

PET AND LIVESTOCK PROTECTION ACT

OCTOBER 3, 2025.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. WESTERMAN, from the Committee on Natural Resources,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

together with

DISSENTING VIEWS

[To accompany H.R. 845]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Natural Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 845) to require the Secretary of the Interior to reissue regulations removing the gray wolf from the list of endangered and threatened wildlife under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with an amendment and recommends that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Pet and Livestock Protection Act”.

SEC. 2. REMOVING THE GRAY WOLF FROM THE LIST OF ENDANGERED AND THREATENED WILDLIFE.

Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary of the Interior shall reissue the final rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removing the Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*) From the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife” and published on November 3, 2020 (85 Fed. Reg. 69778).

SEC. 3. NO JUDICIAL REVIEW.

Reissuance of the final rule under section 2 shall not be subject to judicial review.

PURPOSE OF THE LEGISLATION

The purpose of H.R. 845 is to require the Secretary of the Interior to reissue regulations removing the gray wolf from the list of endangered and threatened wildlife under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

This bill would require the Department of the Interior to reissue the final rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removing the Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*) From the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife” published on November 3, 2020 (85 Fed. Reg. 69778). The bill would also prohibit the rule from being subject to judicial review.

In 1978, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) listed the gray wolf as threatened in Minnesota, and endangered in the remainder of the lower 48 states, under the Endangered Species Act.¹ The rule specified that “biological subspecies would continue to be maintained and dealt with as separate entities.”² FWS thus implemented gray wolf recovery programs in three regions: the northern Rocky Mountains for the northern Rocky Mountain wolf, the southwestern United States for the Mexican wolf, and the eastern United States (including the Great Lakes States) for the eastern timber wolf.³

The Great Lakes region has the largest concentration of gray wolves in the lower 48 states, with approximately 4,200 wolves inhabiting Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan.⁴ Under the current management framework, wolves in Minnesota are listed as threatened, whereas wolves in Wisconsin and Michigan are listed as endangered.⁵ The recovery plan for the gray wolf in the Great Lakes is quite clear regarding the criteria for delisting: a stable or increasing population of wolves in Minnesota and a population of at least 200 wolves outside of Minnesota.⁶ According to former wildlife biologist at the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Nathan Roberts, these goals have been met since at least 1994. He went on to say, it is remarkable to “note that, given the natural life span of wolves, every wolf on the landscape in the Great Lakes region was born long after recovery goals were met.”⁷

Between 2003 and 2015, the FWS published several rules revising the 1978 rule to incorporate new information and recognize the biological recovery of gray wolves in the northern Rocky Mountains and eastern United States (including the Great Lakes States). These rules were challenged in court and invalidated or vacated, in

¹“U.S. District Court Vacates Gray Wolf Delisting Rule.” Erin H. Ward. Congressional Research Service. LSB10697 (congress.gov).

²43 FR 9607, March 9, 1978.

³*Id.*

⁴“America’s Gray Wolves Get Another Chance at Real Recovery.” Natural Resources Defense Council. Shelia Hu. April 21, 2022. America’s Gray Wolves Get Another Chance at Real Recovery (nrdc.org).

⁵“U.S. District Court Vacates Gray Wolf Delisting Rule.” Erin H. Ward. Congressional Research Service. LSB10697 (congress.gov).

⁶“Recovery Plan For the Eastern Timber Wolf.” U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 3. January 31, 1992, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GOVPUB-I49-PURL-LPS37439/pdf/GOVPUB-I49-PURL-LPS37439.pdf>.

⁷“Testimony of Nathan Roberts.” House Committee on Natural Resources. March 23, 2023. testimony_roberts.pdf (house.gov).

part, on the determinations that the FWS distinct population segment (DPS) designations were legally flawed.⁸

In 2009, the FWS published final rules designating and delisting the western Great Lakes DPS and the northern Rocky Mountain DPS, except it did not delist the gray wolf in Wyoming after finding the state's management plan inadequate.⁹ The Humane Society challenged the western Great Lakes DPS rule on the grounds that the FWS violated the Administrative Procedures Act's notice and comment requirements. Ultimately, the FWS reached a settlement agreement and withdrew the rule.¹⁰ Defenders of Wildlife challenged the northern Rocky Mountain DPS rule, and the Montana federal district court vacated the 2009 Northern Rocky Mountain DPS rule after concluding that the ESA did not allow the FWS to list a partial DPS.¹¹ However, an act of Congress in 2011 directed the FWS to reinstate the 2009 rule designating and delisting the northern Rocky Mountain DPS without Wyoming.¹²

