. Furthermore, it is recognized that women are more likely than men to report food insecurity in almost 2/3 of countries and are more likely to suffer health conditions due to lack of nutrition, such as anemia. The Committee, therefore, encourages the Secretary to make women and girls a priority in the Food for Peace Title II program as they often eat last and least while sacrificing for their families.

*Food for Peace.*—For over 70 years the Food for Peace program has fed millions across the world and been a stabilizing force for good in struggling countries. Not only does the program feed vulnerable populations, it helps sustain the U.S. agriculture community by requiring only U.S. grown commodities be used in the program. The world is seeing unprecedented hunger in many areas of the world and the Committee does not believe now is the time to under fund this vital program.

*Quarterly Reports.*—The Secretary is directed, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to provide to the Committee a quarterly report on obligations and current balances of Food for Peace Title II grants. This report should also include any supplemental funding.

#### FOOD FOR PEACE TITLE II GRANTS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$1,619,107,000
Committee recommendation .....	1,500,000,000

*Commodities Supplied in Connection With Dispositions Abroad (Title II) (7 U.S.C. 1721–1726).*—Commodities are supplied without cost through foreign governments to combat malnutrition and to meet famine and other emergency requirements. Commodities are also supplied for non-emergencies through public and private agencies, including intergovernmental organizations. The CCC pays ocean freight on shipments under this title and may also pay overland transportation costs to a landlocked country, as well as internal distribution costs in emergency situations. The funds appropriated for title II are made available to private voluntary organizations and cooperatives to assist these organizations in meeting administrative and related costs.

*Food for Peace Interagency Review and Report.*—The Committee provides \$1,000,000 and directs the Foreign Agricultural Service [FAS] within the Department of Agriculture [USDA] to work with the U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID] on an interagency review and report to Congress that outlines the process and needs within the USDA to operate the Food for Peace program should Congress direct such a transfer of administration from USAID to USDA. For the past 70 years, American farmers have helped combat international hunger through Food for Peace, feeding more than 4 billion people in more than 150 countries. Regardless of which agency manages such program, the Committee supports efforts to improve administrative efficiencies, transparency, and integration of American farmers within the program. The Committee recognizes additional capacity at the USDA may be needed to support a seamless transition between agencies should Congress transfers the program administration. The Committee requests a report within 60 days of enactment of this legislation addressing the agency's capacity needs pre- and post-relocation, such as space requirements, IT infrastructure, and staffing levels and staff expertise, ensuring the relocation supports efficient operations, as well as a comparison to the operation of the program at USAID in fiscal year 2024. Specifically, the Committee directs that the report include:

- Justification for Relocation.*—The rationale behind the move, such as cost savings, attracting and retaining talent, or improving operational efficiency.
- Cost Analysis.*—A comprehensive cost analysis will be included, detailing expenses associated with the relocation, including facility costs, moving expenses, and any potential impact on employee compensation or benefits.
- Impact on Agency Operations.*—How the relocation will affect the agency’s day-to-day operations, including any potential disruptions, changes in work processes, or impacts on service delivery.
- Space Requirements.*—The space requirements of the new location, including square footage, office configurations, and any specialized needs.
- IT Infrastructure.*—The IT infrastructure needs of the new location, including network capacity, server requirements, and data security.
- Staffing Levels and Transfer of Staff Expertise.*—The report will address how the relocation might affect staffing levels, including any potential for downsizing, hiring, or re-allocating personnel with program expertise and must include a discussion of the staffing expertise that will need to be transferred from the United States Agency for International Development to the Department of Agriculture.
- Employee Support.*—The support provided to employees during the relocation process, such as relocation assistance, training, and communication initiatives.
- Operational Planning.*—Protocols and an operations plan for management of and participation with humanitarian responses operations, including for Disaster Assistance Response Teams, between USAID, State, and USDA.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$1,500,000,000 for Food for Peace title II grants.

#### MCGOVERN-DOLE INTERNATIONAL FOOD FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM GRANTS

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$240,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	240,000,000

The McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program helps support education, child development, and food security for some of the world’s poorest children. The program provides for donations of U.S. agricultural products, as well as financial and technical assistance, for school feeding and maternal and child nutrition projects in low-income, food-deficit countries that are committed to universal education. Commodities made available for donation through agreements with private voluntary organizations, cooperatives, intergovernmental organizations, and foreign governments may be donated for direct feeding or for local sale to generate proceeds to support school feeding and nutrition projects.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$240,000,000 for the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program.

*Local and Regional Procurement.*—The Committee supports efforts to build long-term agriculture sustainability and establish a local investment in school feeding programs. With direct U.S. commodity contributions, projects supported by the McGovern-Dole Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program have significantly improved the attendance, nourishment, and learning capacity of school-aged children in low-income countries throughout the impoverished world. New funding authorities would enable school feeding programs to proactively transition from direct commodity assistance to locally sourced agriculture products. The Committee directs the Secretary to conduct the Local and Regional Food Aid Procurement Project Program in accordance with the priorities of the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program.

## COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION EXPORT [LOANS]

## CREDIT GUARANTEE PROGRAM ACCOUNT

## (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

[In thousands of dollars]

	Guaranteed loan levels
Appropriations, 2025 .....	6,063
Committee recommendation .....	6,063

In 1980, the CCC instituted the Export Credit Guarantee Program (GSM–102) under its charter authority. With this program, CCC guarantees, for a fee, payments due U.S. exporters under deferred payment sales contracts (up to 36 months) for defaults due to commercial as well as noncommercial risks. The risk to CCC extends from the date of export to the end of the deferred payment period covered in the export sales contract and covers only that portion of the payments agreed to in the assurance agreement. Operation of this program is based on criteria which will assure that it is used only where it is determined that it will develop new market opportunities and maintain and expand existing world markets for U.S. agricultural commodities. The program encourages U.S. financial institutions to provide financing to those areas where the institutions would be unwilling to provide financing in the absence of the CCC guarantees. CCC also provides facilities financing guarantees.

The Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (Public Law 101–508) establishes the program account. The subsidy costs of the CCC export guarantee programs are exempt from the requirement of advance appropriations of budget authority according to section 504(c)(2) of the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (Public Law 101–508). Appropriations to this account will be used for administrative expenses.

**TITLE VI**  
**RELATED AGENCY AND FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**  
**FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION**

[In thousands of dollars]

	Fiscal year 2025 enacted	Committee recommendation
Centers and related field activities:		
Human Food Program .....	1,171,319	1,171,319
Center Activities .....	576,058	576,058
Field Activities .....	442,887	442,887
HFP Field Lab Operations .....		
Field Laboratory Operations .....	152,374	152,374
Human Drugs .....	724,168	724,168
Center Activities .....	521,040	521,040
Field Activities .....	165,194	165,194
Field Laboratory Operations .....	37,934	37,934
Biologics .....	268,197	268,197
Center Activities .....	224,144	224,144
Field Activities .....	43,808	43,808
Field Laboratory Operations .....	245	245
Animal Drugs .....	228,708	228,708
Center Activities .....	172,309	172,309
Center Activities (HFP) .....		
Field Activities .....	44,836	44,836
Field Lab Operations (HFP) .....		
Field Laboratory Operations .....	11,563	11,563
Medical and Radiological Devices .....	446,660	454,874
Center Activities .....	359,749	366,365
Field Activities .....	77,980	79,414
Field Laboratory Operations .....	8,931	9,095
National Center for Toxicological Research .....	77,740	77,740
Office of the Commissioner .....	234,981	236,767
Rent, related activities, and rental payments for GSA .....	375,377	375,377
FDA Buildings and Facilities .....	5,000	5,000
Total, FDA salaries and expenses, new budget authority, buildings and facilities	3,527,150	3,537,150
FDA Total without Buildings and Facilities .....	3,522,150	3,532,150

The Food and Drug Administration [FDA] is a scientific regulatory agency whose mission is to promote and protect the public health and safety of Americans. The FDA's work is a blend of science and law. The Food and Drug Administration Amendments Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–85) reaffirmed the responsibilities of the FDA: to ensure safe and effective products reach the market in a timely way and to monitor products for continued safety while they are in use. In addition, the FDA is entrusted with two critical functions in the Nation's war on terrorism: preventing willful contamination of all regulated products, including food; and improving the availability of medications to prevent or treat injuries caused by biological, chemical, radiological, or nuclear agents.

The FDA Foods program has the primary responsibility for assuring that the food supply, quality of foods, food ingredients, and dietary supplements are safe, sanitary, nutritious, wholesome, and honestly labeled and that cosmetic products are safe and properly labeled. The variety and complexity of the food supply has grown

dramatically while new and more complex safety issues, such as emerging microbial pathogens, natural toxins, and technological innovations in production and processing, have developed. This program plays a major role in keeping the U.S. food supply among the safest in the world.

In January 2011, the Food Safety Modernization Act [FSMA] (Public Law 111-353) was signed into law. This law enables the FDA to better protect public health by strengthening the food safety system. It enables the FDA to focus more on preventing food safety and feed problems rather than relying primarily on reacting to problems after they occur. The law also provides the FDA with new enforcement authorities designed to achieve higher rates of compliance with prevention- and risk-based food and feed safety standards and to better respond to and contain problems when they do occur. The law also gives the FDA important new tools to hold imported food and feed to the same standards as domestic food and feed and directs the FDA to build an integrated national food safety system in partnership with State and local authorities.

The FDA Drugs programs are comprised of four separate areas: Human Drugs, Animal Drugs, Medical Devices, and Biologics. The FDA is responsible for the lifecycle of products, including pre-market review and post-market surveillance of human and animal drugs, medical devices, and biological products to ensure their safety and effectiveness. For Human Drugs, this includes assuring that all drug products used for the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of disease are safe and effective. Additional procedures include reviewing and evaluating investigational new drug applications; evaluation of market applications for new and generic drugs and labeling and composition of prescription and over-the-counter drugs; monitoring the quality and safety of products manufactured in, or imported into, the United States; and regulating the advertising and promotion of prescription drugs. The Animal Drugs and Feeds program ensures only safe and effective veterinary drugs, intended for the treatment and/or prevention of diseases in animals and the improved production of food-producing animals, are approved for marketing.

The FDA Biologics program assures that blood and blood products, blood test kits, vaccines, and therapeutics are pure, potent, safe, effective, and properly labeled. The program inspects blood banks and blood processors; licenses and inspects firms collecting human source plasma; evaluates and licenses biologics manufacturing firms and products; lot releases licensed products; and monitors adverse events associated with vaccine immunization, blood products, and other biologics.

The FDA Devices and Radiological program ensures the safety and effectiveness of medical devices and eliminates unnecessary human exposure to man-made radiation from medical, occupational, and consumer products. In addition, the program enforces quality standards under the Mammography Quality Standards Act (Public Law 108-365). Medical devices include thousands of products from thermometers and contact lenses to heart pacemakers, hearing aids, and MRIs. Radiological products include items such as microwave ovens and video display terminals.

The FDA's National Center for Toxicological Research [NCTR] in Jefferson, Arkansas, serves as a specialized resource, conducting peer-review scientific research that provides the basis for the FDA to make sound, science-based regulatory decisions through its pre-market review and post-market surveillance. The research is designed to define and understand the biological mechanisms of action underlying the toxicity of products and lead to developing methods to improve assessment of human exposure, susceptibility, and risk of those products regulated by the FDA.

In 2009, Congress granted the FDA new authority to regulate the manufacture, distribution, and marketing of tobacco products. The FDA exercises this responsibility by protecting the public health from the health effects of tobacco, setting scientific standards and standards for tobacco product review, conducting compliance activities to enforce its authority over tobacco, and conducting public education and outreach about the health effects of tobacco products.

#### SALARIES AND EXPENSES

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

[In thousands of dollars]

	Appropriation	User fees	Total
Appropriations, 2025 .....	3,532,150	3,482,888	7,015,038

*Accelerated Approval Pathway.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of the FDA's continued use of the Accelerated Approval pathway to provide patients with unmet medical needs access to new therapies, especially to patients with neurological diseases. Further, the Committee is concerned that the application of the regulatory flexibility offered under the Accelerated Approval Pathway is not uniform between the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research [CDER] and the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research [CBER]. The Committee directs the FDA to continue to engage through its Accelerated Approval Council to align policies related to the use of accelerated approval and to report to the Committee within 90 days of enactment of this act on how the Accelerated Approval Pathway is being administered uniformly in both CDER and CBER, including any significant policy documents developed that facilitate the consistent and appropriate use of Accelerated Approval by CDER, CBER and the Oncology Center of Excellence. Congress gave the FDA the authority to ensure that the accelerated approval pathway continues to ensure early access to safe and effective new therapies for individuals with serious or life-threatening illnesses. The Committee recognizes the importance of and support for the FDA's continued use of the Accelerated Approval pathway to provide patients with unmet medical needs access to new therapies. In particular, the Committee supports the FDA's authority to approve therapies under the accelerated approval pathway based on surrogate endpoints or intermediate clinical endpoints and remains concerned about other HHS agencies discouraging the use of the pathway and thus patient access, particularly related to Alzheimer's disease therapies.



*Additive Ingredients in Drug Products.*—The Committee is aware that the Department of Health and Human Services has announced plans to phase out the use of certain additive ingredients from food products in the United States. The Committee also understands that additional actions may be underway to evaluate the use of certain additives as inactive ingredients in drug products, including prescription and over the counter [OTC] ingested drug products. To ensure that the Department's efforts to remove synthetic dyes and other additive ingredients with no medical or nutritious purpose comprehensively address all products available in the U.S., the Committee encourages the Commissioner to provide a report to the Committee listing all additive ingredients, including synthetic dyes, artificial sweeteners, and artificial flavors, used in prescription and OTC ingested drug products that the Department plans to phase out the use of, as well as details on the Department's plan to eliminate those additive ingredients from food and ingested drug products.

*Advanced Manufacturing Technologies.*—The Committee encourages the Commissioner to continue to facilitate the utilization of advanced manufacturing technologies to improve manufacturing efficiencies and dependability. The Committee requests that the Commissioner continue to encourage manufacturers of critical generic sterile injectable products that commonly experience drug shortages to invest in innovative technologies that are effective and sustainable.

*Agricultural Water Rule.*—The Committee directs the Human Food Program to continue its Produce Safety Network of technical agents to assist growers in conducting environmental assessments, evaluating agricultural water, and other crucial food safety functions. The Committee recommends the placement of agents should take into consideration the top U.S. States in most need of food safety technical resources, and mixed agricultural regions.

*ALS.*—The Committee recognizes the FDA's Orphan Drug Program is one of the few programs in the Federal Government that funds phase 1 and phase 2 clinical trials for new ALS therapies. In addition, FDA-sponsored research can expedite ALS drug development through innovative trial designs that can speed the FDA regulatory processes for new ALS treatments. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2024 level to support Section 5 of the Accelerating Access to Critical Therapies for ALS Act (Act for ALS; Public Law 117–79), which established the FDA Rare Neurodegenerative Disease Grant Program authorizing grants for clinical trials for ALS and other neurodegenerative diseases. The Committee supports Sections 3 and 4 of ACT for ALS, to support the HHS Public-Private Partnership for Rare Neurodegenerative Diseases and implementation of the ACT for ALS Action Plan.

*Alzheimer's Disease.*—The Committee recognizes and commends the FDA for its efforts thus far in addressing Alzheimer's and related dementias and urges the FDA to fully utilize all existing authorities and tools to meet these critical unmet medical needs. It is vital that the FDA fully applies current science, patient input, and available regulatory mechanisms to expedite the development and approval of potential treatments. Prioritizing patient access to innovative therapies is paramount. The Committee remains com-

mitted to supporting the FDA's efforts and emphasizes the need for a proactive and comprehensive approach in tackling this devastating family of diseases.

*Andrological Health.*—The Committee encourages the FDA to convene a public meeting discussing areas of unmet need for products addressing male reproductive and sexual health. This meeting will focus on identifying areas of unmet need and proposals developing new safe and effective products, focusing on products for male reproductive and sexual health.

*Angelman Syndrome.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of patient-focused drug development for Angelman syndrome, a rare and devastating monogenic neurodevelopmental disorder. Patient and family preferences and broader patient experience data should have an impact on drug development. For this population, seemingly small gains in self-care are critical for patients and their caregivers in building toward independence. Without treatments individuals are completely dependent on a caregiver to perform the fundamental activities of daily living such as dressing, eating, grooming, and navigating their environment. The Committee encourages the FDA to utilize patient experience data to inform regulatory decision-making, as well as the further development of Angelman syndrome clinical endpoints and biomarkers. The FDA should ensure clinically meaningful improvements that matter to patients and families are recognized in regulatory decision-making.

*Animal Biotechnology Reviews.*—The Committee recognizes the role of the FDA in regulating intentional genomic alterations in animals under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.). The Committee encourages the FDA to evaluate and expand opportunities, consistent with existing law, to align its review policies with a product-based framework and to prioritize timely, science-based decisions for animal biotechnology products that do not present new or elevated risks.

*Animal Drug Compounding.*—The Committee urges the FDA to provide public clarification on the role of Animal Drug Compounding in outsourcing facilities registered under section 503B of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. While both CVM and CDER have stated in guidance documents that 503B provisions do not apply to animal drugs, many 503B facilities continue to advertise an ability to compound any needed animal preparation in their 503B facility. The FDA should publicly clarify the use of these outsourcing facilities to produce compounded preparations for animals.

