

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1246

To establish and maintain a wildlife global animal information network for surveillance internationally to combat the growing threat of emerging diseases that involve wild animals, such as bird flu, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 26, 2007

Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Mr. BROWNBACK, and Mr. AKAKA) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To establish and maintain a wildlife global animal information network for surveillance internationally to combat the growing threat of emerging diseases that involve wild animals, such as bird flu, 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,*

3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

4 This Act may be cited as the “Wildlife Global Animal
5 Information Network for Surveillance Act” or “Wildlife
6 GAINS Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds that—

3 (1) the ongoing panzootic of highly pathogenic
4 avian influenza (HPAI) strain H5N1 in Asia and
5 Eurasia is a threat to global human health and the
6 global poultry industry;7 (2) the HPAI virus is capable of causing mas-
8 sive avian die-offs, and response can easily involve
9 the culling of tens of millions of domestic poultry or
10 domestic waterfowl, resulting in significant economic
11 losses;12 (3) the fatality rate due to infection in humans
13 may be 30 to 50 percent or more;14 (4) it has long been known that wild birds are
15 a reservoir host for avian influenza viruses world-
16 wide;17 (5) the 1918 pandemic, the most lethal of the
18 three pandemics that killed over 40,000,000 people
19 worldwide, was caused by an influenza virus that ini-
20 tially jumped directly from birds to humans and sub-
21 sequently evolved an ability to transmit from
22 human-to-human;23 (6) this precedent for an avian influenza virus
24 to transmit directly from birds to humans, then
25 spread among humans, significantly raises the con-
26 cern about the current H5N1 influenza strain;

5 (8) the capacity to proactively detect the
6 threats could result in significantly improved disease
7 prediction and prevention capabilities;

(9) international wildlife health surveillance
does not clearly fall under the jurisdiction of any
Federal or international agency;

11 (10) there is a continued inability to share real-
12 time data across the human, agricultural, wildlife,
13 and veterinary agencies on zoonotic threats;

14 (11) while surveillance at domestic poultry and
15 domestic waterfowl production facilities and farms is
16 an immediate and on-going monitoring need and is
17 being supported through relevant agencies, surveil-
18 lance in wild bird populations that may have been
19 exposed to the virus is a critical component to deter-
20 mine the spread of the virus, implement control
21 measures, and protect human, livestock, and wildlife
22 health;

(12) monitoring and surveillance of wild migratory and resident water birds are critically important to identifying all strains of influenza viruses in wild

1 birds as a library of possible genotypes, determining
2 their role in the spread of the virus, and anticipating
3 where outbreaks may occur to enhance preparedness;

4 (13) improving surveillance of wildlife health
5 around the world would close significant jurisdictional
6 and scientific gaps in current emerging infectious
7 disease preparedness;

8 (14) other emerging diseases beyond bird flu
9 merit similar attention, in terms of the potential
10 threats to global public health as well as
11 agribiosecurity and biodiversity;

12 (15) the majority of emerging infectious diseases
13 identified in the past several decades have
14 moved from wildlife to humans, largely due to
15 human incursions into or alterations of wildlife habitats
16 and hunting, consumption, and trade of wildlife
17 species;

18 (16) the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
19 virus moved from chimpanzees to humans via these
20 mechanisms;

21 (17) many factors contribute to disease emergence
22 and spread from wildlife to domestic animals
23 and humans, including environmental degradation
24 and the handling, consumption, and trade of wildlife
25 and wildlife-derived products;

1 (18) from avian influenza to the severe acute
2 respiratory syndrome (SARS), from bovine tuber-
3 culosis to the Ebola virus, and from HIV/AIDS to
4 monkey pox, a long list of zoonotic diseases nega-
5 tively impacts people's lives and livelihoods and costs
6 the global economy billions of dollars; and

7 (19) the Government of the United States lacks
8 a comprehensive program to monitor wildlife health
9 around the world, a program that could proactively
10 inform preparedness not just in the case of a potential
11 H5N1 influenza strain pandemic, but also for a
12 broader array of emerging infectious disease threats
13 that often arise at the interface between wildlife, hu-
14 mans, and their domestic animals.