In 2017, after several years of litigation, the FWS delisted the gray wolf in Wyoming. As a result, starting in 2017 there were three distinct regulatory frameworks for gray wolf population areas: (1) the northern Rockies Mountains, where the wolf was not listed; (2) in Minnesota, where the gray wolf is listed as threatened; and (3) in all other areas of the lower 48 states, where the gray wolf is listed as endangered.¹³ In November 2020, the Trump administration finalized a rule that delisted the gray wolf, except for the Mexican wolf, and returned management to each of the lower 48 states.¹⁴

Defenders of Wildlife, WildEarth Guardians, and other environmental groups challenged the 2020 rule, and the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California vacated it in February 2022.¹⁵ The court found that the FWS had failed to show that gray wolf populations could be sustained outside of the core populations in the western Great Lakes and northern Rocky Mountains.¹⁶ This ruling reinstated ESA protections for the gray wolf in the lower 48 states, except for the congressionally delisted Northern Rockies Ecosystem.¹⁷ The Biden administration's Department of Justice appealed the ruling and continued to submit legal filings in support of the 2020 rule as late as September 2024.¹⁸

In the 118th Congress, the House of Representatives passed legislation identical to H.R. 845, the "Trust the Science Act," by a vote

⁸*Id.*

⁹74 Fed. Reg. 15,070 (Apr. 2, 2009); 74 Fed. Reg. 15,123 (Apr. 2, 2009).

¹⁰Humane Soc'y of the U.S. v. Salazar, No. 1:09-CV-1092 (D.D.C. July 2, 2009) (settlement order).

¹¹Defenders of Wildlife v. Salazar, 812 F. Supp. 2d 1205, 1207 (D. Mont. 2009).

¹²Public Law 112-10, Department of Defense and Full-year Continuing Appropriations Act of 2011, Section 1713.

¹³"U.S. District Court Vacates Gray Wolf Delisting Rule." Erin H. Ward. Congressional Research Service. LSB10697 (congress.gov).

¹⁴85 Fed. Reg. 69,778 (Nov. 3, 2020).

¹⁵"U.S. District Court Vacates Gray Wolf Delisting Rule." Erin H. Ward. Congressional Research Service. LSB10697 (congress.gov).

¹⁶U.S. District Court Northern District of California. *Defenders of Wildlife, Et. Al. v. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Et Al.* February 10, 2022.

¹⁷"Judge restores gray wolf protections." Michael Doyle. E&E News. February 10, 2022. Judge restores gray wolf protections—E&E News (eenews.net).

¹⁸Federal Appellants' Opening Brief. *Defenders of Wildlife, et al., v. U.S. Fish and Wildlife, et al., and State of Utah, et al.* September 13, 2024. https://naturalresources.house.gov/uploadedfiles/chairman_westerman_ftr__9th_cir_court_defenders_v_usfws__wolves.pdf.

of 209–205, with four Democrats voting in support of the legislation.¹⁹

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 845 was introduced on January 31, 2025, by Representative Lauren Boebert (R–CO). The bill was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries. On March 25, 2025, the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries held a hearing on the bill. On April 9, 2025, the Committee on Natural Resources met to consider the bill. The Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 845 by unanimous consent. Representative Lauren Boebert (R–CO) offered an Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute designated Boebert 014 ANS. The Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute was agreed to by voice vote. Representative Val Hoyle (D–OR) offered an amendment to the Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute designated Hoyle #2. The amendment to the Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute was not agreed to by a roll call vote of 17 yeas to 24 nays, as follows:

¹⁹ H.R. 764, “Trust the Science Act.” H.R. 764—118th Congress (2023–2024): Trust the Science Act | Congress.gov | Library of Congress.