*Animal Food Ingredients.*—Animal food ingredients are subject to review by the Center for Veterinary Medicine and animal food additives require pre-market approval by the Center before they can enter the interstate marketplace to be sold for consumption by either livestock or pets. The Committee remains concerned about the time associated with the ingredient review and approval process. To address these concerns, the Committee includes funding consistent with fiscal year 2024 levels and directs the Center for Veterinary Medicine to improve animal food ingredient reviews to enable innovation and address challenges and opportunities in the animal food industry. Further, the Committee directs a briefing within [60] days of enactment of this act regarding staffing levels

as well as an explanation of what may be contributing to the delays in review times.

*Animal Food Substances.*—The Committee understands that the Center for Veterinary Medicine is working to improve its review and approval of novel animal food substances that affect the structure or function of the animal through a means other than nutrition but only act within the animal's gastrointestinal tract. In some cases, certain substances are administered orally but not directly added to the food or drinking water of animals. When reviewing and approving animal feed ingredient petitions, the Center for Veterinary Medicine shall ensure that substances administered orally, including boluses, are deemed to be food additives provided they achieve their intended effects solely within the gastrointestinal tract and meet other relevant criteria established by the Commissioner.

*Animal Product Terminology.*—The Committee is concerned about the increase of products, which do not include meat or egg products, that are labeled and marketed using animal food product terminology and related iconography. The Committee directs the FDA to conduct a study to better understand consumers' attitudes, beliefs, motivations, and perceptions relative to product composition, health attributes, and labeling. The FDA shall assess consumer perceptions of different terms used on labeling of plant-based alternative products. No later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this act, the FDA shall submit to the Committee, and make publicly available online, a report on the findings of this study.

*Antimicrobial Research.*—The Committee supports the FDA's work to improve the understanding of biofilms and the regulatory science of biofilms associated with the FDA's work on medical devices, drug delivery, and public health. The Committee is encouraged by the FDA's goal to reduce healthcare associated infections as described in the FDA CDRH Regulatory Science Priorities report, support the domestic manufacture of medical devices and drugs delivery systems.

*Artificial Intelligence.*—The Committee supports the steps that the FDA has taken to identify and oversee issues related to AI in drug development and urges the Commissioner to convene a dedicated, cross-center team of internal experts in AI-enabled drug development. Building on existing frameworks and programs, the Committee encourages the agency to consider engaging subject matter experts from outside of the agency in artificial intelligence, as appropriate, to discuss general matters relating to the uses of AI in drug development. The Commissioner shall provide a report to the Committee no later than 180 days after enactment of this act the status of the FDA's efforts regarding engagement on AI in drug development.

*Artificial Intelligence in Medical Devices.*—Within 90 days of enactment of this act, the FDA shall conduct an assessment of its existing authorities and provide to Congress a report that identifies, if any, changes to its statutory authorities necessary for the FDA to conduct oversight of post-deployment performance and patient safety monitoring of artificial intelligence/machine learning [AI/ML] based software as a medical device [SaMD] and AI/ML-en-

abled medical devices. The Commissioner's report to Congress should include recommended modifications to authority, law, or policy, including an estimate of the associated implementation costs and any adjustment in the allocation of resources.

*Avian Influenza.*—The FDA shall prioritize inspection and regulatory activities for dairy products for human and animal consumption, and animal food for H5N1 virus. The Committee encourages the FDA to ensure that the HFP, CVM, and OII are sufficiently staffed and resourced to carry out these duties.

*Bacterial Endotoxin Testing.*—The Committee recognizes that use of recombinant Bacterial Endotoxins Testing [rBET] methods as alternatives to tests using horseshoe crab blood could provide scientific, economic, supply chain, environmental, and animal protection benefits in the safety testing of vaccines, injectable therapies, and medical devices. The Committee recognizes that the United States Pharmacopeia [USP] chapter <86>, which includes rBET methods for endotoxins testing for products, has been finalized. The Committee directs the FDA to update its 2012 Guidance for Industry on Pyrogen and Endotoxins Testing by publishing revised draft guidance within 365 days of enactment of this act to include acceptance of appropriate rBET methods for endotoxins testing for new and existing products. The FDA will provide staff training on rBET methods.

*Biosimilars.*—The Committee recognizes the FDA's continued work to approve biosimilars that can enhance competition, drive down costs to healthcare systems, and increase patient access to biologic therapies. In May 2025, the FDA approved the 71st biosimilar product. The Committee encourages the FDA to continue its commitment to working with industry to resolve delays or setbacks in a timely manner so that high-quality, safe, and effective biosimilars, particularly those that would introduce new competition, can more quickly get to market.

*Biotechnology Regulatory Capacity.*—The Committee encourages the FDA to dedicate resources to strengthen staffing and expertise for reviewing biotechnology-derived food products, including plant- and microorganism-based innovations. The Committee also encourages the FDA to assess the feasibility of establishing a biotechnology regulatory fellowship program to support workforce development and expand technical capacity in response to increasing application volume and complexity.

*Botanical Dietary Supplements.*—The Committee appreciates the agency's efforts to strengthen regulation of dietary supplements-including through the use of the Dietary Supplement Ingredient Advisory List and the Botanical Safety Consortium. The Committee encourages the FDA to further invest in research to identify potential drug interactions with botanical drugs.

*Cancer Immunotherapy and Artificial Intelligence [AI].*—The Committee is encouraged by recent progress in developing personalized treatments designed for a patient's unique cancer. AI models specifically are becoming critically important in this effort. The Committee commends the FDA for advancing the use of these models by issuing its recent draft guidance, "Considerations for the Use of Artificial Intelligence to Support Regulatory Decision-Making for Drug and Biological Products." To provide additional clarity, future

guidance should address how investigators should incorporate timely AI updates into ongoing clinical trials and development pathways where the drug relies on an AI output. Therefore, the Committee encourages the FDA to work with stakeholders to develop guidance on how to incorporate iterative changes to AI technologies within the regulatory pathway of an AI-dependent personalized treatment.

*Cannabis.*—The Committee is concerned about the proliferation of products marketed in violation of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act [FFDCA], including products containing derivatives of the cannabis plant. The Committee is aware that non-FFDCA compliant products pose potential health and safety risks to consumers through misleading, unsubstantiated, and false claims that cannabis and cannabis derivatives can treat serious and life-threatening diseases and conditions, including COVID-19 and cancer.

*Cell and Gene Therapy.*—The Committee commends the FDA's prioritization of cell and gene therapies and directs the agency to continue to modernize its approach, considering the totality of the scientific evidence and maximizing approval pathways, especially for rare and ultra-rare conditions with significant unmet medical needs. The FDA should review these therapies based on current scientific understanding and with urgency, particularly for pediatric patients. To advance these efforts, the FDA reviewers are encouraged to collaborate with expert researchers and stakeholders to stay informed about the latest field advancements. While recognizing the critical balance between patient safety and timely access to potentially life-saving treatments, the Committee is concerned by the seemingly disproportionate number of clinical holds on cell and gene therapy trials. Although clinical holds are an appropriate regulatory mechanism, the Committee urges the FDA to apply them judiciously and work proactively with sponsors to address issues without unnecessarily impeding critical research by applying clinical holds without a clear communication of the rationale.

*Cell Cultured Products.*—The Committee is aware that in April of 2020 the U.S. Government Accountability Office completed a study of cell culture products and found that because no company was commercially producing cell-cultured meat at that time, there was a lack of specific information on the technology being used, eventual commercial production methods, and composition of final products. The Committee directs the FDA to submit a report no later than 60 days following the enactment of this act to the Committee outlining the specific information on the technology being used commercial production methods, and composition of the final products that have undergone the FDA's pre-market consultation process for human foods made with cultured animal cells.

*Centers of Excellence in Advanced and Continuous Pharmaceutical Manufacturing.*—The Committee supports the FDA's work to promote the domestic manufacturing of drug and biological products to bolster drug supply chain resiliency. The Committee directs the FDA to submit a report to the Committee within 120 days of the enactment of this act with plans to designate National Centers of Excellence.

*Chemotherapy Shortages.*—The Committee is concerned by the recent shortages of commonly used chemotherapeutic drugs, includ-

ing cisplatin and carboplatin. These shortages have hurt cancer care and resulted in care rationing in some cases. Reliable access to chemotherapeutic drugs is essential to cancer care. The Committee is concerned that the FDA has only included a single chemotherapeutic drug on its Essential Medicines list. The Committee urges the FDA to continue to take appropriate action to mitigate future shortages of chemotherapeutic drugs, including considering the inclusion of additional chemotherapeutic drugs to the Essential Medicines list.

*Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease.*—Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease [COPD] continues to be among the leading causes of death, chronic illness, and disease economic burden in the United States. Over 15 million Americans have been diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease [COPD] and it is estimated that a similar number are undiagnosed and not receiving appropriate treatment. The Committee is aware of efforts to support development of COPD treatments for earlier stages of the disease aiming to slow progression and reduce the burden of disease on individuals and society. To support these efforts, patient-centered, novel clinical outcome measures are needed to advance these potential therapies. The Committee encourages the FDA to continue to collaborate with the COPD Foundation and other stakeholders in this important area.

*Chronic Pain.*—Chronic pain is the leading cause of disability in the U.S. and is increasing faster than other common chronic diseases like diabetes, depression and high blood pressure. Despite the enormous burden of chronic pain on fifty million Americans, the healthcare system and the U.S. economy, there has been limited novel, non-opioid therapeutics approved for chronic pain in more than a decade. While the Committee is pleased that the FDA released guidance regarding non-opioid analgesics for acute pain in 2022, the FDA has not released such guidance for chronic pain despite statutory requirements of section 3001(b) of the 2018 SUP-PORT Act. Therefore, the Committee directs the FDA within 180 days of enactment to issue or update existing guidance to help address challenges to developing non-addictive medical products to manage chronic pain.

*Clinical Trial Efficacy.*—The Committee supports the FDA's continued efforts to require study sponsors to develop and submit action plans for including appropriately representative individuals in phase 3 studies of new drugs. The Committee directs the FDA to consider strategies that would assist sponsors with how it can use its authorities in a flexible manner and to provide additional guidance to study sponsors regarding mechanisms to remedy inadequate progress as those study sponsors continue to work with the FDA to overcome common barriers to participation. This includes restrictive eligibility criteria and limited enrollment outreach, particularly in rural or underserved areas. The FDA is directed to, within 180 days of enactment of this act, provide a report to the Committee and to post on a publicly accessible website on steps it has and can still take to assist sponsors with overcoming barriers to participation.

*Clinical Trial Guidance.*—The Committee welcomes the draft guidance under docket FDA-2023-D-1987. The Committee directs

the FDA to issue final guidance no later than 270 days after the enactment of this act.

*Clinical Trial Operations.*—The Committee recognizes that staffing shortages are present at clinical research sites, exacerbating longstanding challenges to the timely collection and efficient reporting of clinical trial data in cancer research. The burden of data collection, entry, and verification is high and rests primarily with site staff, who most often input data manually. Meanwhile, the data fields requested for developing a given drug class have become increasingly numerous and may be complex. The Committee urges the FDA to provide guidance to cancer trial sites, sponsors, and contractors that both defines necessary data elements and streamlines data entry and verification processes. Such guidance will be foundational in maximizing clinical trial efficiency through a targeted reduction of the administrative burden currently placed upon research staff.

*Continuous Pharmaceutical Manufacturing.*—The Committee appreciates the FDA's continued efforts to adapt drug manufacturing guidance to align with new advanced manufacturing processes such as continuous flow manufacturing of active pharmaceutical ingredients [API], including the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research's Framework for Regulatory Advanced Manufacturing Evaluation [FRAME] Initiative. The Committee is concerned that a current lack of clear standards and realistic quality assessment methods for continuous pharmaceutical manufacturing are creating unnecessary risk for capital investments in advanced manufacturing equipment. The Committee notes the promising potential for continuous pharmaceutical manufacturing to reduce the cost of generic pharmaceutical production and make it more financially viable to increase generic pharmaceutical manufacturing in the United States. The Committee also notes that investors and manufacturers may hesitate to make the significant capital investments required to purchase continuous manufacturing equipment when standard practices for quality monitoring and licensing are not yet established.

*Counterfeit Drugs.*—The Committee is concerned by the increased presence of counterfeit drugs in the U.S. pharmaceutical distribution supply chain. The Committee directs the FDA to provide a report that outlines the challenges that the FDA faces with preventing counterfeit drugs from entering the U.S. pharmaceutical distribution supply chain and reaching patients. The report should include recommendations for funding or authorities needed to address this problem to protect public health and should be provided to the Committee within 120 days of the enactment of this act.

*Dietary Supplements.*—The Committee applauds the FDA's policy and enforcement actions against manufacturers of dietary supplement products that are adulterated or misbranded but recognizes that more resources are needed to address products that are contaminated, either intentionally or unintentionally, with unsafe ingredients. The Committee has noted the agency's efforts to strengthen regulation of dietary supplements—including through the recently re-released Dietary Supplement Ingredient Directory and the Botanical Safety Consortium—but encourages increased enforcement activities and interagency collaboration with the De-

partment of Justice to remove illegal dietary supplements from the market. The Committee encourages the FDA to increase enforcement of the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act [DSHEA], including inspection and enforcement activities. The FDA shall continue to update the Committee, explaining how the agency carries out risk-based enforcement of dietary supplement product manufacturers and the resources it used for these activities.

*Drug Approvals.*—The Committee asserts that the FDA’s authority to approve medications should be solely based on sound science and devoid of political or economic considerations.

*Drug Shortages.*—The Committee is concerned by ongoing drug shortages in the United States, including for drugs that have been on the shortage list for many years, without solutions to remove them from the list. The Committee directs the FDA to provide a briefing that outlines how it is working with industry to facilitate the resolution of drug shortages and discuss potential recommendations for improving supply chain resilience to reduce the potential for such drugs to return to list in the future. The briefing should be held within 120 days of the enactment of this act and should also include the methodology used by the FDA to determine whether a drug meets the statutory standard for addition to or removal from the drug shortage list.

*Duchenne and Becker Muscular Dystrophy.*—There are currently eight approved therapies for Duchenne, five of which aim to address the underlying cause of Duchenne. One of those five is a gene therapy. In addition, individuals with Duchenne are routinely prescribed a variety of therapies for symptom management—including three approvals for Duchenne-specific symptoms. However, a significant unmet need remains. The Committee recognizes the important work of patient, provider, and research organizations to better understand the effects of these products used in sequence and encourages the FDA to collaborate in this initiative.

*East Asia Offices.*—The Committee is aware of the need for the FDA to have a permanent presence in East Asia, outside of China, to conduct inspections, including unannounced inspections, and strengthen regulatory control and oversight for products being produced in that region, including devices, drugs, and aquaculture products. Therefore, the Committee instructs the FDA to establish within the Office of Global Policy and Strategy [OGPS] an East Asia Regional Office with locations in Hanoi, Vietnam and Tokyo, Japan. The Committee provides an additional \$1,800,000 to the OGPS to support this initiative. In addition, the FDA is directed to spend not less than \$5,000,000 on these efforts.

*Essential Medical Devices.*—The FDA issued a safety communication in November 2023, with additional updates in March, April, and May of 2025, warning consumers, healthcare providers, and healthcare facilities to avoid syringes that are manufactured in China due to quality and patient safety concerns around leaks, breakage, and other problems. However, foreign needles and syringes, particularly from China, continue to be imported into the U.S. These products are being widely used throughout the U.S. healthcare system despite the serious risks to patients and the resulting erosion of the domestic manufacturing base. The Committee



strongly supports efforts to protect patient safety, national security, and vulnerable domestic supply chains for critical industries, like essential medical devices. The Committee directs the FDA to provide a report to the Committee on steps it will take to increase awareness of problematic syringes from China, including discussion of the use of domestically produced syringes as alternatives where appropriate.

*Essential Medicines.*—The Committee requests the Commissioner, in coordination with other relevant Federal entities, and, as appropriate, in consultation with stakeholders who have relevant expertise, update, maintain, and publish a list of essential medicines initially developed in response to Executive Order 13944 (85 Fed. Reg. 49929) to include drug and biological products, including their active ingredients that are: directly related to responding to chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear threats and incidents; of greatest priority for providing healthcare and identified as being at high risk of shortage; or the shortage of which would have an adverse health outcome on patients with chronic conditions. Using the products listed on the Essential Medicines List, the Committee requests the Secretary, in coordination with other relevant Federal entities, and through public-private partnerships, map, or otherwise visualize, the supply chains of the drug and biological products on the Essential Medicines List, including, to the extent data are available, their key starting materials, excipients, and active ingredients. The Committee encourages the Commissioner to use data analytics to identify supply chain vulnerabilities that pose a threat to national and health security. The Committee directs the Secretary to submit a report to the relevant committees of Congress on (1) the current status of efforts to map and analyze supply chains for essential medicines, including coordination among relevant Federal entities; and (2) the extent to which the FDA uses data analytics to conduct predictive modeling for anticipated drug shortages and risks associated with supply chain vulnerabilities that pose a threat to national security; and (3) any gaps or limitations in utilizing data analytics to mitigate identified risks, including drug shortages, and increase resiliency of essential medicine supply chains.

*Expert Panels.*—The Committee is concerned with panels that the FDA recently deployed to evaluate scientific matters related to talc, infant formula, and cell and gene therapies that could impact public health. The FDA should assess scientific issues in a transparent manner and must adhere to principles established by Congress in the Federal Advisory Committee Act. The Committee is concerned that the agency did not allow public participation or provide for public comments and panelists did not disclose potential conflicts of interest. The FDA must follow long standing practices that ensure processes and decisionmaking are transparent, unbiased, and grounded in science. The Committee expects that any future engagement with regards to these and other topics will be based on sound science and free from conflicts of interest.

