

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 688

To direct the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct a study of the effectiveness of silver-based biocides as an alternative treatment to preserve wood.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 11, 2003

Mr. GIBBONS (for himself and Mr. OTTER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct a study of the effectiveness of silver-based biocides as an alternative treatment to preserve wood.

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Wood Preservation
5 Safety Act of 2003”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE STUDY ON EFFEC-**
2 **TIVENESS OF SILVER-BASED BIOCIDES AS**
3 **WOOD PRESERVATION TREATMENT.**

4 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

5 (1) The Environmental Protection Agency, the
6 chemical industry, and the home improvement indus-
7 try have negotiated a voluntary agreement to phase
8 out the use of arsenic-based preservatives in pres-
9 sure treated wood by December 31, 2003.

10 (2) In order to maintain the wood treatment in-
11 dustry in the United States, a suitable, safe alter-
12 native to arsenic-based preservatives must be pro-
13 duced.

14 (3) Silver has great potential as a viable, safe,
15 and cost-effective alternative as a wood preservative.

16 (4) Silver has been used since ancient times as
17 a treatment to prevent the spread of bacteria, and
18 silver-based biocides are used today in a wide range
19 of applications.

20 (5) As of 2001, silver was commercially pro-
21 duced in 12 States (Alaska, Arizona, California, Col-
22 orado, Idaho, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Mex-
23 ico, South Dakota, Utah, and Washington), and sil-
24 ver remains a readily available mineral.

1 (6) The properties of silver biocide need to be
2 further studied to determine the effectiveness of its
3 use as a wood preservative.

4 (b) **STUDY REQUIRED.**—The Secretary of Agri-
5 culture shall direct the Forest Products Laboratory in
6 Madison, Wisconsin, to conduct a study during fiscal years
7 2003 and 2004 regarding the effectiveness of silver-based
8 biocides as a wood preservation treatment.

9 (c) **FUNDING SOURCE.**—To provide funds for the
10 study, the Secretary of the Interior shall return to the Sec-
11 retary of Agriculture \$8,000,000 of the funds that were
12 transferred by the Secretary of Agriculture to the Sec-
13 retary of the Interior pursuant to section 2507 of the
14 Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Public
15 Law 107–171; 116 Stat. 275; 43 U.S.C. 2211 note) and
16 remain unobligated as of the date of the enactment of this
17 Act.

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