Committee on Natural Resources

U.S. House of Representatives

119th Congress

Date: April 9, 2025

Recorded Vote #: 15

Meeting on / Amendment on: **Hoyle #2 amendment to Boebert_014 ANS** to H.R. 845 (Rep. Boebert), "*Pet and Livestock Protection Act of 2025*"

MEMBERS	Yea	Nay	Pres	MEMBERS	Yea	Nay	Pres
Mr. Westerman, AR, Chairman		X		Mr. Huffman, CA	X		
Mr. Wittman, VA		X		Mr. Neguse, CO			
Mr. McClintock, CA		X		Ms. Leger Fernandez, NM	X		
Mr. Gosar, AZ		X		Ms. Stansbury, NM	X		
Mrs. Radewagen, AS		X		Ms. Hoyle, OR	X		
Mr. LaMalfa, CA				Mr. Magaziner, RI	X		
Mr. Webster, FL		X		Mr. Golden, ME	X		
Mr. Fulcher, ID		X		Mr. Min, CA	X		
Mr. Stauber, MN		X		Ms. Dexter, OR	X		
Mr. Tiffany, WI		X		Mr. Hernández, PR	X		
Ms. Boebert, CO		X		Ms. Randall, WA	X		
Mr. Bentz, OR		X		Ms. Ansari, AZ	X		
Ms. Kiggans, VA		X		Ms. Elfreth, MD	X		
Mr. Hunt, TX		X		Mr. Gray, CA	X		
Mr. Collins, GA		X		Ms. Rivas, CA	X		
Ms. Hageman, WY		X		Ms. Velázquez, NY			
Mr. Amodei, NV		X		Mrs. Dingell, MI	X		
Mr. Walberg, MI		X		Mr. Soto, FL	X		
Mr. Ezell, MS		X		Ms. Brownley, CA	X		
Ms. Maloy, UT		X		vacancy			
Mr. McDowell, NC		X					
Mr. Crank, CO		X					
Mr. Begich, AK		X					
Mr. Hurd, CO		X					
Mr. Kennedy, UT		X		TOTAL:	17	24	

Ranking Member Jared Huffman (D-CA) offered an amendment to the Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute designated Huffman #6. The amendment to the Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute was not agreed to by a roll call vote of 17 yeas to 24 nays, as follows:

Committee on Natural Resources

U.S. House of Representatives

119th Congress

Date: April 9, 2025

Recorded Vote #: 16

Meeting on / Amendment on: **Huffman #6 amendment to Boebert_014** ANS to H.R. 845 (Rep. Boebert),
"Pet and Livestock Protection Act of 2025"

MEMBERS	Yea	Nay	Pres	MEMBERS	Yea	Nay	Pres
Mr. Westerman, AR, Chairman		X		Mr. Huffman, CA	X		
Mr. Wittman, VA		X		Mr. Neguse, CO			
Mr. McClintock, CA		X		Ms. Leger Fernandez, NM	X		
Mr. Gosar, AZ		X		Ms. Stansbury, NM	X		
Mrs. Radewagen, AS		X		Ms. Hoyle, OR	X		
Mr. LaMalfa, CA				Mr. Magaziner, RI	X		
Mr. Webster, FL		X		Mr. Golden, ME	X		
Mr. Fulcher, ID		X		Mr. Min, CA	X		
Mr. Stauber, MN		X		Ms. Dexter, OR	X		
Mr. Tiffany, WI		X		Mr. Hernández, PR	X		
Ms. Boebert, CO		X		Ms. Randall, WA	X		
Mr. Bentz, OR		X		Ms. Ansari, AZ	X		
Ms. Kiggans, VA		X		Ms. Elfreth, MD	X		
Mr. Hunt, TX		X		Mr. Gray, CA	X		
Mr. Collins, GA		X		Ms. Rivas, CA	X		
Ms. Hageman, WY		X		Ms. Velázquez, NY			
Mr. Amodei, NV		X		Mrs. Dingell, MI	X		
Mr. Walberg, MI		X		Mr. Soto, FL	X		
Mr. Ezell, MS		X		Ms. Brownley, CA	X		
Ms. Maloy, UT		X		vacancy			
Mr. McDowell, NC		X					
Mr. Crank, CO		X					
Mr. Begich, AK		X					
Mr. Hurd, CO		X					
Mr. Kennedy, UT		X		TOTAL:	17	24	

Representative Maxine Dexter (D-OR) offered an amendment to the Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute designated Dexter #1. The amendment to the Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute was not agreed to by a roll call vote of 17 yeas to 24 nays, as follows:

