

114TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 4776

To establish a national program to identify landslide hazards and reduce loss from landslides, and for other purposes.

---

## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 17, 2016

Ms. DELBENE (for herself, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. LEE, Mr. KILMER, and Mr. HECK of Washington) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, 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 establish a national program to identify landslide hazards and reduce loss from landslides, 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 “National Landslide  
5 Loss Reduction Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1           (1) While landslides can and do occur in every  
2 State and territory of the United States, the type,  
3 including sink holes, ground fissures, and subsid-  
4 ence, the severity, and frequency of landslides vary  
5 from place to place, depending on the terrain, geol-  
6 ogy, seismicity and climate.

7           (2) Landslides in the United States cause an  
8 estimated \$3,000,000,000 in damage each year, and  
9 that estimation could be improved through better  
10 tracking of landslide occurrences and losses.

11           (3) The most recent official estimate of deaths  
12 from landslides in the United States was in 1985,  
13 and it found that landslides kill an estimated 25 to  
14 50 people each year.

15           (4) On March 22, 2014, a massive landslide  
16 near Oso, Washington, killed 43 people, engulfed 42  
17 homes, and severely damaged public infrastructure  
18 and private property.

19           (5) There is no collective landslide inventory for  
20 most counties, States, or the United States, nor is  
21 there an agreed-upon methodology for creating one,  
22 since the availability of Light Detection and Rang-  
23 ing (LIDAR), a powerful tool for creating landslide  
24 inventories, is uneven and the quality is highly vari-  
25 able.

1           (6) Because landslide hazard analysis continues  
2           to evolve, developing analysis methods is an impor-  
3           tant element of technical assistance for nongovern-  
4           mental entities and State and local governments.

5 **SEC. 3. NATIONAL LANDSLIDE HAZARDS REDUCTION PRO-**  
6 **GRAM.**

7           (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of the Interior,  
8           acting through the Director of the United States Geologi-  
9           cal Survey, shall establish a national program to identify  
10          landslide hazards and reduce losses from landslides  
11          through activities under this section.

12          (b) USGS PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary of  
13          the Interior, acting through the Director of the United  
14          States Geological Survey, shall—

15                (1) develop a national strategy for research on  
16                landslides and landslide hazards;

17                (2) develop and maintain a landslide hazard as-  
18                sessment system to identify, map, and assess land-  
19                slide hazards;

20                (3) in coordination with the State Geological  
21                Surveys, USGS shall conduct Federal-State working  
22                groups to establish regional priorities for identifying,  
23                mapping, and assessing landslide hazards as well as  
24                develop and implement guidelines for geologists and  
25                geological and geotechnical engineers;

1           (4) develop and maintain a national landslide  
2 hazard inventory database;

3           (5) compile, maintain, and evaluate data on—

4                 (A) the nationwide impact of landslides on  
5 health and safety, the economy, and the envi-  
6 ronment; and

7                 (B) landslide hazard stabilization and re-  
8 duction of losses from landslides; and

9           (6) in coordination with the Assistant Adminis-  
10 trator for Weather Services for the National Oceanic  
11 and Atmospheric Administration and Director, Na-  
12 tional Weather Service, the Administrator of the  
13 Federal Emergency Management Agency, and State  
14 Geological Surveys, develop and disseminate guide-  
15 lines and training materials for planners and deci-  
16 sionmakers on the use of the landslide hazard as-  
17 sessment system and on reducing losses from land-  
18 slides.

19           (c) NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE ACTIVITIES.—The  
20 Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Assistant Ad-  
21 ministrator for Weather Services for the National Oceanic  
22 and Atmospheric Administration and Director, National  
23 Weather Service, in consultation with others qualified to  
24 provide advice, as necessary, shall develop and disseminate  
25 landslide-related curricula and training modules for State

1 and local elected and appointed officials and Federal,  
2 State, local, and tribal emergency managers.

3 (d) INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON  
4 LANDSLIDES.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—There is established an  
6 Interagency Coordinating Committee on Landslides  
7 (in this subsection referred to as the “Committee”)   
8 chaired by the Director of the United States Geo-  
9 logical Survey.