*Food Labeling Accuracy.*—The Committee supports evaluating whether artificial intelligence [AI] driven audit tools can effectively assess food labeling accuracy and facilitate greater Federal labeling compliance. The Human Foods Program [HFP] is responsible for

assuring that foods sold in the United States are safe and properly labeled. The Committee believes that AI-driven tools will accelerate HFP's goal of ensuring the accuracy of food labeling consistent with the Agency's obligation under the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act and the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act to monitor and ensure that food labels are truthful and not misleading. The Committee directs HFP's to report to the Committee by on the status of its evaluation.

*Food Regulations.*—The Committee strongly supports efforts to provide Americans with healthier food choices but is troubled by the lack of coordination and transparency between the USDA, FDA, and CDC in safeguarding our Nation's food supply, particularly during foodborne illness outbreak investigations. The Committee directs the FDA in coordination with the USDA and CDC to provide recommendations on ways to improve interagency collaboration in order to efficiently deploy inspectional resources, conduct coordinated outbreak investigations, and provide unified messages to the American public. There are concerns that information communicated to the public in the past may have been inaccurate. Therefore, the Committee requests that the USDA, FDA, and CDC acknowledge that initial hypotheses may need to be updated based on new scientific evidence and final conclusions must be based on robust evidence. These recommendations should also include ways to work with the industry to improve food safety. USDA, FDA, and CDC should collaborate with industry during outbreak investigations to prevent future events. The Committee requests a report from the USDA, FDA, and CDC on these recommendations within 90 days of enactment of this act to ensure that U.S. consumers have access to safe, healthy and affordable foods.

*Food Chemical and Color Reviews.*—The Committee directs the Food and Drug Administration [FDA] to use robust and well-established scientific principles to conduct pre-market assessments on chemicals that could end up in the food supply, when such assessments are required by law or regulation, and to prioritize and conduct post-market food chemical assessments (or reviews) resulting in risk-based conclusions while prioritizing risk management practices as needed for chemicals already in the food supply. The Committee directs the FDA to proceed through a post-market review assessment of color additives authorized by the FDA under the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act [FD&C Act) before the removal of any use authorizations other than removal based on industry abandonment or where such color additives are deemed unsafe by law. The Committee is aware of potential impacts to the U. S. food supply chain of any widespread phase out on color additives authorized by FDA under the FD&C Act and directs the FDA, in consultation with other Federal departments and agencies as appropriate, to ensure that any changes will not significantly disrupt the U.S. food supply while considering any phase outs of ingredients.

*Food Safety Modernization Act Outreach to Small Farmers.*—The Committee directs that of the of the funding provided for the Human Foods Program and related field activities in the Office of Inspections and Investigations, no less than the fiscal year 2025 amount shall be provided to support outreach, training, and tech-

nical assistance to farmers, including small farmers, to assist them in meeting the requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act.

*Field Based Prevention Strategies.*—The Committee directs the FDA Center for Excellence to continue to dedicate funds as necessary to develop field-based prevention strategies for the fresh produce industry.

*Foreign Approved Drugs.*—The Committee supports efforts to increase the tools available to the FDA to ensure the timely approval of lifesaving drugs and encourages the FDA to examine opportunities to facilitate submission of marketing applications by manufacturers of drugs with marketing authorization in countries listed in 21 U.S.C. 382, Federal, Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act section 802(b), but which are not approved in the United States.

*Foreign Medical Device Inspections.*—The Committee is concerned about medical device recalls from foreign facilities and directs the FDA to strengthen its foreign inspection pilot programs to include medical device inspections. The FDA should identify what, if anything, is needed to increase unannounced inspections of overseas drug and device manufacturers, with emphasis on facilities in China and India where quality issues are most prevalent. The FDA should enhance inspector language capabilities, technological resources, and staffing levels across both programs. The Committee expects the FDA to report within 180 days on concrete steps taken to integrate and improve these inspection programs, including unified metrics on inspection frequency, violation rates, and progress in eliminating the backlog of uninspected facilities. The report shall detail specific measures that are available if efforts to conceal violations during inspections are discovered and ensure imported drugs and devices consistently meet U.S. safety standards.

*Grain Reconditioning.*—The Committee is aware of delays in the FDA's approval for a reconditioning process after the Federal Grain Inspection Service [FGIS] has determined the inspected grain at export facilities to be Distinct Low Quality. The Committee directs the FDA and USDA to update their Memorandum of Understanding [MOU] regarding their respective timely responsibilities in the inspection and standardization of grain, rice, pulses, and food products, to allow pre-approved reconditioning plans for lost/sublots of grain that are found actionable for specific conditions. In updating the MOU, the Committee directs the FDA and USDA to consult with key stakeholders, including industry.

*Hawaii Coffee.*—The Committee includes bill language regarding Hawaii Grown Coffee and directs the FDA to update its Beverages and Beverage Materials guidance and any other relevant guidance's to clarify or add any additional food safety issues that may arise due to this change within 180 days of enactment.

*Heavy Metals in Baby Food.*—The Committee is concerned that lead, arsenic, cadmium and mercury are often present in dangerous quantities in foods intended for consumption by infants and toddlers and encourages the FDA to coordinate with the USDA to ensure that a wide variety of healthy nutritious foods remain available to participants of Federal nutrition programs.

*Highly Sensitized Kidney Transplant Patients.*—The Committee recognizes that highly sensitized patients, who comprise 10–30 per-

cent of the kidney transplant waiting list, face severe challenges in finding compatible donor organs. These patients experience significantly higher rejection rates compared to non-sensitized patients, and many remain on dialysis for extended periods. The Committee notes that current desensitization protocols, while promising, still face challenges with antibody rebound and high rejection rates. The Committee directs the FDA to submit a report within 180 days after enactment of this act detailing strategies to facilitate the development and approval of desensitization therapies, ensure the safety of medications used in desensitization protocols, and improve long-term outcomes for highly sensitized patients.

*Hiring Freeze Related to Scientists and Product Reviewers.*—The Committee is concerned about hiring restrictions in place at the FDA for scientists, product reviewers, and inspectors. As the FDA continues necessary modernization to meet the needs of the fast-paced development of innovation in the United States, a key component is ensuring its workforce has the up-to-date expertise to meet those needs. The FDA is a science-based regulatory agency whose crucial mission is to protect and promote public health; which is heavily reliant on the expertise and contributions of its scientific staff. The FDA's scientists are at the forefront of regulatory science, which involves developing new tools, standards, and approaches to assess regulated products. Their technical expertise is essential for keeping pace with scientific and technological advancements and improving public health outcomes. The FDA's inspectorate is on the front lines of safeguarding public health by verifying that facilities and products comply with Federal laws and regulations. Inspections help to identify potential hazards and non-compliance issues before they escalate into public health crises, like outbreaks of foodborne illness. By inspecting manufacturing processes and assessing product quality, inspectors ensure that drugs, medical devices, and other regulated products meet rigorous safety and efficacy standards. The Committee is aware of the challenges facing recruitment and retention of qualified candidates for these positions and directs the FDA to remove the hiring restrictions in place for these key roles within 30 days of enactment of this act. The Committee provides that no department or agency funded in this or any other appropriations Acts, including prior year Acts, may continue the freeze on the hiring of Federal civilian employees imposed by the Presidential Memorandum dated January 20, 2025 (Hiring Freeze), and extended in the Presidential Memorandum dated April 15, 2025 (Extension of Hiring Freeze), for scientists, product reviewers, and inspectors at the FDA: *Provided*, That, notwithstanding any merit hiring plan that either has been adopted or is adopted subsequent to the date of enactment of this act pursuant to Executive Order 14710 of January 20, 2025 (Reforming the Federal Hiring Process and Restoring Merit to Government Service), any such hiring of scientists, product reviewers, and inspectors at the FDA shall be exempted from the hiring freeze pursuant to this section within 30 days of the date enactment of this act: *Provided further*, That any further extension of the hiring freeze referred to in this section that occurs subsequent to the date of enactment of this act shall not apply to scientists, product reviewers, and inspectors at the FDA.

*HIV Self-Testing.*—The Committee supports advancement of technologies that enable rapid self-testing for HIV, particularly those technologies that detect HIV in patients on current or future therapeutics and vaccines. The Committee notes the critical importance of having such self-testing technologies available before HIV vaccines reach the market in order to eliminate false positive results with current tests and to support vaccine adoption. The Committee encourages the FDA to prioritize meritorious proposals to bring these important tests to market.

*Homeopathy.*—The Committee understands the importance of homeopathic medicines for millions of users. Consumers access and safety to these products are best ensured by implementing a legal pathway that includes homeopathic specific standards for the regulation of these medicines. The Committee understands the FDA is limited to enforcing pharmaceutical specific standards when taking enforcement action against products labeled as homeopathic. The FDA's interpretation of the law that all homeopathic medicines are unapproved new drugs that are illegally marketed has created confusion both for the homeopathic community and enforcement officials. The Committee directs the FDA to work with the homeopathic community with regards to the regulation of these medicines.

*HPV Self-Sampling.*—One in four women in the United States do not receive regular cervical cancer screenings, with more than half of cervical cancer diagnoses occurring in women who are not screened. While there are many barriers to screening, some of the top include fear of the procedure, embarrassment, or lack of time or transportation. The Committee encourages the FDA to exercise the use of regulatory authorities to expedite innovation related to at-home self-collection tests that could increase and expand access to screenings for women and address a persistent cancer health disparity for women who are never screened or under-screened.

*Human Drug Review Performance Trends.*—The concurrent investment of discretionary resources and Prescription Drug User Fee Act [PDUFA] Program funds has resulted in a successful program for over three decades enabling faster review times in the United States, thus allowing the American people to gain quicker access to the FDA approved prescription drugs. The Committee is aware of a recent decrease in the FDA first cycle approval rates [FCA] with an increasing number of Complete Response Letters [CRLs] being issued to drug manufacturers. This decline is observed across all human drug review programs, including novel drug approvals. To keep with the stated goals within the PDUFA Performance Goals to increase the first cycle approval rate for medicines that are ultimately approved, the Committee directs the FDA to provide a report to the Committee with an analysis of how issues that led to CRLs for medicines over the past 5 years could have been resolved within the first review cycle. This analysis should assess issues relating to both the FDA and sponsor company responsibilities and make recommendations on: how sponsors and the FDA can work better on timely identification and resolution of potential issues; the extent to which and how the global pandemic impacted performance and FCAs between February 2020 to May 2023; and how challenges in the human drug review process may

be resolved with the ultimate goal of increasing FCA rates and faster patient access to safe and effective prescription drugs.

*Hypoxic Ischemic Encephalopathy.*—The Committee recognizes the lack of any pharmaceutical treatment for infants born with Hypoxic Ischemic Encephalopathy [HIE], a rare brain injury due to insufficient cerebral oxygen and blood flow. While HIE injuries tragically takes the lives of many newborns, of the surviving babies, approximately 25 percent will endure significant and lifelong neurological disability. HIE is a leading cause of physical and cognitive deficits, including recurrent seizures and cerebral palsy. Due to the severity of the condition, long-term impact on the patients, and high cost to healthcare, the Committee encourages the FDA to consider endpoints for clinical trials that may predict improvements in neurodevelopmental outcomes and expedite therapeutic development for HIE.

*Illegal Import of Unapproved New Drugs.*—The Committee expresses deep concern over the health risks posed by illegal importation of unapproved and misbranded drugs, particularly through third-party brokers facilitating access via employer-sponsored health plans. These unapproved drugs lack the FDA's oversight, potentially containing incorrect dosages, unknown ingredients, or contaminants, which can lead to serious health consequences, especially for vulnerable populations with conditions like HIV, cancer, or hepatitis. The substitution of an FDA-approved medications with unapproved versions can cause patient confusion, medication errors, and negatively impact treatment outcomes, as healthcare providers may unknowingly base decisions on patients' responses to these unregulated drugs. Furthermore, sourcing from uninspected and unregulated supply chains increases the risk of receiving adulterated or improperly stored medications. Given these significant dangers, the Committee directs the FDA to provide a comprehensive report within 180 days, addressing various aspects of this issue, including safety risks, verification challenges, enforcement actions, and recommendations for strengthening oversight. This action is critical to protect U.S. consumers from the potential harm of unapproved and misbranded drugs circumventing regulatory safeguards.

*Imported Shrimp Safety and Inspection Pilot Program.*—The Committee commends and supports the FDA's ongoing efforts to implement and increase its oversight and the regulation of the safety of shrimp products imported into the United States. The Committee maintains the fiscal year 2025 funding levels to implement the program. The FDA's prior reports to Congress emphasized the importance of increased sampling of import shipments, investment in laboratory capabilities, data analytics, and the establishment of regulatory partnership arrangements with the top three countries exporting shrimp to the U.S. The Committee encourages the FDA to continue the full development and implementation of the shrimp pilot program including finalizing the establishment of regulatory partnership arrangements. The FDA Commissioner shall provide the Committee a briefing before the end of fiscal year 2026 summarizing how the funds appropriated have been used and how the funds support the FDA in meeting the objectives of section 787 of Public Law 116–260.

*Increased Enforcement Action Against Unauthorized E-Cigarettes and Tobacco Improvements.*—The Committee remains deeply concerned about data from the National Youth Tobacco Survey showing 1.63 million youth use e-cigarettes and urges the FDA to use its full authority to address this serious public health problem. The Committee also remains deeply concerned with the enormous surge of flavored disposable e-cigarettes and nicotine pouch products being illegally imported into the U.S., primarily from China, that are openly evading the FDA’s regulatory requirements. The Committee believes these illegal imports constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the public health of the United States.

The Committee directs the FDA to prioritize the use of resources by (1) establishing a floor of \$200,000,000 for fiscal year 2026 to be spend on enforcement activities to ensure these illegal products are expeditiously removed from the market and that those illegally importing and distributing such products are subject to significant compliance and enforcement actions. (2) Out of the funds provided in (1), \$2,000,000 shall be used to support activities related to the Federal multi-agency task force created in June 2024 to combat the illegal distribution and sale of e-cigarettes, which could include enforcement actions taken by members of the task force. The task force shall:

- (a) Include all Federal agencies that have roles or responsibilities related to e-cigarette enforcement, including but not limited to the Food and Drug Administration, Department of Justice, including the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, the U.S. Marshals Service; the Department of Homeland Security, including Customs and Boarder Protection and Homeland Security Investigations within Immigration and Customs Enforcement; the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and the Federal Trade Commission;
- (b) Meet at least quarterly to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy for reducing the number of unauthorized e-cigarettes on the market, including setting goals, sharing information, and coordinating efforts where appropriate; and
- (c) Report to the Committees of Appropriations in the Senate and House within 90 days of enactment of this Act and annually thereafter on enforcement actions that the task force or members of the task force have taken against unauthorized e-cigarettes.

The Committee is also concerned that the agency has not completed its review of many e-cigarettes and other deemed tobacco products that are popular with youth and has allowed scores of unauthorized products to be sold without the authorization required by statute, whether because they failed to submit a premarket application, have a pending application, or have been denied. The Committee is deeply concerned that many tobacco products that lack the legally required marketing authorization from the FDA remain on the market, including flavored products that are attractive to youth. The wide availability of these unauthorized products is hindering efforts to reduce youth use of e-cigarettes and other tobacco products. Notwithstanding the large number of premarket

applications received and resolved, the FDA too seldom completes its reviews within the time established by law. The Committee urges the FDA to promptly complete its required premarket review of e-cigarettes and to deny authorization for any product that does not meet the statutory standard of “appropriate for the protection of the public health,” including denying authorization for all products, especially flavored products, that have increased or are likely to increase initiation by youth or non-tobacco users. The Committee urges the FDA to pursue all legally authorized remedies to ensure that all products being sold unlawfully are removed from the marketplace.

*Infant Formula.*—The Committee remains concerned about the domestic production of infant formula after the 2022 infant formula crisis and that since the 2022 crisis, there have been several instances of *cronobacter* being found in infant formula and illness and death among babies who consumed it. The Committee directs the FDA to use all authorities to prevent contaminated infant formula from making it to market. The Committee also directs the FDA to streamline approval processes for domestic manufacturers to increase and expand the domestic supply of infant formula and bring jobs to the United States.

*Innovative Glass Packaging.*—The Committee directs the FDA to work with glass packaging suppliers and pharmaceutical manufacturers to evaluate and promote streamlined approval requirements designed to expedite the adoption and use of innovative glass packaging technologies with the capacity to improve product quality, reduce product recalls, reduce drug shortages, and protect public health. Such streamlined approval requirements should address stability testing and other relevant types of data to be submitted in support of product approval.

*Insomnia.*—The Committee strongly encourages the FDA to work expeditiously with the Drug Enforcement Administration [DEA] to prioritize actions related to FDA-approved DORA class substances, currently controlled in Schedule IV under the Controlled Substances Act and indicated as treatments for insomnia. The Committee understands that our servicemembers, veterans, and first responders have a higher-than-average prevalence of insomnia, and that the DEA and the FDA are currently undergoing a review to determine an appropriate control status for, or potentially deschedule, the DORA class insomnia treatments. The FDA is currently conducting an Eight Factor Analysis as part of this review process to evaluate the abuse potential, medical use, and safety of DORA class medications in relation to drug schedules under the Controlled Substances Act. The FDA is directed to complete this review in a timely manner so that DEA can expedite a review of its findings. The FDA is directed to report back to the Committee within 30 days of enactment of this act with an update.