15 SEC. 3. PURPOSES.

16 The purposes of this Act are to establish and main-
17 tain a Wildlife Global Animal Information Network for
18 Surveillance—

19 (1) to more rapidly and efficiently detect,
20 verify, and report on the presence of infectious dis-
21 eases, such as highly pathogenic avian influenza, in
22 birds and other wildlife around the world;

23 (2) to use information on pathogens found dur-
24 ing surveillance of wildlife to better delineate poten-

1 tial threats to domestic animals, humans, as well as
2 wildlife itself;

3 (3) to use information on when and where
4 HPAI and other pathogens of concern are identified
5 in wildlife—

6 (A) to better guide preparedness in the
7 United States and around the world; and

8 (B) to carry out a strategic wildlife health
9 surveillance initiative that will provide regions,
10 countries, and specific locations with early
11 warning information that will help target re-
12 sources toward enhancement of agribiosecurity,
13 surveillance, public health vigilance, and related
14 areas;

15 (4) to create an open access database within
16 which information on HPAI and other pathogens of
17 interest identified in wild birds and other wildlife
18 can be shared as close to real time as possible;

19 (5) to protect the health and safety of United
20 States citizens and officials traveling or living
21 abroad; and

22 (6) to protect the economic interests of the
23 United States and its partners from threats to
24 health, agriculture, and natural resources, including
25 wildlife itself.

1 SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

2 In this Act:

3 (1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, acting through one or more eligible organizations.

7 (2) ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATION.—The term “eligible organization” means an organization chartered in the United States with—

10 (A) extensive global wildlife health experience in tracking disease in wild birds and other 11 wildlife, including free-ranging, captive, and 12 wild bird species;

14 (B) proven ability in identifying avian influenza, Ebola virus, and other pathogens in 15 wild birds or other wildlife;

17 (C) experience managing and implementing 18 similar wildlife surveillance activities; and

19 (D) accredited zoological facilities in the 20 United States.

21 (3) HPAI.—The term “HPAI” means highly 22 pathogenic avian influenza.

23 (4) WILDLIFE GAINS.—The term “Wildlife 24 GAINS” means the Wildlife Global Animal Information Network for Surveillance established under section 5(a).

1 (5) WILDLIFE GAINS PARTNERS.—The term
2 “Wildlife GAINS partners” means the partners of
3 the Wildlife GAINS described in section 5(b).

4 SEC. 5. WILDLIFE GLOBAL ANIMAL INFORMATION NET-
5 WORK FOR SURVEILLANCE.

6 (a) AUTHORIZATION OF ASSISTANCE.—The Adminis-
7 trator, acting through one or more eligible organizations,
8 is authorized to establish and maintain a program to im-
9 plement a Wildlife Global Animal Information Network for
10 Surveillance.

11 (b) PARTNERS.—In administering the Wildlife
12 GAINS, the Administrator shall collaborate with appro-
13 priate—

14 (1) Federal and State agency partners, includ-
15 ing—

16 (A) the Department of Agriculture, acting
17 through—

18 (i) the Agricultural Research Service;
19 and

20 (ii) the Animal and Plant Health In-
21 spection Service;

22 (B) the Department of Health and Human
23 Services, acting through the Centers for Dis-
24 ease Control and Prevention;

25 (C) the Department of Homeland Security;

1 (D) the Department of Defense;

2 (E) the Department of the Interior, acting

3 through—

4 (i) the United States Geological Sur-

5 vey; and

6 (ii) the United States Fish and Wild-

7 life Service; and

8 (F) various State wildlife agencies in the

9 United States;

10 (2) multilateral agency partners, including—

11 (A) the Food and Agriculture Organiza-

12 tion;

13 (B) the World Health Organization;

14 (C) the Office International des Epizooties,

15 the world animal health organization; and

16 (D) the World Conservation Union;

17 (3) conservation organizations with expertise in

18 international and domestic wildlife monitoring and

19 surveillance;

20 (4) accredited colleges of veterinary medicine

21 and medicine; and

22 (5) other national and international partners,

23 as necessary.