Committee on Natural Resources

U.S. House of Representatives

119th Congress

Date: April 9, 2025

Recorded Vote #: 17

Meeting on / Amendment on: **Dexter #1 amendment to Boebert_014 ANS** to H.R. 845 (Rep. Boebert), "*Pet and Livestock Protection Act of 2025*"

MEMBERS	Yea	Nay	Pres	MEMBERS	Yea	Nay	Pres
Mr. Westerman, AR, Chairman		X		Mr. Huffman, CA	X		
Mr. Wittman, VA		X		Mr. Neguse, CO			
Mr. McClintock, CA		X		Ms. Leger Fernandez, NM	X		
Mr. Gosar, AZ		X		Ms. Stansbury, NM	X		
Mrs. Radewagen, AS		X		Ms. Hoyle, OR	X		
Mr. LaMalfa, CA				Mr. Magaziner, RI	X		
Mr. Webster, FL		X		Mr. Golden, ME	X		
Mr. Fulcher, ID		X		Mr. Min, CA	X		
Mr. Stauber, MN		X		Ms. Dexter, OR	X		
Mr. Tiffany, WI		X		Mr. Hernández, PR	X		
Ms. Boebert, CO		X		Ms. Randall, WA	X		
Mr. Bentz, OR		X		Ms. Ansari, AZ	X		
Ms. Kiggans, VA		X		Ms. Elfreth, MD	X		
Mr. Hunt, TX		X		Mr. Gray, CA	X		
Mr. Collins, GA		X		Ms. Rivas, CA	X		
Ms. Hageman, WY		X		Ms. Velázquez, NY			
Mr. Amodei, NV		X		Mrs. Dingell, MI	X		
Mr. Walberg, MI		X		Mr. Soto, FL	X		
Mr. Ezell, MS		X		Ms. Brownley, CA	X		
Ms. Maloy, UT		X		vacancy			
Mr. McDowell, NC		X					
Mr. Crank, CO		X					
Mr. Begich, AK		X					
Mr. Hurd, CO		X					
Mr. Kennedy, UT		X		TOTAL:	17	24	

The bill, as amended, was then ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by a roll call vote of 24 yeas to 17 nays, as follows:

Committee on Natural Resources

U.S. House of Representatives

119th Congress

Date: April 9, 2025

Recorded Vote #: 18

Meeting on / Amendment on: **On Favorably Reporting, as amended, H.R. 845 (Rep. Boebert), "Pet and Livestock Protection Act of 2025"**

MEMBERS	Yea	Nay	Pres	MEMBERS	Yea	Nay	Pres
Mr. Westerman, AR, Chairman	X			Mr. Huffman, CA		X	
Mr. Wittman, VA	X			Mr. Neguse, CO			
Mr. McClintock, CA	X			Ms. Leger Fernandez, NM		X	
Mr. Gosar, AZ	X			Ms. Stansbury, NM		X	
Mrs. Radewagen, AS	X			Ms. Hoyle, OR		X	
Mr. LaMalfa, CA				Mr. Magaziner, RI		X	
Mr. Webster, FL	X			Mr. Golden, ME		X	
Mr. Fulcher, ID	X			Mr. Min, CA		X	
Mr. Stauber, MN	X			Ms. Dexter, OR		X	
Mr. Tiffany, WI	X			Mr. Hernández, PR		X	
Ms. Boebert, CO	X			Ms. Randall, WA		X	
Mr. Bentz, OR	X			Ms. Ansari, AZ		X	
Ms. Kiggans, VA	X			Ms. Elfreth, MD		X	
Mr. Hunt, TX	X			Mr. Gray, CA		X	
Mr. Collins, GA	X			Ms. Rivas, CA		X	
Ms. Hageman, WY	X			Ms. Velázquez, NY			
Mr. Amodei, NV	X			Mrs. Dingell, MI		X	
Mr. Walberg, MI	X			Mr. Soto, FL		X	
Mr. Ezell, MS	X			Ms. Brownley, CA		X	
Ms. Maloy, UT	X			vacancy			
Mr. McDowell, NC	X						
Mr. Crank, CO	X						
Mr. Begich, AK	X						
Mr. Hurd, CO	X						
Mr. Kennedy, UT	X			TOTAL:	24	17	

HEARINGS

For the purposes of clause 3(c)(6) of House rule XIII, the following hearing was used to develop or consider this measure: hearing by the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries held on March 25, 2025.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1. Short title

Establishes the short title of this act as the “Pet and Livestock Protection Act”.