*Inspections.*—The Committee recognizes that inspecting a facility for a new drug application is highly complex because the FDA must thoroughly evaluate whether the manufacturing site can consistently produce the drug with the identity, strength, quality, and purity claimed in the application, which involves detailed audits of records, equipment, processes, and data integrity. This process requires coordination among multidisciplinary experts who assess



compliance with current good manufacturing practices [CGMP] and verify that the facility's operations align precisely with the application's Chemistry, Manufacturing, and Controls [CMC] information, often under tight timelines and with global supply chain considerations. However, the Committee is concerned with reports that the FDA is issuing Complete Response Letters [CRLs] for drug applications due to a lack of timeliness and therefore what appears to be a pause only to allow the FDA time to fully complete the inspection which results in no finding of a concern. Or, a CRL is issued based on facility inspection issues unrelated to that specific drug application. Both circumstances could force delays in the approval process since these inspections are often conducted late in the review cycle, leaving insufficient time for sponsors to address deficiencies. The Committee fully supports the FDA's efforts to ensure that drug production facilities are safe and meet CGMP standards; however in order to better understand this issue the FDA is directed to report back to the Committee on the number of CRLs associated with inspections, (i.e, CRLs resulting solely from inspections with Official Action Indicated [OAI] or potential OAI [pOAI] outcomes), including the number of those inspections that were Pre-Approval Inspections [PAI].

*Inspection Frequency.*—The Committee is concerned that food facilities are not inspected frequently enough to adequately identify and respond to risks. Under the Food Safety Modernization Act, high-risk domestic facilities must be inspected every 3 years and other domestic facilities must be inspected every 5 years. The Committee directs the FDA to provide a report, not later than 180 days after the enactment of this act, regarding its resource analysis on increasing the frequency of inspections to every 18 months for high-risk domestic facilities and every 3 years for non-high-risk domestic facilities, while continuing other important public health activities, including oversight of imported food safety.

*International Mail Facilities.*—The Committee remains concerned about the opioid epidemic and imports of illegal tobacco products. The Committee supports the FDA's continued investments in International Mail Facilities and Ports of Entry to prevent illicit products, from entering the United States.

*Islet Cells.*—The appearance of certain islet autoantibodies in the serum of individuals increases the chance of developing type 1 diabetes at some point in the future. Therefore, the Committee encourages the FDA to continue working with the Type 1 diabetes community on the assessment of potential diabetes biomarkers related to islet autoimmunity, which might help inform the design of clinical studies.

*Limited Population Pathway for Antibacterial and Antifungal Drugs.*—On December 13, 2016, the Limited Population Pathway for Antibacterial and Antifungal Drugs (LPAD pathway) was added to the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic (FD&C) Act through section 3042 of the 21st Century Cures Act (section 506(h) of the FD&C Act). This pathway provides stakeholders, including the FDA and industry, with a tool to help with the approval of antibacterial and antifungal drugs to treat serious and life-threatening infections in a limited population of patients with unmet needs. On August 5, 2020, the FDA published a Final Guidance for Industry:

Limited Population Pathway for Antibacterial and Antifungal Drugs. In 2021 the Government Accountability Office [GAO] published a report highlighting the fact that the pathway was infrequently used. The Committee directs the GAO to revisit and update this report and include recommendations to improve utilization of the LPAD program.

*Listeria.*—The Committee recognizes that developing the Compliance Policy Guide [CPG] for *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat foods is a complex process and directs the FDA to work with stakeholders to ensure that the CPG outlines a policy that is reflective of the current scientific evidence and is practical to implement.

*Lupus.*—The Committee is aware of barriers that have long affected the development of therapeutics for lupus, a disease that primarily affects women. The Committee is pleased that the FDA has partnered with researchers, industry, patients, and other stakeholders to launch the Lupus Accelerating Breakthroughs Consortium [ABC], a public-private partnership to accelerate development of new therapies. The Committee encourages the FDA to continue this engagement and provide updates on its efforts to accelerate development of safer and more effective treatments for people with lupus.

*Medical Foods.*—The Committee recognizes the unique role medical foods play in the nutritional management of inborn errors of metabolism and encourages a flexible regulatory process that would enhance access to safe medical foods for individuals with serious or life-threatening inborn errors of metabolism. The Committee encourages the FDA to continue focusing on this issue.

*Medications Safety and Effectiveness.*—The Committee supports the FDA's authority to approve medications based on the scientific evaluation of the safety and efficacy of the medication, as well as its authority to determine the methodology to adequately perform the scientific evaluation.

*Medical Supply Chain Surveillance.*—The Committee appreciates the FDA's work to address drug shortages and other medical supply chain issues, but these continue to persist and cause harm. The Committee urges the FDA to build on its June 2021 recommendations to improve transparency throughout the pharmaceutical supply chain by continuing to support the development of information systems to anticipate drug or other medical supply shortages in order to be able to act to work to prevent and/or mitigate shortages. A special emphasis should be placed on drug shortages, particularly sterile injectable drugs, which were found to be the drugs most commonly in short supply in the Drug Shortages Taskforce its report "Drug Shortages: Root Causes and Potential Solutions". The Committee urges the FDA to partner with other divisions in the Department of Health and Human Services, such as to expedite the development or licensure of a coordinated medical supply chain surveillance system to support strategies to proactively prevent or mitigate drug shortages. This effort should include the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response and other governmental and nongovernmental organizations as deemed necessary.

*Menopause and Mid-Life Women's Health.*—The Committee encourages the FDA to continue outreach and engagement activities with healthcare providers and researchers on perimenopause,

menopause, postmenopause and mid-life women's health, and to facilitate the development and testing of new pharmacological (hormonal and non-hormonal) treatments for menopausal symptoms, as well as oversight and consumer protection efforts to assess the safety and effectiveness of new diagnostic tools for menopausal symptoms, including devices that use artificial intelligence. Within 180 days of enactment of this act, the FDA is directed to provide a report on its activities, including specific information on research, staffing, outreach and engagement activities, and coordination with Federal agencies.

*Metastatic Cancer.*—The Committee recognizes the FDA for ongoing efforts to gather input and patient-focused feedback from the metastatic cancer community. The Committee notes the ongoing challenge identified by patients of needing access to multiple therapeutic option and various sites of care due to the fact that patients with metastatic cancer often progress through multiple therapies, and encourages the FDA to continue working to ensure multiple safe and effective therapeutic options with varying delivery mechanisms are available.

*Microplastics Testing.*—The Committee directs the FDA's Human Foods Program to develop a validated testing methodology for detection and analysis of microplastics in human foods, including standards for sample collection, sample preparation, minimum particle size, and analysis to ensure accurate and reproducible results. Such program shall, once finalized, be added to the FDA Foods Program Compendium of Analytical Laboratory Methods: Chemical Analytical Compendium. The Secretary shall further directs the FDA Human Foods Program to implement a program to evaluate the ability of laboratories to perform the testing methodology.

*Minimal (or Measurable) Residual Disease.*—To expedite the development and safe patient access to new therapeutics, the FDA is encouraged to support collaborative research with the National Institutes of Health, universities, and industry, regarding the utilization of Minimal (or Measurable) Residual Disease [MRD] testing to assess response to therapy and predict patient outcomes in its evaluation of therapeutic products. The Committee directs the FDA to report within 1 year of the enactment of this act on advances in the science and development of products directed to the determination of MRD, that might soon enable the utilization of MRD to serve as an exploratory endpoint for clinical trial evaluations.

*MoCRA.*—The Committee is concerned that the FDA has not implemented key provisions of the Modernization of Cosmetics Regulation Act [MoCRA], which gave the FDA additional authorities to ensure that cosmetic products are safe for the American public. To address these concerns the Committee provides an additional \$2,000,000 to aid in the implementation of MoCRA. The Committee requests a report within 90 days of the enactment of this act, that includes a timeline for undergoing rulemaking and promulgating regulations for Good Manufacturing Practices and Fragrance Allergen Labeling for cosmetic products. The report should also include any challenges that the FDA is facing with implementing MoCRA in a timely manner.

*Neurology Drug Program.*—The Committee is encouraged by the Agency's hiring of additional staff with neurological expertise to ex-

pand the Agency's efforts to address regulatory challenges in neurodegenerative drug development. The Committee provides an additional \$2,000,000 for the Agency to build on current efforts to advance our scientific knowledge of neurological diseases.

*New Era of Smarter Food Safety.*—The Committee supports the FDA's efforts to bring together data from several agencies to identify and predict vulnerabilities in the Nation's food supply chain and enable the FDA to take a proactive approach to ensure food safety and supply chain continuity to prevent and respond to crises, such as the recent infant formula shortage. The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2025 level to continue this initiative.

*New Prior Knowledge.*—The Committee is aware of certain issues with domestic drug manufacturing supply chains, and that the FDA has been previously encouraged to improve generic drug development, manufacturing, and quality of generic drugs domestically. The Committee urges the FDA to establish a pilot program that will apply new tools to improve generic drug development, manufacturing, and quality. The program must be in collaboration with academic institutions that offer strengths in assessing and improving the generic drug supply chain to ensure the utilization of evidence-based best practices.

*New Alternative Methods.*—The Committee strongly supports the FDA initiatives to reduce, refine and replace animal testing and advance new alternative methods [NAMs] and appreciates the Science Board to the FDA's report on Potential Approaches to Drive Future Integration of NAMs for Regulatory Decision-Making. The Committee acknowledges that NAMs, including in vitro tests and computational models, may represent cost-effective, reliable, and human-relevant advances to support safety and efficacy testing of pharmaceuticals. To encourage the use of NAMs by industry, the FDA is directed to revise its regulations to make clear where applicable that animal toxicology tests are not required to support clinical testing in humans. The FDA must provide a written report to the Committee describing progress toward implementing Science Board recommendations and revising regulations within 1 year of enactment of this act. The agency should limit funding to carry out new animal testing to situations in which comparisons between an animal method and alternative methods are scientifically necessary and use existing animal data and alternative methods that will reduce animal use in research when human data is not available.

*Niemann-Pick Type C [NPC].*—The Committee continues to encourage the FDA to increase its understanding and focus on NPC, a rare progressive and universally fatal disease that impact children and young adults. The Committee encourages the FDA to use its existing authorities and pathways to meet the urgent unmet medical need of the current generation of NPC patients, including preserving access to existing experimental therapies already in use. The Committee further encourages the FDA to maximize the use of existing natural history data and real world evidence contributed by this small patient population through existing and past clinical studies and to continue to work with patients, scientists, and industry partners to bring to full fruition the work that is being ac-

complished through patient organizations, scientists, researchers, and other to fully benefit this generation of NPC patients.

*Office of Therapeutic Products.*—The Committee recognizes the FDA's efforts with regard to rare disease and oncology pilot programs and other positive initiatives, as well as recent increases to support staffing, especially within the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research and the Office of Therapeutic Products [OTP]. However, the Committee is concerned about the ability to consistently achieve the desired level of review timeliness and quality, and encourages the FDA to implement and apply modern approaches to keep pace with the science. Specifically, the Committee encourages OTP to facilitate reviewers' understanding of the current scientific consensus and disease-specific considerations for current and future programs through consultation with subject matter experts, both internal and external to the FDA. The Committee is also concerned about insufficient patient and expert input when weighing benefits and risks of potentially life changing or lifesaving new treatments. Further, the Committee is concerned that despite Congress recently reinforcing the FDA's flexibilities and toolkit related to rare disease and unmet need, OTP is not fully utilizing these flexibilities and tools as Congress intended. The Committee notes the importance of use of these flexibilities and tools, as appropriate, and expects a briefing to the Committee on interim measures of progress within 1 year of enactment.

*OIG Report on Infant Formula.*—The Committee is concerned by the findings of the HHS Office of Inspector General's report on the FDA's response to the infant formula crisis (A-01-22-01502). The Committee directs the FDA to provide the Committee with quarterly briefings on changes the FDA has made as a result of the findings to improve inspections, recalls, and administrative responses within the FDA. The Committee also directs the FDA to provide a report, within 90 days of enactment of this act, outlining any statutory changes needed to fully implement the findings from the report.

*Over-the-Counter Tests.*—The Committee remains concerned for Americans lacking equitable access to health care. Diagnostics have proven to be a critical component in protecting public health—mitigating the spread of infectious disease, as well as informing treatment options—still access remains limited. The Committee is aware of existing over-the-counter [OTC] diagnostic tests that would improve accessibility for Americans, and encourage more frequent testing of common infections, providing an overall benefit to public health. Therefore, the Committee encourages the FDA to prioritize the premarket review of OTC tests which target the most common viral and bacterial threats, particularly to address infections for which there is no OTC diagnostic currently authorized, when they meet the FDA's standards. Additionally, the Committee directs that no later than 90 days after the enactment of this act, the agency provides a report on the FDA's efforts to expand access to OTC diagnostics, including an update on submissions in general for these tests, with special attention to products that address infections for which there is no OTC diagnostic currently authorized.

*Oversight Activities.*—The Committee provides \$1,500,000 for the HHS Office of Inspector General specifically for oversight of the

FDA's activities. The Committee also directs the HHS Office of Inspector General to determine how the workforce reductions at the Center for Tobacco Products at the FDA will affect the mission and delivery of services by the Center as agreed to under the current user fee agreements. Within 1 year of the enactment of this act, the HHS OIG shall brief the Committees on Appropriations in the Senate and House of Representatives about their work on this topic.

*Oversight on FDA Inspections.*—The FDA often takes several cycles of review to approve drugs and biologics that are safe and effective. Pharmaceuticals or biologics often take several review cycles to be approved due to questions about the quality of their manufacturing, which often takes place overseas. The Committee directs the FDA to submit a report of the impact of the location of manufacturing sites, and the FDA's ability to conduct inspections, on the rate of first cycle approvals.

*Pacific Snapper.*—The Committee includes bill language regarding Pacific Snapper and directs the FDA to update its Fish and Fishery Products Hazards and Controls Guidance or any other relevant guidance to clarify or add any additional food safety issues that may arise due to this change within 180 days of enactment.

*Patient Medication Information.*—The FDA is directed to finalize the proposed rule for Patient Medication Information [PMI] with an option for pharmacies to deliver PMI electronically to enhance patient choice, education, and medication adherence for prescription drugs. This standardized information will provide patients with clear, concise, and accessible information about their medications, including drug names, important safety information, common side effects, and directions for use. The availability of PMI in electronic format may offer users features like adjustable text size and language options to improve comprehension for a diverse patient population. Importantly, patients will always have the choice of paper information, ensuring all patients have access to their preferred format of medication information.

*Pasteurized Orange Juice.*—The Committee is concerned that pests, disease and hurricanes are having a devastating impact on Florida's citrus growers and processors. These circumstances have resulted in a natural decline in the Brix level for Florida's mature oranges, with no known adverse health consequences for consumers. The Committee believes it is necessary to provide for analytical deviation in the minimum Brix level for pasteurized orange juice to account for these naturally occurring growing conditions. The Committee strongly encourages both USDA and the FDA to expedite work with Florida's citrus growers and processors, and other stakeholders as necessary, to consider additional flexibility by modernizing requirements for pasteurized orange juice that better account for naturally-occurring Brix variation.

*Pathogen Reduction.*—The Committee supports the FDA's efforts to recommend an individual risk assessment for blood donor eligibility. The Committee encourages the FDA to continue studying how to improve existing blood donation policies to advance a safe and adequate supply of blood and reduce stigma. Further, the FDA must prioritize further investments in pathogen reduction technologies to reduce the risk of transfusion-transmitted infections and safeguard the blood supply.

*Patient Experience Data.*—The Committee supports efforts to identify standardized approaches to collecting and analyzing patient experience data to inform clinical research design and regulatory reviews under the patient-focused drug development process. The Committee encourages the FDA to make every effort to incorporate all relevant patient experience data, including from patient advocacy organizations, across its regulatory obligations.

*Pediatric Cancer.*—Many rare pediatric cancers have molecular and genetic characteristics that are unique to children, such as tumors with gene fusions, embryonic tumors, germline tumors, and many brain tumors. Developing new therapies for such rare cancers is difficult, leaving children with rare tumors with few or no therapeutic options. The FDA should prioritize the development of a public-private partnership to assume responsibility for conducting pediatric oncology drug development programs that may not be possible for industry to develop on its own. A January 2020 GAO report on pediatric vouchers recommended the implementation of “a collaborative agreement to share development risk and reward between a public or quasi public organization and one or more private developers”.

*Pediatric Cancer International Collaboration.*—The Committee encourages the FDA to engage more formally and extensively with international entities to promote greater collaboration between the U.S. and international partners around pediatric cancer drug development.

*Pediatric Device Consortia Grants.*—Pediatric Device Consortia grants provide funding to assist innovators in developing medical and surgical devices designed for the unique needs of children, needs that often go unmet by devices currently available on the market. The Committee is pleased that the FDA-funded Pediatric Device Consortia have assisted in advancing the development of more than 2,500 proposed pediatric medical devices projects since 2009.

*Pediatric Labeling.*—The Committee continues to be concerned that labeling for over-the-counter [OTC] single-ingredient acetaminophen does not contain weight-based dosing instructions for children ages 6 months to 2 years. The Committee is concerned that the lack of dosing information for this vulnerable population may lead to dosing errors, adverse events, and inadequate treatment of fever and pain. Over a decade ago, the FDA Nonprescription Drugs Advisory Committee and Pediatric Advisory Committee recommended weight-based dosing instructions be added to the labeling based on scientific data; however, the FDA has still not taken action. The Committee directs the FDA to initiate regulatory action to add dosing data within 180 days of the enactment of this act or issue a report to Congress every 90 days until such regulatory action is initiated.