24 (c) INTERNATIONAL SURVEILLANCE.—The Adminis-

25 trator shall manage an international surveillance program

1 under which Federal Wildlife GAINS partners shall, and
2 non-Federal Wildlife GAINS partners are encouraged
3 to—

4 (1) monitor and test for the presence or arrival
5 of avian influenza and other significant avian pathogens
6 at important bird areas around the world and
7 in marketplaces with intense trade in wild birds;

8 (2) monitor and test for the presence or arrival
9 of other significant pathogens in free-ranging wild-
10 life and in places with intense trade in wild animals;

11 (3) use trained professionals to collect samples
12 and other data and send samples to appropriate di-
13 agnostic centers;

14 (4) use the Wildlife GAINS, in partnership with
15 relevant agencies and organizations, for con-
16 ducting—

17 (A) disease surveillance activities on migra-
18 tory birds and other wildlife worldwide;

19 (B) domestic and international field inves-
20 tigations on migratory birds and other wildlife;

21 (C) training and capacity-building activi-
22 ties related to the relationships between human
23 health, domestic animal health, and wildlife
24 health; and

1 (D) research on methods and approaches
2 for detection and enhanced surveillance of
3 HPAI and other pathogens in migratory birds
4 and other wildlife; and

5 (5) send samples for pathogen identification
6 and testing to certified laboratories that—

7 (A) meet internationally established meth-
8 ods standards;

9 (B) are located at—

10 (i) the Centers for Disease Control
11 and Prevention;

12 (ii) the Office International des
13 Epizooties, the world animal health organi-
14 zation;

15 (iii) the Food and Agriculture Organi-
16 zation;

17 (iv) National Veterinary Services Laboratories of the Department of Agriculture;

18

19 (v) the Agricultural Research Service;

20 or
21 (vi) other relevant specialized labora-
22 tories; and

23 (C) report the findings back to the Admin-
24 istrator and Wildlife GAINS partners.

25 (d) NETWORK.—

9 (A) use surveillance reports and other for-
10 mal and informal sources of information to
11 identify and investigate local disease outbreaks
12 of avian influenza and other infectious diseases
13 involving wildlife, in coordination with Wildlife
14 GAINS partners;

15 (B) develop a long-term baseline of re-
16 gional data related to HPAI and pathogens in
17 migratory birds and other wildlife for analysis
18 between and across sites to create a system to
19 identify when and where outbreaks might occur
20 and paths of dispersal;

21 (C) provide technical assistance for disease
22 prevention and control programs based on sci-
23 entific understanding of the relationships be-
24 tween wildlife health, domestic animal health,
25 and human health;

1 (D) provide analytical disease findings reg-
2 ularly to the United States Agency for Inter-
3 national Development and other Federal Wild-
4 life GAINS partners to prevent or combat
5 human and animal diseases;

(E) conduct other activities as are necessary to support the Wildlife GAINS network and Wildlife GAINS partners; and

9 (F) coordinate Wildlife GAINS surveillance
10 results at the headquarters of the eligible orga-
11 nization.

12 (e) DATABASE.—

17 (2) REQUIREMENTS.—The database shall—

18 (A) provide geographic data on wildlife
19 populations and the movements of the popu-
20 lations and laboratory test results; and

21 (B) be available for viewing by any Federal
22 agency, foreign country, multilateral institution,
23 organization, or individual.

24 (f) TRAINING.—The Administrator shall request ac-
25 credited colleges of veterinary medicine and medicine and

1 other Wildlife GAINS partners to train members of the
2 Wildlife GAINS network to—

3 (1) monitor important wildlife areas around the

4 world; and

5 (2) test for the presence or arrival of avian in-
6 fluenza and other significant pathogens of zoonotic
7 concern or of concern to domestic or wild animals.

8 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

9 There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out
10 this Act \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through
11 2012.

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