

119TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 629

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## AN ACT

To amend the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 to remove barriers to agricultural producers in accessing funds to carry out emergency measures under the emergency conservation program, 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 “Emergency Conserva-  
3 tion Program Improvement Act of 2025”.

4 **SEC. 2. IMPROVING THE EMERGENCY CONSERVATION PRO-**  
5 **GRAM.**

6 Section 401 of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978  
7 (16 U.S.C. 2201) is amended—

8 (1) in subsection (b)—

9 (A) in the subsection heading, by inserting  
10 “AND OTHER EMERGENCY CONSERVATION  
11 MEASURES” after “FENCING”;

12 (B) in paragraph (1)—

13 (i) by inserting “or for other emer-  
14 gency measures to replace or restore farm-  
15 land or conservation structures requiring  
16 an immediate response (as determined by  
17 the Secretary),” after “replacement of  
18 fencing,”; and

19 (ii) by striking “option of receiving”  
20 and all that follows through the period at  
21 the end and inserting the following: “op-  
22 tion of receiving, before the agricultural  
23 producer carries out the repair, replace-  
24 ment, or restoration—

25 “(A) with respect to a payment to the agri-  
26 cultural producer for a replacement, 75 percent

1 of the cost of the replacement, as determined by  
2 the Secretary; and

3 “(B) with respect to a payment to the ag-  
4 ricultural producer for a repair or restoration,  
5 50 percent of the cost of the repair or restora-  
6 tion, as determined by the Secretary.”; and

7 (C) in paragraph (2), by striking “60-day”  
8 and inserting “180-day”; and  
9 (2) by adding at the end the following:

10 “(c) WILDFIRE DETERMINATION.—A wildfire that  
11 causes damage eligible for a payment under subsection (a)  
12 includes—

13 “(1) a wildfire that is not caused naturally, if  
14 the damage is caused by the spread of the wildfire  
15 due to natural causes; and

16 “(2) a wildfire that is caused by the Federal  
17 Government.”.

18 **SEC. 3. IMPROVING THE EMERGENCY FOREST RESTORA-**  
19 **TION PROGRAM.**

20 Section 407 of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978  
21 (16 U.S.C. 2206) is amended—

22 (1) in subsection (a)(2), by striking “wildfires,”  
23 and inserting “wildfires (including a wildfire that is  
24 not caused naturally, if the damage is caused by the  
25 spread of the wildfire due to natural causes, and a

1 wildfire that is caused by the Federal Govern-  
2 ment),”;

3 (2) by redesignating subsection (e) as sub-  
4 section (f); and

5 (3) by inserting after subsection (d) the fol-  
6 lowing:

7 “(e) ADVANCE PAYMENTS.—

8 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall give an  
9 owner of nonindustrial private forest land the option  
10 of receiving, before the owner carries out emergency  
11 measures under this section, not more than 75 per-  
12 cent of the cost of the emergency measures, as de-  
13 termined by the Secretary.

14 “(2) RETURN OF FUNDS.—If the funds pro-  
15 vided under paragraph (1) are not expended by the  
16 end of the 180-day period beginning on the date on  
17 which the owner of nonindustrial private forest land  
18 receives those funds, the funds shall be returned  
19 within a reasonable timeframe, as determined by the  
20 Secretary.”.

Passed the Senate March 24, 2026.

Attest:

*Secretary.*



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