10 (2) MEMBERSHIP.—The Committee shall be  
11 composed of the Directors, or their designees, of—

12 (A) the Federal Emergency Management  
13 Agency;

14 (B) the National Science Foundation;

15 (C) the National Institute of Standards  
16 and Technology;

17 (D) the Office of Science and Technology  
18 Policy;

19 (E) the National Weather Service; and

20 (F) the Office of Management and Budget.

21 (3) MEETINGS.—The Committee shall meet not  
22 less than 3 times a year at the call of the chair.

23 (4) PURPOSE AND DUTIES.—The Committee  
24 shall—

1 (A) oversee the planning, management,  
2 and coordination of the program established  
3 under subsection (a);

4 (B) develop, not later than 6 months after  
5 the date of the enactment of this Act, and up-  
6 date periodically—

7 (i) a strategic plan that establishes  
8 goals and priorities for such program; and

9 (ii) a detailed management plan to  
10 implement such strategic plan; and

11 (C) develop a coordinated interagency  
12 budget for such program.

13 (5) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Committee shall  
14 transmit an annual report to Congress which shall  
15 include—

16 (A) the budget developed under paragraph  
17 (4)(C), reported by agency and by each goal es-  
18 tablished under paragraph (4)(B)(i);

19 (B) a description of the activities of the  
20 Committee under this subsection and the re-  
21 sults of such activities during the previous year;  
22 and

23 (C) a description of the extent to which  
24 any recommendations of the Advisory Com-  
25 mittee have been implemented.

1 (6) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

2 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the  
3 United States Geological Survey shall establish  
4 an Advisory Committee on Landslides (in this  
5 subsection referred to as the “Advisory Com-  
6 mittee”).

7 (B) MEMBERSHIP.—There shall be at least  
8 11 members of the Advisory Committee, none  
9 of whom may be an individual described in sub-  
10 paragraphs (A) through (F) of section  
11 7342(a)(1) of title 5, United States Code. The  
12 Advisory Committee shall include representa-  
13 tives of—

14 (i) State geologists;

15 (ii) research and academic institutions  
16 who are qualified to provide advice on  
17 landslide hazards reduction and represent  
18 all related scientific, architectural, and en-  
19 gineering disciplines;

20 (iii) industry standards development  
21 organizations; and

22 (iv) State, local, and tribal emergency  
23 management agencies.

24 (C) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Advisory  
25 Committee may submit recommendations to the

1           Committee, which shall consider any rec-  
2           ommendations so submitted.

3           (e) GRANT PROGRAMS.—

4           (1) COOPERATIVE LANDSLIDE HAZARD MAP-  
5           PING AND ASSESSMENT PROGRAM.—

6           (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the  
7           Interior shall make grants, administered  
8           through the United States Geological Survey,  
9           on a competitive basis to support the efforts of  
10          State and local governments to map and assess  
11          landslide hazards within the jurisdictions of  
12          such governments.

13          (B) PRIORITY.—

14          (i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall  
15          consult annually with State Geological Sur-  
16          veys to establish priorities for the grant  
17          program established under this paragraph.

18          (ii)           MATCHING           FUND  
19          PRIORITIZATION.—The Secretary shall  
20          prioritize a grant for a project under this  
21          paragraph to an entity that provides such  
22          assurances as the Secretary considers nec-  
23          essary that the entity will receive up to 50  
24          percent of the total cost of the project  
25          from non-Federal sources.



1           (C) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIA-  
2           TIONS.—There are authorized to be appro-  
3           priated to the Secretary \$8,000,000 for fiscal  
4           year 2017 and each fiscal year thereafter to  
5           carry out this paragraph.

6           (2) PARTNERSHIPS FOR LANDSLIDE LOSS RE-  
7           DUCTION PROGRAM.—

8           (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the  
9           Interior, working with the National Science  
10          Foundation, shall make grants, on a competi-  
11          tive basis, to support efforts by institutions of  
12          higher education, State and local governments,  
13          and nongovernmental entities to research land-  
14          slides.

15          (B) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIA-  
16          TIONS.—There are authorized to be appro-  
17          priated \$10,400,000 for fiscal year 2017 and  
18          each fiscal year thereafter to carry out this  
19          paragraph.

20          (3) ANNUAL REPORTS.—The Secretary of the  
21          Interior shall annually submit to Congress a report  
22          on the grants awarded under this subsection with re-  
23          spect to a year, including the following information:

24                  (A) A list of activities under such grants  
25                  during such year.

1

(B) The results of such activities.

○