*Pediatric Therapies for IBD.*—The Committee is concerned about the limited FDA-approved therapies to treat children impacted by Pediatric IBD—also known as Crohn’s disease and ulcerative colitis—and the myriad challenges associated with recruiting children into clinical trials, especially “washout” periods or time during which patients must abstain from therapy to participate in trials. The Committee is aware of the FDA efforts to address these chal-

lenges more broadly, including a recently issued final guidance on the use of pediatric extrapolation in drug development as well as 2024 draft guidance to industry focused on developing drugs to treat pediatric IBD. The committee notes an increased reliance on extrapolation and other approaches to support the approval of similar therapies to treat other pediatric autoimmune conditions, such as juvenile arthritis. The Committee directs the FDA to build upon these guidance documents and to work with patient, researcher, and therapy development stakeholders to update the draft guidance document on pediatric IBD based on emerging data and collective stakeholder feedback and incorporating the potential use of other data sources, including real-world evidence [RWE], in clinical trials for pediatric IBD.

*PFAS in Cosmetics.*—The Committee is concerned about the presence of perfluoroalkyl or polyfluoroalkyl [PFAS] substances in cosmetics. The Committee directs the FDA to develop plan outlining research needed to inform regulatory decisionmaking, including potential development of a proposed rule to ban intentionally added PFAS substances in cosmetics. Not later than 90 days after enactment, the FDA will brief the committee on the research plan, potential regulatory options, and discuss considerations and anticipated challenges with issuing such a proposed rule.

*Plant Based Product Labeling.*—The Committee is concerned that the current labeling practices of some plant based alternatives to animal-derived foods have the potential to cause consumer confusion. The Committee directs the FDA to conduct a study to (1) better understand consumer's perceptions and motivations relative to produce composition, health attributes, and labeling, and (2) assess consumer perceptions of different terms used on labeling of plant-based alternative products. No later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this act, the FDA shall submit to Congress, and make publicly available online, a report on the findings of this study.

*Polycystic Ovary Syndrome [PCOS].*—The Committee recognizes that there have been no FDA-approved treatments specific to PCOS and commends the FDA for supporting the Externally-Led Patient-Focused Drug Development [EL-PFDD] meeting on PCOS. The Committee further encourages the FDA, based on the findings of the EL-PFDD meeting, to work with investigators, industry, patients, practitioners, and researchers to advance the development of safe new evidence-based therapies, diagnostics, devices, and that address the identified needs and treatment priorities of PCOS patients.

*Prioritizing U.S. Biomanufacturing of Essential Medicines and Drugs in Shortage.*—The Committee directs the FDA to prioritize applications, including or supplements, that identify a domestic manufacturing facility or a manufacturing facility in the territory of a government or government agency that the FDA has determined to be capable of conducting inspections pursuant to a mutual recognition agreement, for essential medicines as identified by the FDA and/or products that are included, or have recently been included, on the FDA's drug shortage list. The FDA should prioritize pre-approval and pre-license inspections of U.S. manufacturing facilities identified in an original application for an essential medi-



cine and pre-approval and pre-license inspections of U.S. manufacturing facilities newly identified in a supplement for an essential medicine or product that is, or has recently been included, on the FDA's drug shortage list.

*Promoting Domestic Manufacturing.*—The Committee supports the Agency's work to promote the domestic manufacturing of drugs and biological products to help bolster supply chain resiliency. The Committee encourages the FDA to increase its efforts, consistent with its authorities, to encourage the pharmaceutical industry to expand and relocate drug manufacturing to the United States for this purpose. The Committee encourages the FDA to continue programs and policies that would encourage the pharmaceutical industry to adopt advanced manufacturing technologies, which could help prompt industry to relocate foreign manufacturing to the United States or expanding current domestic manufacturing.

*Psychedelics.*—The Committee recognizes the increased interest and need to study psychedelics, including MDMA, psilocybin, ibogaine, and 5-MeO-DMT, and their potential therapeutic effects. The Committee encourages the FDA to work with the VA, DoD, and NIH on leveraging clinical trials to improve our understanding of psychedelics. The Committee also encourages the FDA and VA, DoD, and NIH to work together in developing and supporting public-private collaborations to advance psychedelic research for therapeutic purposes, with the FDA maintaining its independent regulatory authority as an observer. The Committee requests a report on such efforts within 180 days of enactment of this act.

*Rare Diseases.*—The Committee recognizes that the development of rare disease therapies offers unique regulatory challenges, such as the small patient populations for clinical studies, poorly understood natural history, and hurdles in manufacturing and commercialization. To ensure that therapies for rare diseases remain a top priority for the FDA, the Committee notes that the Rare Disease Innovation Hub (the Hub) serves as the FDA's coordinating office for engagement with rare disease stakeholders across all therapies including drugs and biologics (including cell and gene therapies), while coordinating closely with the FDA's center generally responsible for regulation of medical devices. The Committee requests that the Hub continue to promulgate draft guidance regarding the evidentiary standard established by the Drug Amendments of 1962 (Public Law 87-781) and the unique development challenges posed by rare diseases to add to existing the FDA draft guidance's such as Rare Diseases: Considerations for the Development of Drugs and Biological Products (Dec. 2023). The Committee asks that the FDA submit a report to Congress within 12 months of the enactment of this act, which shall include summaries of relevant charters (such as the responsibilities of the Chair(s), required participants, and criteria for initial populations and regulatory review) and any other relevant information the agency deems appropriate. The Committee also supports the Hub in fully implementing the 2025 strategic agenda and to strengthen the relationship between drug, biologic, and device products centers and stakeholders to address unmet needs in rare diseases, including the lack of effective treatments and limited medical options for people with rare diseases.

*Rare Disease Innovation Agenda.*—The Committee recognizes that the development of rare disease therapies offers unique regulatory challenges, especially for the smallest patient populations. This is due to several factors including poorly understood natural history, challenges in identifying informative endpoints and biomarkers, and for certain therapies, hurdles in manufacturing and commercialization due to population size. To help further facilitate the development of medical products for rare diseases with a high unmet need, the Committee requests that within 180 days of enactment, the agency develop a Rare Disease Innovation Agenda to enhance communication between the rare disease community and the Agency and to focus on intercenter collaboration and coordination regarding issues critical to rare disease drug development, such as novel endpoints, biomarker development, use of real world data, and innovative clinical trial designs for small populations. In developing such an agenda, the Agency should consider whether different mechanisms could be operationalized to facilitate and enhance intercenter collaboration, as well as solicit public input, including through a public meeting that includes patients, companies developing rare disease therapies and other relevant experts. A summary of such meeting and proposed recommendations shall be posted on the Agency's website.

*Rare Pediatric Disease Priority Review Voucher Program [RPD PRV].*—The RPD PRV program was established in 2012 and is a longstanding bipartisan priority that has resulted in discovery, delivery, and development of treatments for rare pediatric diseases. The program serves as a critical, cost-neutral incentive for pharmaceutical companies to develop treatments for rare pediatric diseases and enables faster access to life-saving therapies for children with rare conditions. The Committee anticipates that this program will be reauthorized in 2025 and directs the FDA to maintain its focus on rare pediatric disease therapies and continue supporting the PRV program framework until reauthorization occurs.

*Recommendations on Hemp.*—The Committee recognizes the growing consumer demand for American-made hemp products following the expanded legalization of hemp under the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018. As the industry continues to innovate and expand to meet consumer demand, the Committee acknowledges the need for clear, science-based guidance to ensure product safety, consumer confidence, and regulatory clarity. To support this effort, the Committee directs the FDA to solicit information from and engage with industry stakeholders, including small businesses, scientists, manufacturers, public health experts, academic researchers, and other relevant parties in the hemp community on suggested limits on the amounts of tetrahydrocannabinol or other cannabinoids in hemp-derived cannabinoid products for the purposes of promulgating regulations pursuant to authorities under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.). The Committee also encourages the FDA to seek out information from States on actions taken to address consumer safety concerns like cannabinoid limits and age restrictions. The FDA shall brief the Committee within 60 days of enactment of this act on planned engagement and requests for information.

*Medical Device Remanufacturing.*—The Committee is aware of the FDA’s work on medical device remanufacturing and servicing requirements, including the May 2024 final guidance, and directs the agency to provide a report detailing the agency’s efforts to implement the guidance. The report should outline outreach efforts that the FDA has undertaken to inform independent servicers (who aren’t FDA-regulated and may not monitor Federal Register notices) about their responsibilities, including industry group communications and trade publication education. The report should also cover the FDA’s surveillance of servicers and remanufacturers to ensure proper documentation of remanufacturing determinations (this shall include a summary of conducted inspections and enforcement actions taken). Additionally, the report should include data on whether the guidance has increased establishment registrations or 510(k) submissions by remanufacturers and explain how the FDA is addressing concerns that the guidance might be misinterpreted to permit unsupervised device modifications by third parties, emphasizing independent servicers’ understanding of their regulatory obligations. The Committee expects the report to be completed within 90 days of enactment with all relevant information posted on the FDA’s public website.

*Operation Stork Speed.*—The Committee supports the goals of Operation Stork Speed [OSS] to improve the safety and availability of infant formula. The Committee urges the FDA to act swiftly to establish and enforce clear, consistent inspection and compliance standards for all infant formula products, regardless of their country of origin. Absent this regulatory alignment, the market risks being disrupted by products that fall short of the high standards set by OSS and the FDA. The Committee maintains that all manufacturers, whether domestic or foreign, should be held to the same regulatory standards, requirements, and inspection levels, including surprise inspections, to ensure a safe and transparent domestic infant formula supply chain.

*Orphan Products Grant Program.*—The Committee is aware of continued advancements in the number of therapies in development for rare disease patients but notes that 95 percent of rare diseases do not have FDA-approved treatments. The Committee recognizes the importance of the Orphan Products Grant Program, comprised of the Clinical Trials Grant Program and the Natural History Studies Grants Program. The Committee directs the FDA to move forward in soliciting and supporting research to address rare disease regulatory science challenges.

*Safe and Effective Products.*—The Committee recognizes the FDA’s continued efforts to ensure the safety and effectiveness of products for U.S. patients. The Committee strongly supports FDA’s ongoing adherence to the statutory limits on compounded copies of medicines once an FDA approved safe and effective medicine is otherwise available. The demand for certain products, including incretin medications, should be addressed with FDA-approved safe and effective treatments, as required by law, unless the FDA has declared a shortage and authorized a temporary, alternative source to meet individual needs. At the same time, the Committee understands the need for continued access to compounded medications when commercially available drugs can not meet a patient’s specific

needs; including in circumstances where a prescriber has determined that an individual patient requires a formulation change that makes a medically significant difference in line with section 503A of the Food, Drug & Cosmetic Act. The Committee remains concerned that unapproved and misbranded drugs are being imported illegally and directs the FDA to coordinate closely with U.S. Customs and Border Protection and other partners to prevent unapproved and misbranded drugs from entering the market, thereby upholding regulatory standards and safeguarding the drug supply chain to protect patient health. The Committee directs the FDA to provide to the Committee a briefing, no later than 60 days after the enactment of this act highlighting the FDA's comprehensive approach to prevent the distribution of unapproved and misbranded incretin medications into the supply chain to avoid harm to patient safety.

*School Nutrition Grants to Combat Chronic Disease.*—The Committee provides \$10,000,000 within the Human Foods Program funding to support the FDA Commissioner's priority to combat the chronic disease crisis in the United States through a pilot grant program to help schools transition to healthier foods to ensure the children of our Nation are served nutritious food; including equipment purchases to facilitate food made on premises and procuring more local, fresh produce.

*Shrimp Imports.*—The Committee is concerned that the FDA is not taking adequate measures to prevent the importation of shrimp contaminated with antimicrobial resistant pathogens such as salmonella. The FDA's reporting shows a massive decline in the amount of entry lines of shrimp refused for the presence of salmonella even as the volume of shrimp imports have substantially increased, outbreaks of illness from salmonella have been tied to imported shrimp, and the agency has confirmed antibiotic resistance in salmonella found in shrimp imports. Further, the FDA's Import Alerts 16–18 and 16–35 reflect a lack of care and attention to the identification of companies exporting shrimp to the United States without being detained without physical examination. The bill provides that no funds shall be used to add any firms to these Import Alerts until the FDA ensures that firms added to the Green List have resolved the conditions that gave rise to the appearance of the violation. In addition, the FDA will submit a report on the steps taken by the agency to confirm that Import Alerts 16–18 and 16–35 correctly identify existing producers that are not subject to Detention Without Physical Examination and are able to adequately demonstrate that the firm has resolved the conditions that gave rise to the appearance of the violation. The Committee directs the FDA to submit this report to the Committee within 180 days of enactment of this act and include a summary of the agency's actions to prevent the entry of shrimp contaminated with filth, decomposition, or harmful pathogens (such as salmonella) into the United States.

*State and Local Inspections.*—Of the total amount appropriated for the Human Foods Program and related field activities in the Office of Inspections and Investigations, no less than \$116,000,000 shall be used for State and local programs.

*Seafood Labeling.*—The Committee continues to hear concerns with the labeling of certain foods as a fish or seafood product when the products are highly-processed plant-based foods rather than derived from actual fish or seafood, and the labeling of these products are misleading, deceptive, and confusing to consumers. The Committee is concerned the terms “plant-based” and “vegan” exempt the producer from describing the actual plant source as part of the product name, in opposition to other FDA guidance. The Committee directs the FDA to provide clarity around the labeling of these foods using seafood terminology to ensure they are held to the same standards as actual seafood products to avoid consumer confusion and aligns with the structure it has applied to the draft guidance for the labeling of plant-based milk alternatives.

*Securing Medical Supply Chains.*—The Committee direct the FDA, in coordination with national security agencies, to prioritize supply chain security and national security when evaluating all applications throughout the new drug development and approval lifecycle.

*Smoking Cessation Treatments for Youth and Adults.*—The Committee continues to recognize the important work of advancing smoking cessation treatment innovation to help adult smokers be more successful in quitting and the critical role of the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research [CDER] in this work. The Committee further acknowledges the agency’s October 2024 public meeting on advancing smoking cessation innovation which underscored the importance of bringing forward new pharmacotherapies for smokers seeking to quit and the key opportunity for CDER to be more modern and efficient in its work in this area. The Committee strongly encourages CDER to do more to modernize the regulatory framework for these products to reflect the real-world experience risk-benefit considerations, address unnecessary barriers to advancing vitally needed new cessation therapies for patients, and encourage smoking cessation pharmacotherapy innovation on behalf of our Nation’s patients. The Committee requests an update from the Commissioner of Food and Drugs on new actions CDER will take to address the Committee’s concerns not later than 90 days after enactment of this act.

The Committee is aware of alarming trends in youth e-cigarette use; recent survey data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates that in 2024, nearly 8 percent of high school students reported e-cigarette use in the previous 30 days. At present, there are no FDA-approved nicotine cessation drugs that are approved for adolescent populations. With more than 2.5 million young people using e-cigarettes, there is a need for development of nicotine cessation treatments in adolescents. The Committee encourages the FDA to provide additional guidance to drug manufacturers on the tools that the FDA can utilize to promote development and expedite approval of nicotine cessation treatments in adolescents.

*Sodium.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of reducing sodium in the food supply. Within 90 days of enactment, the Committee directs the FDA to provide a report to the Committee on its preliminary assessment report that will be publicly posted to its website and on its plans for monitoring and evaluation of the short-

term targets. In its report, the FDA should detail how it will identify data sources, collect and analyze data, create a timeline for assessments, and work with industry on voluntary compliance.

*Sponsor Communication.*—The Committee is concerned with the FDA’s reliance on “Written Response Only” communication, in lieu of live interactions when responding to meeting requests from sponsors. While written response can be a useful tool, there are times where meaningful scientific exchanges between sponsors and the FDA is required. The Committee directs the FDA to offer face to face or teleconference meetings when requested by the sponsor, as discussed in the FDA’s guidance documents.

*State and Regulatory Frameworks and Adequacy of Current Powers.*—The Committee urges the FDA to improve data sharing and coordination between State and Federal authorities, such as by continuing to support the FDA’s Cannabinoid Hemp Product 20.88 Information Sharing Agreement initiative.

*Steroid Use.*—The Committee is encouraged that the FDA is continuing to progress in its risk benefit analysis of new treatments for diseases, particularly rare diseases, with high unmet need and a current standard of care that carries a potential risk, especially for children who may be taking these higher risk treatments over many years. The Committee applauds the FDA for applying thoughtfulness and urgency when reviewing new treatment options that are both effective treatment options and could mitigate the potential long-term risk of the current standard of care. As the Agency continues to address risks such as radiation exposure in cancer treatments, prolonged exposure to addictive treatments, and other current treatments that carry potential risk along with benefit, the Committee supports the Agency in applying the same urgency to addressing the risk of prolonged exposure to high dose steroids, particularly for children.

*Sunscreen.*—The Committee is concerned that Americans are falling behind the rest of the world when it comes to access to sunscreen even though skin cancer is the most common cancer in the U.S. According to the Surgeon General, more than five million Americans each year are treated for skin cancer at a cost of over eight billion dollars per year. As a result, the Committee directs the FDA to work with stakeholders to harmonize its approach with international testing standards to ensure Americans have access to as many sunscreen active ingredients as possible recognizing that safe and effective sunscreen products are a proven preventative tool against skin cancer. In addition, the Committee urges the FDA to utilize its authorities provided under the CARES Act to evaluate new sunscreen ingredients already approved for use around the world and to educate stakeholders about the administrative order process to encourage research and development of new sunscreen technology.