Section 2. Removing the Gray Wolf from the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife

Requires the Secretary of the Interior to reissue the final rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removing the Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*) From the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife” not later than 60 days after the date of enactment.

Section 3. No judicial review

Prohibits judicial review on the reissuance of the final rule under section 2.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Natural Resources’ oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII AND
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT

1. *Cost of Legislation and the Congressional Budget Act.* With respect to the requirements of clause 3(c)(2) and (3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and sections 308(a) and 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the following estimate for the bill from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

H.R. 845, Pet and Livestock Protection Act				
As ordered reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources on April 9, 2025				
By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars		2025	2025-2030	2025-2035
Direct Spending (Outlays)		0	*	*
Revenues		0	*	*
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit		0	*	*
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)		0	*	*
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?		No	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply? Yes	
			Mandate Effects	
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?		No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	Yes, Under Threshold
			Contains private-sector mandate?	Yes, Under Threshold
* = between -\$500,000 and \$500,000.				

H.R. 845 would require the Department of the Interior within 60 days of the bill's enactment to reissue a final rule, "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removing the Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*) From the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife," which was submitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and published in the *Federal Register* on November 3, 2020. The bill also would prohibit judicial review of that rule. The rule removed from the list all gray wolves (except the Mexican wolf) in the continental United States and Mexico, effective January 4, 2021. A court order in February 2022 reinstated the gray wolves' protections under the Endangered Species Act (ESA); they are currently listed as threatened in Minnesota and endangered elsewhere.

Under current law, USFWS collects permitting fees for lawful activities that involve protected species, including scientific research, conservation, and unintentional taking of the animals while performing permitted activities. Under H.R. 845, permits would no longer be required for activities involving gray wolves in the continental United States. Permitting fees are recorded in the budget as offsetting receipts (that is, as reductions in direct spending) and are available to be spent without further appropriation. Using information from USFWS, CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 845 would reduce those receipts and the consequent spending by an insignificant amount over the 2025–2035 period.

Violators of the ESA are subject to civil and criminal penalties, which are recorded in the budget as revenues; those penalties can be spent without further appropriation. Using information from USFWS, CBO estimates that any reductions in penalties and the associated spending would be insignificant because of the small number of related cases expected to occur over the 2025–2035 period.

Under current law, plaintiffs who challenge the federal government under the ESA may be entitled to the repayment of attorneys' fees. Such payments are made from the federal government's Judgment Fund, which has a permanent indefinite appropriation. CBO expects that by prohibiting judicial review, H.R. 845 could reduce

the number of civil actions that otherwise would be filed and thus the potential for payments from the fund. Based on the amount of such payments in the past, CBO estimates that any decrease in direct spending for those payments would be insignificant over the 2025–2035 period.

Finally, using information from USFWS, CBO estimates that the administrative costs to reissue the final rule under H.R. 845 would be insignificant; any related spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

H.R. 845 would impose an intergovernmental and private-sector mandate, as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA), by eliminating a right of action for entities to seek a judicial review of the administrative rule required by the bill. Because the rights of action precluded under the bill do not generally result in monetary damages, CBO estimates that the cost of the mandates would fall well below the intergovernmental and private-sector thresholds established in UMRA (\$103 million and \$206 million in 2025, respectively, adjusted annually for inflation).

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Lilia Ledezma (for federal costs) and Erich Dvorak (for mandates). The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

PHILLIP L. SWAGEL,
Director, Congressional Budget Office.

2. *General Performance Goals and Objectives.* As required by clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII, the general performance goal or objective of this bill is to require the Secretary of the Interior to reissue regulations removing the gray wolf from the list of endangered and threatened wildlife under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

EARMARK STATEMENT

This bill does not contain any Congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined under clause 9(e), 9(f), and 9(g) of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

UNFUNDED MANDATES REFORM ACT STATEMENT

According to the Congressional Budget Office, H.R. 845 would impose an intergovernmental and private-sector mandate, as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA), by eliminating a right of action for entities to seek a judicial review of the administrative rule required by the bill. Because the rights of action precluded under the bill do not generally result in monetary damages, CBO estimates that the cost of the mandates would fall well below the intergovernmental and private-sector thresholds established in UMRA (\$103 million and \$206 million in 2025, respectively, adjusted annually for inflation).

