

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4365

AN ACT

To provide public health veterinary services to Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations for rabies prevention, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Veterinary Services
3 to Improve Public Health in Rural Communities Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

5 It is the sense of Congress that the Indian Health
6 Service of the Department of Health and Human Services
7 is uniquely suited to empower Indian Tribes and Tribal
8 organizations to address zoonotic disease threats in the
9 communities they serve by providing public health veteri-
10 nary services through a One Health approach that recog-
11 nizes the interconnection between people, animals, plants,
12 and their shared environment.

13 **SEC. 3. PUBLIC HEALTH VETERINARY SERVICES.**

14 Title II of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act
15 is amended by inserting after section 223 (25 U.S.C.
16 1621v) the following:

17 **“SEC. 224. PUBLIC HEALTH VETERINARY SERVICES.**

18 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

19 “(1) PUBLIC HEALTH VETERINARY SERV-
20 ICES.—The term ‘public health veterinary services’
21 includes any of the following:

22 “(A) spaying and neutering services for do-
23 mestic animals;

24 “(B) diagnoses;

25 “(C) surveillance;

26 “(D) epidemiology;

1 “(E) control;
 2 “(F) prevention;
 3 “(G) elimination;
 4 “(H) vaccination; and
 5 “(I) any other related service or activity
 6 that reduces the risk of zoonotic disease trans-
 7 mission or antimicrobial resistance in humans,
 8 food, or animals.

9 “(2) ZOONOTIC DISEASE.—The term ‘zoonotic
 10 disease’ means a disease or infection that may be
 11 transmitted naturally from vertebrate animals to hu-
 12 mans, or from humans to vertebrate animals.

13 “(b) AUTHORIZATION FOR VETERINARY SERVICES.—
 14 The Secretary, acting through the Service, may expend
 15 funds, directly or pursuant to the Indian Self-Determina-
 16 tion and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5301 et
 17 seq.), for public health veterinary services to prevent and
 18 control of zoonotic disease infection and transmission in
 19 Service areas where the risk for disease occurrence in hu-
 20 mans and wildlife is endemic.

21 “(c) PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS; COORDINATION.—
 22 In providing public health veterinary services under sub-
 23 section (b), the Secretary may—

1 “(1) assign or deploy veterinary public health
2 officers from the Commissioned Corps of the Public
3 Health Service to Service areas; and

4 “(2) coordinate and implement activities with—
5 “(A) the Director of the Centers for Dis-
6 ease Control and Prevention; and

7 “(B) the Secretary of Agriculture.

8 “(d) REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit to the
9 Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate, the Committee
10 on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate,
11 the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Rep-
12 resentatives, and the Committee on Energy and Commerce
13 of the House of Representatives a biennial report on the
14 use of funds, the assignment and deployment of veterinary
15 public health officers from the Commissioned Corps of the
16 Public Health Service, data related to the monitoring and
17 disease surveillance of zoonotic diseases, and related serv-
18 ices provided under this section.”.

19 **SEC. 4. APHIS WILDLIFE SERVICES STUDY ON ORAL RABIES**
20 **VACCINES IN ARCTIC REGIONS OF THE**
21 **UNITED STATES.**

22 Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment
23 of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall conduct a
24 feasibility study—

1 (1) on the delivery of oral rabies vaccines to
 2 wildlife reservoir species that are directly or indi-
 3 rectly connected to the transmission of rabies to
 4 Tribal members living in Arctic regions of the
 5 United States; and

6 (2) that—

7 (A) evaluates the efficacy of the vaccines
 8 described in paragraph (1); and

9 (B) makes recommendations to improve
 10 the delivery of those vaccines.

11 **SEC. 5. ONE HEALTH FRAMEWORK.**

12 Section 2235(b) of the Prepare for and Respond to
 13 Existing Viruses, Emerging New Threats, and Pandemics
 14 Act (42 U.S.C. 300hh–37(b)) is amended by striking “and
 15 the Secretary of the Interior” and inserting “, the Sec-
 16 retary of the Interior, and the Director of the Indian
 17 Health Service”.

Passed the Senate December 12, 2024.

Attest:

Secretary.

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