*Supply Shortages for Critical Medications.*—The Committee is concerned about continued reports of supply shortages for critical medications and devices, including diabetes, cancer, antibiotic, ADHD, and other drug shortages, which continue to pose a significant challenge and affect patients access to vital treatments and care. Within 90 days of enactment, the Committee requests a report from the FDA regarding its implementation of shortage-re-

lated authorities, and the status of shortage related guidance documents.

*Temporomandibular Disorder.*—The Committee encourages the FDA to support the development and implementation of a Patient-Centered Coordinated Registry Network [CRN] for Temporomandibular Joint Disorder [TMD]. This Registry will be a critical component in the transformation of temporomandibular disorder research across other Government Agencies. The Committee supports collaborations among medical product centers related to the development of treatments for TMD and urges the FDA to support implementing of a Temporomandibular Joint [TMJ] CRN, continuing the developmental work of the TMJ Patient-led Round-Table and its partners in successfully developing the Registry as an important tool in ongoing efforts to improve the treatment and management of TMD patients.

*Timing and Sequencing of Cancer Immunotherapy.*—The Committee commends the FDA for supporting the rapid implementation of life-saving immunotherapies into the clinic. New data suggest the administration of immunotherapies early in the treatment timeline may be able to prevent or intercept cancers before they develop into serious disease, thus improving patient outcomes while simultaneously reducing monetary costs and physical burden. To support continued research in this area, the field must develop novel tools to efficiently run early-stage clinical trials. These tools include biomarkers that can detect early disease, inform appropriate treatments, and/or serve as surrogates for clinical endpoints. In addition, determination of early-stage clinical trial endpoints at large that can characterize patient benefit are necessary for continued momentum. Therefore, the Committee urges the FDA to provide guidance on the development of early disease clinical trial tools, including early-stage biomarkers and clinical endpoints.

*Tissue Transplants.*—The Committee notes the tissue transplant industry is growing, with approximately 58,000 donors providing tissue allografts for 2.5 million transplants in the United States each year. Although products in this space are widely used for patients and healthcare providers, the Committee notes outbreaks of *M. tuberculosis* in 2021 and 2023 that has contaminated over 100 bone-allograft HCT/PS placed in patients, resulting in adverse events and negative patient outcomes. The Committee requests the FDA issue guidance identifying *M. tuberculosis* as a relevant communicable disease agent or disease [RCDAD] and providing recommendations to reduce the risk of transmission of *M. tuberculosis*.

*Traceability Rule.*—The Committee directs that no funding from this act or any other act may be used by the FDA to delay enforcement of the Food Traceability Final Rule (21 CFR Part 1, Subpart S) beyond July 20, 2028. The FDA shall take all necessary measures to ensure that full compliance and enforcement begin no later than that date. The FDA shall submit a report to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate within 60 days of the enactment of this act detailing its strategies to support industry implementation and to prepare for the FDA's enforcement of the Food Traceability Final Rule by July 20, 2028. The report shall include specific performance milestones (including

progress toward operationalization of FDA's internal Product Tracing System) and an inspections and compliance roadmap and shall describe technical assistance provided to industry. The FDA shall submit progress updates every 90 days thereafter until the rule is in effect. Failure to submit these reports shall not delay the July 20, 2028, enforcement date.

*Transparency for Imaging Technology.*—Foreign adversaries are pursuing the collection and exploitation of Americans' sensitive health data through medical equipment. Therefore, the Committee directs the FDA to provide a report regarding the authorization of all medical imaging technology for sale into the United States from entities that are based in a territory of a foreign adversary, as defined in 15 CFR 7.4, or under the jurisdiction of a foreign adversaries' laws or regulations, to the degree that the FDA has the information and based on the most current information in the FDA's databases of premarket authorizations and Establishment Registration & Device Listings. "Medical imaging technology" refers to any device, software, or other technology intended for use in medical imaging, including but not limited to X-ray, MRI, CT, ultrasound, and other diagnostic or therapeutic imaging modalities.

*Type 1 Diabetes.*—The Committee directs \$5,000,000 to be spent within the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research [CBER] within the FDA to prioritize the development and validation of improved endpoints for clinical trials of disease-modifying therapies in type 1 diabetes (T1D), with a specific focus on C-peptide as a potential surrogate endpoint. The agency should engage with relevant stakeholders, including researchers, clinicians, and patient advocacy groups, to evaluate the merits of C-peptide as a surrogate endpoint and its potential to accelerate the development of disease-modifying therapies for T1D. Furthermore, the FDA is directed to provide clear guidance to drug developers and relevant stakeholders on the appropriate use of C-peptide in clinical trials and take the necessary steps to consider its acceptance as a validated surrogate endpoint for demonstrating efficacy in T1D therapies. The Committee believes that improving and expanding the range of acceptable endpoints, particularly through the validation of C-peptide, could significantly expedite the development and approval of innovative treatments for T1D, ultimately leading to improved patient outcomes and reduced disease burden. The FDA is required to report back to the Committee within 180 days on its progress in this area, including the specific steps taken to incorporate C-peptide or other novel endpoints into the regulatory pathway for T1D therapies.

*User Fee Agreements.*—Biopharmaceutical, medical device, and other medical product developers pay user fees to the FDA to ensure the agency has the resources and staffing needed for timely review of new and generic product applications, with an overall goal of shortening the time it takes for patients to access new safe and effective treatments in the United States. This statutory framework was developed for patients, to ensure that the FDA's medical product reviews occur in an efficient and predictable manner, while also supplementing the government resources, which has been successful for decades. As the FDA undergoes its current reorganization and staffing changes, it is imperative that the user fee



money provided to the FDA is used in the manner intended and outlined in the user fee commitment letters which were passed by Congress and signed into law. This includes the agency maintaining the appropriate level of user-fee funded staff and other resources. To ensure the user fee programs operate as intended, section 779 of the bill directs the FDA to provide a report, validated by the FDA Ombudsman, within 90 days of the enactment of this act, outlining how the FDA is ensuring that the user fee agreements are fully maintained and implemented, including details as to the current level of staff and other resources devoted to user fee commitments. Following the initial 90-day assessment, section 779 of the bill directs the FDA Ombudsman to certify quarterly staffing and user fee spending for the FDA's reporting to the Committee.

*Valley Fever.*—The Committee is encouraged by progress made toward producing a Valley Fever vaccine and recommends that the FDA consult with the public and obtain input on the state of the science related to vaccines to prevent Valley Fever. The Committee further recommends that the FDA draft and issue industry guidance for entities seeking approval under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.) or licensure under section 351 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 262) of antifungal therapies to treat Valley Fever.

*Vibrio.*—The Committee is aware of the public health challenge related to the naturally occurring bacteria called *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* that can accumulate in shellfish and believes that more scientific research is necessary to develop proper controls that will reduce the risk to consumers and sustain a healthy domestic shellfish industry. The Committee encourages the FDA to increase funding for research into *Vibrio* illnesses associated with the consumption of raw molluscan shellfish, improve risk assessment models, and develop improved rapid detection methods for virulent *Vibrio* strains.

*Women in Clinical Research.*—Following recommendations by the Task Force on Research Specific to Pregnant Women and Lactating Women, the Committee urges the agency to issue final regulations relating to the protection of human subjects, including parts 50 and 56 of title 21, Code of Federal Regulations, with the latest regulations of the Department of Health and Human Services relating to the inclusion of pregnant women as subjects in clinical research. The agency should consider further guidance about ethical issues to be considered and strategies for designing ethical studies, to inform the inclusion of pregnant women and lactating women in a clinical trial and facilitate their participation.

*Women's Health.*—The Committee recognizes that women's health includes conditions and diseases that differently, disproportionately and/or solely impact the health of women. The Committee directs the FDA to prioritize professional expertise in women's biology and innovation to facilitate a timely in the approval process, ensure clinical trial design is representative of disease impact in the broader population, and accelerate bringing medical innovations to women.

## BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

Appropriations, 2025 .....	\$5,000,000
Committee recommendation .....	5,000,000

The FDA maintains offices and staff in 49 States and in the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, including field laboratories and specialized facilities, as well as the National Center for Toxicological Research complex. Repairs, modifications, improvements, and construction to the FDA headquarters and field facilities must be made to preserve the properties, ensure employee safety, meet changing program requirements, and permit the agency to keep its laboratory methods up to date.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$5,000,000 for the FDA buildings and facilities.

This funding shall be used to upgrade the FDA's facilities and laboratories which are currently below public safety standards and incapable of performing agency requirements. The Committee is aware that several FDA-owned facilities need significant renovations and repairs. The Committee understands that high-quality, reliable buildings are a necessity to support the FDA's mission-critical work.

## INDEPENDENT AGENCY

## FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION

## LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

Limitation, 2025 .....	\$100,425,000
Committee recommendation .....	106,500,000

The Farm Credit Administration [FCA] is the independent agency in the executive branch of the Government responsible for the examination and regulation of the banks, associations, and other institutions of the Farm Credit System.

Activities of FCA include the planning and execution of examinations of Farm Credit System institutions and the preparation of examination reports. FCA also promulgates regulations, establishes standards, enforces rules and regulations, and approves certain actions of the institutions.

The administration and the institutions under its jurisdiction now operate under authorities contained in the Farm Credit Act of 1971 (Public Law 92-181), effective December 10, 1971. Public Law 99-205, effective December 23, 1985, restructured FCA and gave the agency regulatory authorities and enforcement powers.

The act provides for the farmer-owned cooperative system to make sound, adequate, and constructive credit available to farmers and ranchers and their cooperatives, rural residences, and associations and other entities upon which farming operations are dependent, and to modernize existing farm credit law to meet current and future rural credit needs.

The Agricultural Credit Act of 1987 (Public Law 100-233) authorized the formation of the Federal Agricultural Mortgage Corporation [FAMC] to operate a secondary market for agricultural

and rural housing mortgages. FCA, under section 8.11 of the Farm Credit Act of 1971 (Public Law 92-181), as amended, is assigned the responsibility of regulating this entity and assuring its safe and sound operation.

Expenses of FCA are paid by assessments collected from the Farm Credit System institutions and by assessments to the FAMC.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends a limitation of \$106,500,000 on administrative expenses of the Farm Credit Administration.

TITLE VII  
GENERAL PROVISIONS

(INCLUDING RESCISSIONS AND TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

The Committee recommends the following provisions:

Section 701. This section includes language regarding passenger motor vehicles.

Section 702. This section includes language regarding the Working Capital Fund.

Section 703. This section limits the funding provided in the bill to 1 year, unless otherwise specified.

Section 704. This section includes language regarding indirect costs.

Section 705. This section includes language regarding Rural Development programs.

Section 706. This section includes language regarding new information technology.

Section 707. This section includes language regarding conservation programs.

Section 708. This section includes language regarding Rural Utilities Service program eligibility.

Section 709. This section includes language regarding information technology expenses.

Section 710. This section includes language regarding first-class travel.

Section 711. This section includes language regarding the Commodity Credit Corporation.

Section 712. This section includes language regarding advisory committees.

Section 713. This section includes language regarding information technology systems.

Section 714. This section includes language regarding section 32 activities.

Section 715. This section includes language regarding user fee proposals without offsets.

Section 716. This section includes language regarding the reprogramming of funds and notification requirements.

Section 717. This section includes language regarding fees for the guaranteed business and industry loan program.

Section 718. This section includes language regarding the appropriations hearing process.

Section 719. This section includes language regarding pre-packaged news.

Section 720. This section includes language regarding details and assignments of Department of Agriculture employees.

Section 721. This section includes language regarding spending plans.

Section 722. This section includes language regarding the Food and Drug Administration.

Section 723. This section includes language regarding Rural Development programs.

Section 724. This section includes language regarding loans and loan guarantees.

Section 725. This section includes language regarding credit card refunds.

Section 726. This section includes language regarding SNAP.

Section 727. This section includes language regarding housing loan programs.

Section 728. This section includes language regarding new user fees.

Section 729. This section includes language regarding the Food and Drug Administration.

Section 730. This section includes language regarding FSIS.

Section 731. This section includes language regarding APHIS inspections.

Section 732. This section includes language regarding domestic preference.

Section 733. This section includes language regarding lobbying.

Section 734. This section includes language regarding Rural Development programs.

Section 735. This section includes language regarding the Food and Drug Administration.

Section 736. This section includes language regarding the Food and Drug Administration.

Section 737. This section includes language regarding school meals program.

Section 738. This section includes language regarding hemp.

Section 739. This section includes language regarding matching funds.

Section 740. This section includes language regarding land purchases.

Section 741. This section includes language regarding a pilot program.

Section 742. This section includes language regarding the Food for Peace program.

Section 743. This section includes language regarding school meals program.

Section 744. This section includes language regarding school meals program.

Section 745. This section includes language regarding biotechnology risk assessment.

Section 746. This section includes language regarding agency relocation.

Section 747. This section includes language regarding watershed programs.

Section 748. This section includes language regarding Rural Development.

Section 749. This section includes language regarding the Water Bank program.

Section 750. This section includes language regarding the Food and Drug Administration.

Section 751. This section includes language regarding REAP Zones.

Section 752. This section includes language regarding a Tribal pilot program.

- Section 753. This section including language regarding Listeria.
- Section 754. This section includes language regarding bison.
- Section 755. This section includes language regarding bison.
- Section 756. This section includes language regarding APHIS.
- Section 757. This section includes language regarding horse slaughter.
- Section 758. This section includes language regarding wetlands.
- Section 759. This section includes language regarding the PAWS Act.
- Section 760. This section includes language regarding NASEM.
- Section 761. This section includes language regarding Rural Development.
- Section 762. This section includes language regarding labeling.
- Section 763. This section includes language regarding the Institute for Rural Partnerships.
- Section 764. This section includes language regarding a working group.
- Section 765. This section includes language regarding the Office of the General Counsel.
- Section 766. This section includes language regarding housing.
- Section 767. This section includes language regarding community facilities.
- Section 768. This section includes language regarding a rescission.
- Section 769. This section includes language regarding a rescission.
- Section 770. This section includes language regarding a rescission.
- Section 771. This section includes language regarding a rescission.
- Section 772. This section includes language regarding a rescission.
- Section 773. This section includes language regarding the Agricultural Research Service.
- Section 774. This section includes language regarding the Food and Drug Administration.
- Section 775. This section includes language regarding user fees.
- Section 776. This section includes language regarding Livestock Mandatory Reporting.
- Section 777. This section includes language regarding the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey.
- Section 778. This section includes language regarding termination of awards.
- Section 779. This section includes language regarding a pilot.
- Section 780. This section includes language regarding Pacific Snapper.
- Section 781. This section includes language regarding coffee labeling.
- Section 782. This section includes language regarding hemp.

### PROGRAM, PROJECT, AND ACTIVITY

During fiscal year 2026, for purposes of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (Public Law 99–177) or the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Reaffirmation Act of 1987 (Public Law 100–119), the following information provides the definition of the term “program, project, and activity” for departments and agencies under the jurisdiction of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee. The term “program, project, and activity” shall include the most specific level of budget items identified in the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2026, and the report.

If a sequestration order is necessary, in implementing the Presidential order, departments and agencies shall apply any percentage reduction required for fiscal year 2026 pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 99–177 or Public Law 100–119 to all items specified in the explanatory notes submitted to the Committees on Appropriations of the House and Senate in support of the fiscal year 2026 budget estimates, as amended, for such departments and agencies, as modified by congressional action, and in addition:

For the Agricultural Research Service the definition shall include specific research locations as identified in the explanatory notes.

For the Natural Resources Conservation Service the definition shall include individual flood prevention projects as identified in the explanatory notes and individual operational watershed projects as summarized in the notes.

For the Farm Service Agency the definition shall include individual, regional, State, district, and county offices.

### COMPLIANCE WITH PARAGRAPH 7, RULE XVI OF THE STANDING RULES OF THE SENATE

Paragraph 7 of rule XVI requires that Committee reports accompanying general appropriations bills identify each recommended amendment which proposes an item of appropriation which is not made to carry out the provisions of an existing law, a treaty stipulation, or an act or resolution previously passed by the Senate during that session.

The Committee is filing an original bill, which is not covered under this rule, but reports this information in the spirit of full disclosure.

The Committee recommends funding for the following programs or activities which currently lack authorization for fiscal year 2026:

- Multi-Family Housing Revitalization Program
- Broadband Telecommunications Grants
- Child Nutrition Programs
- Summer Food Service Program
- National School Lunch Act—Information Clearinghouse
- School Meals Program—Compliance and Accountability
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children
- Farmers Market Nutrition Program

## —Livestock Mandatory Reporting

COMPLIANCE WITH PARAGRAPH 7(c), RULE XXVI OF THE  
STANDING RULES OF THE SENATE

Pursuant to paragraph 7(c) of rule XXVI, on July 00, 2026, the Committee ordered favorably reported an original bill (S. 0000) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2026, and for other purposes, provided, that the bill be subject to amendment and that any amendment increasing budget authority be offset by a reduction of equal or greater budget authority, by a recorded vote of 00–00, a quorum being present. The vote was as follows:

Yeas

Nays

COMPLIANCE WITH PARAGRAPH 12, RULE XXVI OF THE  
STANDING RULES OF THE SENATE

Paragraph 12 of rule XXVI requires that Committee reports on a bill or joint resolution repealing or amending any statute or part of any statute include “(a) the text of the statute or part thereof which is proposed to be repealed; and (b) a comparative print of that part of the bill or joint resolution making the amendment and of the statute or part thereof proposed to be amended, showing by stricken-through type and italics, parallel columns, or other appropriate typographical devices the omissions and insertions which would be made by the bill or joint resolution if enacted in the form recommended by the Committee.”