EXISTING PROGRAMS

Directed Rule Making. This bill directs the Secretary of the Interior, an executive branch official, to reissue the final rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removing the Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*) From the List of Endangered and Threat-

ened Wildlife” and published on November 3, 2020 (85 Fed. Reg. 69778).

Duplication of Existing Programs. This bill does not establish or reauthorize a program of the federal government known to be duplicative of another program. Such program was not included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139 or identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance published pursuant to the Federal Program Information Act (Public Law 95–220, as amended by Public Law 98–169) as relating to other programs.

APPLICABILITY TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that the legislation does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act.

PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

Any preemptive effect of this bill over state, local, or tribal law is intended to be consistent with the bill’s purposes and text and the Supremacy Clause of Article VI of the U.S. Constitution.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

As ordered reported by the Committee on Natural Resources, H.R. 845 would make no changes in existing law.

DISSENTING VIEWS

H.R. 845, the “Pet and Livestock Protection Act of 2025,” would prematurely strip federal protections for the gray wolf across the lower 48 states, ignoring scientific evidence that the species remains vulnerable in many parts of its historic range.¹ This bill would undermine the Endangered Species Act (ESA) by mandating the reissuance of a 2020 rule that was overturned by the courts in 2022.² By explicitly blocking judicial review, it would remove a critical legal safeguard that ensures species protection decisions are based on science, not politics.

The gray wolf plays a crucial role in healthy ecosystems by regulating prey populations, such as deer and elk, preventing overgrazing, and promoting biodiversity. While wolf numbers have rebounded in limited areas, such as the Northern Rockies and Great Lakes, the species remains absent from much of its former range and continues to face threats from habitat fragmentation, human conflict, and genetic isolation.³

Rather than supporting science-based recovery, H.R. 845 would turn wolf management over to individual states. In the past, state-led management has resulted in mass killings of wolves, endangering population stability and undoing decades of progress under the ESA.⁴ After the Trump Administration de-listed gray wolves in 2020,⁵ Wisconsin’s rushed wolf hunt killed over 30% of the state’s population in just one season.⁶ Idaho passed a law allowing the killing of up to 90% of its wolves, including pups.⁷ Montana removed protections around Yellowstone, raised bag limits, and expanded trapping.⁸

By removing judicial review, H.R. 845 would erode the transparency and accountability of the ESA process. Courts play an essential role in ensuring that delisting decisions meet legal and scientific standards. Without this oversight, the integrity of the ESA is at risk, and future decisions could be driven by political pressure rather than ecological necessity.

¹ *E.g.*, CRS Report R47581. Experimental Populations Under the Endangered Species Act and Gray Wolves Report (2023).

² *Ibid.*

³ *E.g.*, O’Shaughnessy, Sydney. “As U.S. Wolf Populations Slowly Rebound, A Conservation Expert Reflects on Her Decades of Research”. National Academies. October 16, 2023.

⁴ Tess Joosse, Wolf Populations Drop as More States Allow Hunting, *Sci. Am.* (Sept. 7, 2021), Wolf Populations Drop as More States Allow Hunting | Scientific American.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Adrian Treves, Francisco J. Santiago-Avila & Karann Putrevu, Quantifying the Effects of Delisting Wolves after the First State Began Lethal Management, (2021), Quantifying the effects of delisting wolves after the first state began lethal management—PubMed.

⁷ Bob D’Angelo, Idaho Governor Signs Bill That Will Allow Killing of Up To 90% of State’s Wolf Population, KIRO7 (May 7, 2021), Idaho Gov. Signs Bill To Allow Killing 90% of State’s Wolves | HuffPost Impact.

⁸ Tom Kuglin, Judge Issues Immediate Temporary Changes to Montana’s Wolf Hunting, Trapping Seasons, *Indep. Rec.* (Nov. 16, 2022), Judge issues immediate temporary changes to Montana’s wolf hunting, trapping seasons.

This bill prioritizes fear-based policies over the ecological importance of keystone species and could trigger population declines that require costly federal re-listing and intervention in the future. The best available science shows that the gray wolf's recovery remains incomplete. H.R. 845 not only ignores the best available science but also sets a dangerous precedent for legislating species-specific delisting actions that bypass expert agency review and public input.

JARED HUFFMAN,
Ranking Member.