In compliance with this rule, changes in existing law proposed to be made by the bill are shown as follows: existing law to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets; new matter is printed in italic; and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman.

DISCLOSURE OF CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING  
ITEMS

The Constitution vests in the Congress the power of the purse. The Committee believes strongly that Congress should make the decisions on how to allocate the people’s money. As defined in Rule XLIV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the term “congressionally directed spending item” means a provision or report language included primarily at the request of a Senator, providing, authorizing, or recommending a specific amount of discretionary budget authority, credit authority, or other spending authority for a contract, loan, loan guarantee, grant, loan authority, or other expenditure with or to an entity, or targeted to a specific State, locality or congressional district, other than through a statutory or administrative, formula-driven, or competitive award process. For each item, a Member is required to provide a certification that neither the Member nor the Member’s immediate family has a pecuniary interest in such congressionally directed spending item. Such certifications are available to the public on the website of the Senate Committee on Appropriations (<https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/congressionally-directed-spending-requests>). Following is a list



of congressionally directed spending items included in the Senate recommendation discussed in this report, along with the name of each Senator who submitted a request to the Committee of jurisdiction for each item so identified. Neither the Committee recommendation nor this report contains any limited tax benefits or limited tariff benefits as defined in rule XLIV.

## CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING ITEMS

Account	State	Project	Recipient	Recommendation (\$)	Requestor(s)
Agricultural Research Service Buildings and Facilities .....	AR	Dale Bumpers National Rice Research Center Equipment and Infrastructure Modernization.	Dale Bumpers National Rice Research Center ..	3,100,000	Boozman
Agricultural Research Service Buildings and Facilities .....	AR	Dale Bumpers National Rice Research Center Facility Repairs and Improvements.	Dale Bumpers National Rice Research Center ..	6,550,000	Boozman
Agricultural Research Service Buildings and Facilities .....	HI	Pacific Regional Lab for Control of Agricultural Pests.	ARS, Hilo .....	4,000,000	Schatz
Agricultural Research Service Buildings and Facilities .....	KY	University of Kentucky/United States Department of Agriculture Agricultural Research Services Forage-Animal Production Research Unit.	University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment.	10,000,000	McConnell
Agricultural Research Service Buildings and Facilities .....	MD	Beltsville Agricultural Research Center Infrastructure.	USDA BARC .....	3,000,000	Van Hollen
Agricultural Research Service Buildings and Facilities .....	NE	ARS National Center for Resilient and Regenerative Precision Agriculture, Lincoln, NE.	USDA Agricultural Research Service co-located at the University of Nebraska Lincoln.	16,000,000	Fischer
APHIS Salaries and Expenses .....	AK	Alaska Native Rural Veterinary Care .....	Alaska Federation of Natives .....	750,000	Murkowski
APHIS Salaries and Expenses .....	CT	The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station for Monitoring Ticks and Tick-borne Pathogens to Better Guide Public Health Action.	Connecticut Agriculture Experiment Station .....	267,000	Blumenthal, Murphy
APHIS Salaries and Expenses .....	GA	Athens Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory Pathological Waste Incinerator.	University of Georgia Research Foundation, Inc.	1,900,000	Ossoff, Warnock
APHIS Salaries and Expenses .....	MN	UMN Vet Diagnostics Lab Testing Capacity .....	University of Minnesota .....	1,000,000	Klobuchar, Smith
APHIS Salaries and Expenses .....	MS	Wildlife Damage Management—Mississippi Fish-Eating Bird Control Program.	APHIS-MS .....	1,000,000	Hyde-Smith
APHIS Salaries and Expenses .....	NM	Innovative Weed Control in Perennial Crops .....	New Mexico State University .....	467,000	Heinrich
APHIS Salaries and Expenses .....	RI	Worden Pond Treatment for Invasive Plants .....	Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management.	500,000	Reed, Whitehouse
APHIS Salaries and Expenses .....	SC	Asian Longhorned Beetle Eradication .....	Clemson University .....	1,000,000	Graham
APHIS Salaries and Expenses .....	SC	Clemson University .....	Clemson University .....	4,500,000	Graham
Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program .....	OH	Appalachian Healthcare Access .....	Appalachian Children's Health .....	500,000	Moreno
Research Facilities Act Program .....	GA	Fort Valley Center for Agricultural Innovation and Entrepreneurship.	Fort Valley State University .....	1,000,000	Ossoff, Warnock
Research Facilities Act Program .....	HI	Agriculture Center for Technical Innovation .....	University of Hawaii .....	2,000,000	Hirono, Schatz
Research Facilities Act Program .....	KS	Global Center for Grain and Food Innovation—Interdisciplinary Research Labs and Pilot Plant Development.	Kansas State University .....	5,535,000	Moran

Research Facilities Act Program	ME	University of Maine Forest Health Lab	University of Maine System	600,000	Collins, King
Research Facilities Act Program	NH	Center for Excellence in Education and Discovery for Plant Science (CEED Plant Science).	University System of New Hampshire	1,925,000	Shaheen
Research Facilities Act Program	SD	South Dakota State University Cottonwood Field Station Renovation and Expansion.	South Dakota State University	2,000,000	Rounds
Research Facilities Act Program	SD	South Dakota State University Transient Animal Research Support Facility.	South Dakota State University	500,000	Rounds
Rural Community Facilities Program	AK	Heavy Equipment Improving Rural Community Conditions.	Alaska Municipal League	4,200,000	Murkowski
Rural Community Facilities Program	AK	Bethel Food Bank and Pantry	Bethel Food Bank and Pantry	605,000	Murkowski
Rural Community Facilities Program	AK	Public Safety Building and Emergency Operations Center Rehabilitation.	City and Borough of Wrangell	2,438,000	Murkowski
Rural Community Facilities Program	AK	Houston Alaska Fire Station 9-3 Public Works Shared Facility.	City of Houston	1,950,000	Murkowski
Rural Community Facilities Program	AK	Community Housing Asbestos Abatement & Removal.	City of Whittier	310,000	Murkowski
Rural Community Facilities Program	AK	Kenai Peninsula Critical Communications Upgrades.	Kenai Peninsula Borough	2,045,000	Murkowski
Rural Community Facilities Program	AK	Native Village of Eagle Fire Hall & Public Safety Building.	Native Village of Eagle	750,000	Murkowski
Rural Community Facilities Program	AK	Self-Contained Breathing apparatus Equipment Replacement.	Petersburg Borough	225,000	Murkowski
Rural Community Facilities Program	AL	City of Samson Water System Improvements	City of Samson	2,200,000	Britt
Rural Community Facilities Program	AL	Slocomb Fire Tanker Replacement	City of Slocomb	278,000	Britt
Rural Community Facilities Program	AL	Grand Bay Fire District Volunteer Fire Station	Grand Bay Fire District	113,000	Britt
Rural Community Facilities Program	AL	Heflin Fire Department Ladder Truck	Heflin Fire Department	1,200,000	Britt
Rural Community Facilities Program	AL	Houston County Radio Tower	Houston County Commission	248,000	Britt
Rural Community Facilities Program	AL	Piedmont Fire Engine	Piedmont Fire Department	488,000	Britt
Rural Community Facilities Program	AL	Pike Road Agricultural Job Development and Career Center.	Town of Pike Road	440,000	Tuberville
Rural Community Facilities Program	AL	Fyffe Sewer System Improvements	Waterworks Sewer and Gas Board of Section, Alabama.	1,648,000	Britt
Rural Community Facilities Program	AL	Winfield Radio Upgrades	Winfield Fire Department	32,000	Britt
Rural Community Facilities Program	AR	Town of Etowah, Etowah Volunteer Fire Department Firetruck Replacement	Town of Etowah, Etowah Volunteer Fire Department	413,000	Boozman
Rural Community Facilities Program	AZ	Alpine Fire District Emergency Response Vehicle.	Alpine Fire District	140,000	Gallego, Kelly
Rural Community Facilities Program	AZ	Bisbee Fire Truck	City of Bisbee	620,000	Gallego, Kelly
Rural Community Facilities Program	AZ	Tonto Basin Fire Station Remodel	Tonto Basin Fire District	158,000	Gallego, Kelly

## CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING ITEMS—Continued

Account	State	Project	Recipient	Recommendation (\$)	Requestor(s)
Rural Community Facilities Program	AZ	Clarkdale Police Station	Town of Clarkdale	150,000	Gallego, Kelly
Rural Community Facilities Program	AZ	Superior Fire Engine	Town of Superior	718,000	Gallego, Kelly
Rural Community Facilities Program	CA	City of Huron Police Vehicle Conversion Project	City of Huron	280,000	Padilla
Rural Community Facilities Program	CA	Mariposa County—6th Street Pedestrian Bridge Project.	County of Mariposa	737,000	Padilla, Schiff
Rural Community Facilities Program	CA	Mono County—Emergency Backup Generators	County of Mono	900,000	Padilla, Schiff
Rural Community Facilities Program	CA	Guadalupe Union School District—Making Way for Room to Play Project.	Guadalupe Union School District	1,967,000	Padilla, Schiff
Rural Community Facilities Program	CO	Gardner Community Center Construction	Huerfano Community Corporation	590,000	Bennet, Hickenlooper
Rural Community Facilities Program	CO	Wellington Community Services Center	Larimer County	1,000,000	Bennet, Hickenlooper
Rural Community Facilities Program	CO	Regional Fire Training Tower	NE Teller County Fire Protection District	529,000	Bennet, Hickenlooper
Rural Community Facilities Program	CO	Fairplay Police Station	Town of Fairplay	1,199,000	Bennet, Hickenlooper
Rural Community Facilities Program	CT	Community Health Resources for Roots to Recovery (R2R) Facility Enhancements.	Community Health Resources	560,000	Blumenthal, Murphy
Rural Community Facilities Program	CT	Essex Library Association for Infrastructure and Accessibility Improvements.	Essex Library Association	576,000	Blumenthal, Murphy
Rural Community Facilities Program	CT	Eugene O'Neill Theater Center for Renovations to Historic Campus.	Eugene O'Neill Memorial Theater Center	1,588,000	Blumenthal, Murphy
Rural Community Facilities Program	CT	Library Association of Warehouse Point for Facilities Improvements.	Library Association of Warehouse Point	182,000	Blumenthal, Murphy
Rural Community Facilities Program	CT	Sea Research Foundation Improved Water Quality and Improved Quality of Wastewater Discharges.	Sea Research Foundation (dba Mystic Aquarium).	750,000	Blumenthal, Murphy
Rural Community Facilities Program	CT	Town of Andover for New Generator Installation and Renovations for Senior/Community Center.	Town of Andover	273,000	Blumenthal, Murphy
Rural Community Facilities Program	CT	Town of Willington for Firehouse and EOC Renovation and Remediation.	Town of Willington	525,000	Blumenthal, Murphy
Rural Community Facilities Program	DE	Cape Henlopen Senior Center	Cape Henlopen Senior Center Inc.	1,049,000	Blunt Rochester
Rural Community Facilities Program	DE	Emergency Radio Tower Upgrades	Delaware Division of Communications	2,208,000	Coons
Rural Community Facilities Program	DE	Energy Efficiency Improvements	Food Bank of Delaware, Inc.	1,126,000	Blunt Rochester,
Rural Community Facilities Program	DE	Capital Improvements	La Red Health Center	720,000	Coons
Rural Community Facilities Program	DE	Capital Improvements	La Red Health Center	2,000,000	Blunt Rochester, Coons

Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	Tanker Truck for Georgia Mutual Aid Group Resources.	Allentown Fire Department	412,000	Ossoff
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia Kitchen.	America's Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia	855,000	Warnock
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	Fire Station Construction	Bleckley County Fire Department	124,000	Ossoff
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	Improvements to Fire Station and Emergency Operations Center.	City of Cochran	314,000	Ossoff
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	Danielsville Community Center	City of Danielsville	42,000	Ossoff
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	New Public Safety Facility for Eastman Fire Department.	City of Eastman	1,059,000	Ossoff, Warnock
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	City of Fitzgerald Fire Department Bedroom Addition.	City of Fitzgerald	509,000	Ossoff
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	New Fire Station and Fire Pumper Truck	City of Lakeland	750,000	Ossoff
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	Ambulance Replacement Initiative	Dade County	406,000	Ossoff
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	Lodging for Veterans at Learning Apiary	Doc's Healing Hives and Honey	163,000	Ossoff
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	Wildland Brush Trucks	Fannin County Fire Department	205,000	Ossoff
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	Manchester Fire Department Station Remodel/Addition.	Manchester Fire Department	300,000	Ossoff
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	McIntosh County First Responder Mini Ambulance.	McIntosh County Board of Commissioners	36,000	Warnock
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	McIntosh County Public Safety Communication Upgrade.	McIntosh County Board of Commissioners	2,303,000	Ossoff, Warnock
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	Okefenokee Experience Nature Center	Okefenokee Swamp Park, Inc.	1,000,000	Ossoff, Warnock
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	Baxley and Appling County Hospital Authority HVAC Upgrade.	The Baxley and Appling County Hospital Authority.	1,001,000	Warnock
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	Knox Community Center Rehabilitation	Warren County Board of Commissioners	652,000	Ossoff
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	Rescue Truck and Electronic Message Boards	Washington County Emergency Management Agency.	270,000	Ossoff
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	White County Library Construction Project	White County	500,000	Ossoff
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	Wilcox County Fire Stations	Wilcox County Board of Commissioners	402,000	Ossoff
Rural Community Facilities Program	GA	City of Wrightsville Police Patrol Vehicles	Wrightsville Police Department	103,000	Ossoff
Rural Community Facilities Program	IL	Laboratory Renovation	Blessing Care Corporation	1,000,000	Durbin
Rural Community Facilities Program	IL	Intergenerational Center	Boys & Girls Club of Livingston County	1,000,000	Durbin
Rural Community Facilities Program	IL	Herrin CUSD No. 4 Pre-K Center	Herrin CUSD No. 4	263,000	Duckworth
Rural Community Facilities Program	IL	Hospital Infrastructure Improvements	Iroquois Memorial Hospital and Resident Home	645,000	Durbin
Rural Community Facilities Program	IL	Medical Technology Upgrades	Lawrence County Memorial Hospital	450,000	Durbin
Rural Community Facilities Program	IL	Memorial Hospital Association LaHarpe Clinic Initiative.	Memorial Hospital Association	1,382,000	Duckworth
Rural Community Facilities Program	IL	Teledentistry initiative	Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center	70,000	Durbin
Rural Community Facilities Program	IL	Rural Health Clinic Expansion	Southern Illinois Hospital Services	1,000,000	Durbin

## CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING ITEMS—Continued

Account	State	Project	Recipient	Recommendation (\$)	Requestor(s)
Rural Community Facilities Program	KS	Barclay College Nursing Program	Barclay College	1,875,000	Moran
Rural Community Facilities Program	KS	Jewell County Courthouse	Jewell County	20,000	Moran
Rural Community Facilities Program	KS	Phillips County Health Systems Operating Room Repairs.	Phillips County Health Systems	675,000	Moran
Rural Community Facilities Program	KS	Rawlins County Health Center Oncology Services Expansion.	Rawlins County Health Center	608,000	Moran
Rural Community Facilities Program	KY	Ohio County Healthcare Hospital Infrastructure Improvement Project.	Ohio County Hospital	1,350,000	McConnell
Rural Community Facilities Program	LA	City of Baker Satellite Fire Station	City of Baker	863,000	Kennedy
Rural Community Facilities Program	LA	Fire Station in Zachary, Louisiana	City of Zachary	1,050,000	Kennedy
Rural Community Facilities Program	LA	Northeast Louisiana Infusion Center	Franklin Medical Center	1,125,000	Kennedy
Rural Community Facilities Program	LA	Fire Station St. Bernard Parish	St. Bernard Parish Government	4,000,000	Cassidy, Kennedy
Rural Community Facilities Program	LA	Town of Farmerville Fire Department Renovations.	Town of Farmerville Fire Department	263,000	Cassidy
Rural Community Facilities Program	MA	Nantucket Food Hub	Nantucket Resource Partnership, Inc.	1,000,000	Markey, Warren
Rural Community Facilities Program	MA	Town of Ashby Highway Loader	Town of Ashby	188,000	Markey, Warren
Rural Community Facilities Program	MA	Monson Fire Station renovation, addition, repair project.	Town of Monson (Fire Department)	1,000,000	Markey, Warren
Rural Community Facilities Program	MA	WMFP Renovation Project	Williamstown Meetinghouse Preservation Fund, Inc.	1,500,000	Markey, Warren
Rural Community Facilities Program	MD	STEM Makerspace at the La Plata Library	Charles County Public Library	67,000	Alsobrooks, Van Hollen
Rural Community Facilities Program	MD	Kent County EMS Headquarters Enhancement Project.	Kent County Board of County Commissioners	45,000	Alsobrooks, Van Hollen
Rural Community Facilities Program	MD	Potomac Fire Company Engine Replacement	Potomac Fire Company No.2 Inc.	675,000	Alsobrooks, Van Hollen
Rural Community Facilities Program	MD	The Foxie G Foundation Horses Helping People Center.	The Foxie G Foundation, Inc.	428,000	Alsobrooks, Van Hollen
Rural Community Facilities Program	MD	Town of Barclay Community Center and Town Hall.	Town of Barclay	1,044,000	Alsobrooks, Van Hollen
Rural Community Facilities Program	MD	Berlin Community Center at Historic Flower Street School Site.	Town of Berlin	1,400,000	Van Hollen
Rural Community Facilities Program	MD	Town of Eagle Harbor Community Revitalization	Town of Eagle Harbor, Inc.	800,000	Van Hollen
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	Healthy Acadia—Safe Harbor Recovery Home	Healthy Acadia	465,000	King
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	Marshfield Fire Station	Marshfield Volunteer Fire Department	756,000	Collins, King

Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	MDI YMCA Multi-Purpose Facility	Mount Desert Island YMCA	500,000	Collins, King
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	Owls Head STEM Community Center	Owls Head Transportation Museum	1,533,000	Collins, King
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	Belgrade Fire and Rescue Station	Town of Belgrade	4,700,000	Collins
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	Holden Police Department Garage	Town of Holden	400,000	Collins, King
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	Littletown Town Garage	Littletown Town Garage	896,000	Collins, King
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	Northport Community Center and Town Office	Town of Northport	2,325,000	Collins, King
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	Penobscot Storage Facility	Town of Penobscot	1,429,000	Collins, King
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	A.B. Ricker Memorial Library	Town of Poland	750,000	Collins, King
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	Searsmont Storage Facility	Town of Searsmont	970,000	Collins, King
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	Town of Solon Public Works and Garage	Town of Solon	1,500,000	Collins
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	St. Agatha Fire Station	Town of St. Agatha	345,000	Collins, King
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	St. Albans Fire Station	Town of St. Albans	1,520,000	Collins
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	Swan's Island Fire and Ambulance Station	Town of Swan's Island	1,444,000	Collins, King
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	Thomaston Fire and EMS Facility	Town of Thomaston	3,500,000	Collins, King
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	Westfield Town Garage	Town of Westfield	1,574,000	Collins
Rural Community Facilities Program	ME	University of Maine at Machias Early College Student Support Center.	University of Maine System	750,000	Collins, King
Rural Community Facilities Program	MI	Big Creek Township Fire Department Emergency Radio Upgrade.	Big Creek Township	74,000	Peters
Rural Community Facilities Program	MI	Caro District Library Elevator Modernization	Caro Area District Library	200,000	Peters
Rural Community Facilities Program	MI	Central Montcalm Early Childhood Center	Central Montcalm Early Childhood Center	225,000	Peters
Rural Community Facilities Program	MI	City of Alpena Aerial Fire Truck Replacement	City of Alpena	1,105,000	Peters
Rural Community Facilities Program	MI	City of Bad Axe Public Safety Building	City of Bad Axe	850,000	Peters
Rural Community Facilities Program	MI	City of Berkley Fire Engine Replacement	City of Berkley	385,000	Peters
Rural Community Facilities Program	MI	City of Big Rapids Fire Truck Acquisition	City of Big Rapids	378,000	Peters
Rural Community Facilities Program	MI	Escanaba Public Safety Ladder Truck	City of Escanaba	700,000	Peters, Slotkin
Rural Community Facilities Program	MI	City of Rockwood Fire Engine Acquisition	City of Rockwood	765,000	Peters
Rural Community Facilities Program	MI	Food Bank of Eastern Michigan- Northern Expansion.	Food Bank of Eastern Michigan	2,000,000	Slotkin
Rural Community Facilities Program	MI	Lakeview District Fire Department Wildfire Rigs	Lakeview District Fire Department Wildfire Rigs	245,000	Peters
Rural Community Facilities Program	MI	Northwest Regional Fire Training Center Training Building.	Northwest Regional Fire Training Center Authority.	80,000	Peters
Rural Community Facilities Program	MI	Village of Ontonagon Plow Truck Acquisition Project.	Village of Ontonagon	169,000	Peters
Rural Community Facilities Program	MN	Expanding Intergenerational Capacity at the Alexandria YMCA.	Alexandria Area YMCA	1,700,000	Klobuchar, Smith
Rural Community Facilities Program	MN	Apple Tree Learning Center Capacity and Infrastructure Project.	Apple Tree Learning Center	1,000,000	Klobuchar, Smith
Rural Community Facilities Program	MN	Bemidji Fire Department Fire Station 1 Upgrade	Bemidji Fire Department	450,000	Klobuchar, Smith
Rural Community Facilities Program	MN	Early Childhood Hub and Community Center	KOOTASCA Community Action	315,000	Klobuchar, Smith

## CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING ITEMS—Continued

Account	State	Project	Recipient	Recommendation (\$)	Requestor(s)
Rural Community Facilities Program	MS	Batesville Aerial Ladder Fire Truck Replacement	City of Batesville	1,201,000	Hyde-Smith, Wicker
Rural Community Facilities Program	MS	Desoto County Agri-Education Center	Desoto County Board of Supervisors	275,000	Wicker
Rural Community Facilities Program	NC	Southeastern Community College Training Program Expansion	Southeastern Community College	4,905,000	Tillis
Rural Community Facilities Program	NC	YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly Construction and Restoration	YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly	1,095,000	Tillis
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	Drive to Safety	Belmont Police Department	73,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	Chesley Memorial Library Energy Efficiency and Emergency Power Project	Chesley Memorial Library	95,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	Cottage Hospital Asbestos Abatement	Cottage Hospital	1,725,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	Croydon Schoolhouse Renovation and Expansion	Croydon School District	1,176,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	Interrupting Intergenerational Addiction	Families Flourish Northeast Inc	1,000,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	Children's Center Building Acquisition	Franconia Children's Center, Inc.	514,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	Renovation and Upgrade to Health Sciences Facilities at Franklin Pierce University, Rindge Campus	Franklin Pierce University	1,000,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	Maplewood Station Community Center	Maplewood Station	750,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	Walpole Village School	The Walpole Foundation	830,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	Bethlehem's Transfer Station Project	Town of Bethlehem	750,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	George B. White Solar Project	Town of Deerfield	248,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	Replacement of Rescue Truck	Town of Gorham	301,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	Groton Salt and Sand Shed	Town of Groton	174,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	Hampton Public Safety Pier	Town of Hampton	125,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	Hancock Fire Station Renovation Project	Town of Hancock	600,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	Unity Fire Station and Emergency Community Shelter	Town of Unity???	2,100,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NH	Walpole NH Police Station	Town of Walpole	2,058,000	Shaheen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NJ	Dumont Borough Ladder Truck Request	Borough of Dumont	525,000	Booker, Kim
Rural Community Facilities Program	NJ	Old Tappan Fire Department Emergency Vehicle	Borough of Old Tappan	525,000	Kim
Rural Community Facilities Program	NJ	Deborah Heart and Lung Center Cardiac Electrophysiology Lab Enhancement	Deborah Heart and Lung Center	789,000	Booker, Kim
Rural Community Facilities Program	NJ	HSCFD Fire Truck 2025	Hopewell Township	186,000	Booker
Rural Community Facilities Program	NJ	Firehouse Critical Infrastructure Update	Runnemede Fire Company No 1	329,000	Booker
Rural Community Facilities Program	NM	Zuni Pueblo Conservation Career and Cultural Preservation Center	Conservation Legacy	275,000	Heinrich



Rural Community Facilities Program	NM	Gila Regional Medical Center Utility Systems Upgrade.	Gila Regional Medical Center	193,000	Heinrich
Rural Community Facilities Program	NM	Collaborative Expansion of Early Childhood Education in Luna County.	HELP New Mexico, Inc.	1,575,000	Heinrich, Luján
Rural Community Facilities Program	NM	Isleta Learning Center	Pueblo of Isleta Department of Education	1,000,000	Heinrich
Rural Community Facilities Program	NM	Communications Equipment for Firefighters	Rio Arriba County	1,100,000	Heinrich, Luján
Rural Community Facilities Program	NM	Estancia Town Hall and Community Center Renovation.	Town of Estancia	1,513,000	Luján
Rural Community Facilities Program	NM	Truchas VFD Fire Apparatus	Truchas Volunteer Fire Department	750,000	Heinrich, Luján
Rural Community Facilities Program	NM	Wildland Fire Engine	Village of Questa	375,000	Heinrich
Rural Community Facilities Program	NV	Ely Shoshone Tribe—Community Facility Center	Ely Shoshone Tribe	3,100,000	Cortez Masto, Rosen
Rural Community Facilities Program	NY	Art Omi—Pavilions at Chatham	Art Omi Pavilions at Chatham	1,000,000	Gillibrand, Schumer
Rural Community Facilities Program	NY	Chenango Memorial Hospital—Facilities Improvements.	Chenango Memorial Hospital, Inc.	667,000	Gillibrand
Rural Community Facilities Program	NY	Expansion and Modernization of Arts Education, Early Childhood Education, and Nonprofit Co-Working Community Hub.	Lake Placid Center for the Arts	1,000,000	Gillibrand, Schumer
Rural Community Facilities Program	NY	Wild Encounters Trail	Natural History Museum of the Adirondacks	466,000	Schumer
Rural Community Facilities Program	NY	Tioga Regional Career and Technical Education Center.	Owego Apalachin Central School District	811,000	Schumer
Rural Community Facilities Program	NY	Tri-County YMCA—Dave Gray Discovery Center	Tri-County YMCA of New York, Inc.	2,000,000	Gillibrand
Rural Community Facilities Program	OH	Skips Landing Revitalization	Coshocton County Board of Commission	1,000,000	Moreno
Rural Community Facilities Program	OH	Road Salt Storage Facility	Saint Joseph Township	43,000	Moreno
Rural Community Facilities Program	OH	Agricultural Service Center Renovation	Seneca County Board of Commissioners	560,000	Moreno
Rural Community Facilities Program	OK	Adolescent Centers for Teen Challenge of Oklahoma.	Central Oklahoma Adult and Teen Challenge	1,162,000	Mullin
Rural Community Facilities Program	OK	Eastern Oklahoma State Rural Facilities Renovation.	Eastern Oklahoma State College	375,000	Mullin
Rural Community Facilities Program	OK	Advising and Career Development Center	Western Oklahoma State College	175,000	Mullin
Rural Community Facilities Program	OR	Fire Station Construction	Idanha-Detroit Rural Fire Protection District	2,000,000	Merkley, Wyden
Rural Community Facilities Program	PA	Emporium Borough Town Hall Improvement Project.	Borough of Emporium	508,000	Fetterman, McCormick
Rural Community Facilities Program	PA	Palmerston Borough Police Building	Borough of Palmerston	550,000	McCormick
Rural Community Facilities Program	PA	Crary Hose Company Volunteer Fire Department Fire Station.	Crary Hose Company	550,000	Fetterman, McCormick
Rural Community Facilities Program	PA	Friendship Hose Co. No. 1 Owingsburg Fire Department Station.	Friendship Hose Co. No. 1 Owingsburg, PA	550,000	McCormick
Rural Community Facilities Program	PA	Laurel Arts Facility Preservation and HVAC Modernization in Somerset County, PA.	Laurel Arts, Inc.	37,000	Fetterman

## CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING ITEMS—Continued

Account	State	Project	Recipient	Recommendation (\$)	Requestor(s)
Rural Community Facilities Program	PA	Center For Youth and Community Development Community Education Center in Adams County, PA.	The Center For Youth and Community Development.	500,000	Fetterman
Rural Community Facilities Program	PA	Warren County Emergency Radio Tower Project	Warren County Commissioners	550,000	McCormick
Rural Community Facilities Program	RI	Ashaway Ambulance Building Expansion	Ashaway Ambulance Association Inc	344,000	Whitehouse
Rural Community Facilities Program	RI	Block Island Maritime Institute Marine Mammal Rescue and Response and Conservation Project.	Block Island Maritime Institute	250,000	Whitehouse
Rural Community Facilities Program	RI	Glocester Public Safety Communications Tower Fire Sub-Station	Glocester Police Department	237,000	Reed
Rural Community Facilities Program	RI	Foster Public Safety Complex	Jamestown Fire Department	248,000	Whitehouse
Rural Community Facilities Program	RI	Scituate Emergency Communication Enhancement Project.	Town of Foster	1,000,000	Reed
Rural Community Facilities Program	RI	Tiverton Fire Rescue Boat	Town of Scituate	204,000	Reed
Rural Community Facilities Program	RI	West Greenwich Fire Radio System	Town of Tiverton	210,000	Reed
Rural Community Facilities Program	SC	Blythewood Fire Station	Town of West Greenwich	311,000	Reed, Whitehouse
Rural Community Facilities Program	SC	Tega Cay Fire Department	Richland County	1,250,000	Graham
Rural Community Facilities Program	SC	Town of Central Fire Station	Tega Cay Fire Department	533,000	Graham
Rural Community Facilities Program	VA	Bedford County Community Center Renovation	Town of Central	2,000,000	Graham
Rural Community Facilities Program	VA	Carroll County Wellness Center Restoration Expansion.	Bedford County, Virginia	1,000,000	Kaine, Warner
Rural Community Facilities Program	VA	City of Bristol Municipal Vehicles Replacement	Carroll County Wellness Center, Inc.	1,000,000	Kaine, Warner
Rural Community Facilities Program	VA	Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Center Safety Net Dental Lab Access.	City of Bristol	285,000	Kaine, Warner
Rural Community Facilities Program	VA	Town of Crewe Community Center	Mission Dental Virginia, Inc. d/b/a Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Center.	303,000	Kaine, Warner
Rural Community Facilities Program	VA	Town of Grundy Fire Truck Replacement	Town of Crewe, Virginia	376,000	Kaine, Warner
Rural Community Facilities Program	VA	Town of Lebanon Brush Truck Replacement	Town of Grundy	398,000	Kaine, Warner
Rural Community Facilities Program	VT	Town of Newark Highway Garage and Fire Station.	Town of Lebanon, Virginia	188,000	Kaine, Warner
Rural Community Facilities Program	VT	Rockingham Municipal Fire Department SR Station.	Town of Newark	1,500,000	Sanders
Rural Community Facilities Program	VT	Agriculture Training and Food Security at YVCC Othello Fire Department	Town of Rockingham	598,000	Welch
Rural Community Facilities Program	WA	Childcare Facility and Library	Vermont Youth Conservation Corps	814,000	Welch
Rural Community Facilities Program	WA	Installation of a Fixed MRI	City of Othello	1,375,000	Murray
Rural Community Facilities Program	WA		City of Republic	1,000,000	Cantwell
Rural Community Facilities Program	WA		Ocean Beach Hospital and Medical Clinics	847,000	Cantwell

Rural Community Facilities Program .....	WA	YMCA Camp Casey .....	YMCA of Snohomish County—YMCA Camp Casey.	4,000,000	Murray
Rural Community Facilities Program .....	WI	Bad River Boys and Girls Club Capital Project .....	Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians.	3,350,000	Baldwin
Rural Community Facilities Program .....	WI	Dodge County Childcare Center .....	Dodge County Housing Authority .....	950,000	Baldwin
Rural Community Facilities Program .....	WI	La Pointe Big Bay Town Park Project .....	Town of La Pointe .....	1,500,000	Baldwin
Rural Community Facilities Program .....	WV	Mullens Fire Department Building .....	Mullens Volunteer Fire Department .....	1,500,000	Capito
Rural Community Facilities Program .....	WV	Nicholas County Community Facilities Upgrades .....	Nicholas County Commission .....	602,000	Capito, Justice
Rural Community Facilities Program .....	WV	Pocahontas County OEM Dispatch/Emergency Medical Service.	Pocahontas County Commission .....	1,500,000	Capito, Justice
Rural Community Facilities Program .....	WV	Ridgeley VFC No.1 Fire Station .....	Ridgeley Volunteer Fire Company No.1 .....	2,841,000	Capito
Rural Community Facilities Program .....	WV	Sistersville General Hospital Bed Capacity Expansion.	Sistersville General Hospital .....	3,580,000	Capito, Justice
Rural Community Facilities Program .....	WV	Poca Public Safety Building .....	Town of Poca .....	2,400,000	Capito
Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations .....	AK	Nunavakanukaklak Lake-Johnson River Watershed.	Native Village of Nunapitchul .....	55,000	Murkowski
Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations .....	AZ	Smith Wash Watershed Plan .....	Pinal County .....	1,000,000	Gallego, Kelly
Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations .....	KS	Rattlesnake Creek Watershed .....	Big Bend Groundwater Management District No. 5.	4,200,000	Moran
Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations .....	MS	Choctaw County Lake .....	Choctaw County Board of Supervisors .....	1,000,000	Wicker
Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations .....	MS	Big and Little Cedar Creeks (George County) Flood Prevention.	George County .....	2,000,000	Wicker
Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations .....	MS	Mississippi Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations.	NRCS-MS .....	13,550,000	Hyde-Smith
Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations .....	MT	Milk River Watershed Plan .....	Milk River Irrigation Project Joint Board of Control.	2,500,000	Sheehy
Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations .....	OK	Spavinaw Creek Bank Stabilization .....	Green Country Conservation Alliance Inc. ....	55,000	Mulin
Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations .....	OR	Farmers Irrigation District Irrigation Modernization Project.	Farmers Irrigation District .....	2,000,000	Merkley, Wyden
Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations .....	OR	North Unit Irrigation District Infrastructure Modernization Project.	North Unit Irrigation District .....	2,000,000	Merkley, Wyden
Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations .....	RI	Pocasset Flood Mitigation Project .....	Rhode Island Association of Conservation Districts.	4,000,000	Reed

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF NEW BUDGET (OBLIGATIONAL) AUTHORITY FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025 AND BUDGET ESTIMATES AND AMOUNTS RECOMMENDED IN THE BILL  
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026  
[In thousands of dollars]

Item	2025 appropriation	Budget estimate	Committee recommendation	Senate Committee recommendation compared with ( + or - )	
				2025 appropriation	Budget estimate
TITLE I—AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS Processing, Research, and Marketing Office of the Secretary					