

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5764

To amend the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000 to require peer review for value-added agricultural product market development grants, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 10, 2018

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico (for himself, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Ms. PINGREE) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To amend the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000 to require peer review for value-added agricultural product market development grants, 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 “Growing Value-Added
5 Economies Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT MARKET**
2 **DEVELOPMENT GRANTS.**

3 Section 231(b) of the (7 U.S.C. 1632a(b)) is amend-
4 ed—

5 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “paragraph
6 (7)” and inserting “paragraph (10)”;

7 (2) by striking paragraph (7); and

8 (3) by inserting after paragraph (6) the fol-
9 lowing new paragraphs:

10 “(7) PEER REVIEW.—

11 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
12 establish independent external review panels
13 comprised of members with relevant expertise
14 who are not employees of the Department to re-
15 view and evaluate each eligible application
16 based on merit and relevance.

17 “(B) MEMBERS OF REVIEW PANEL.—
18 Members assigned to a panel established under
19 subparagraph (A) may include—

20 “(i) producers; and

21 “(ii) experts from colleges and univer-
22 sities, State and local agencies, private
23 nonprofit organizations, industry, and re-
24 lated institutions.

25 “(C) CONFIDENTIALITY.—The Secretary
26 shall ensure that the identity of a member of a

1 panel established under subparagraph (A) is, to
2 the maximum extent practicable, confidential.

3 “(D) CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.—The Sec-
4 retary shall ensure that no person with a con-
5 flict of interest may be assigned to be a member
6 of a panel established under subparagraph (A).

7 “(8) OUTREACH AND TECHNICAL ASSIST-
8 ANCE.—The Secretary shall develop and implement
9 an outreach and technical assistance strategy, in-
10 cluding entering into cooperative agreements with
11 private nonprofit entities, cooperative extension,
12 State and local units of government, to—

13 “(A) further the purposes of the program
14 established under this section; and

15 “(B) ensure that underserved States and
16 communities are served by the program.

17 “(9) PROGRAM EVALUATION.—

18 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
19 provide for the periodic evaluation of the pro-
20 gram that measures the impact of the program
21 and the impact of projects in achieving the pur-
22 poses of the program.

23 “(B) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The
24 Secretary may enter into cooperative agree-
25 ments with private nonprofit entities, coopera-

1 tive extension, State and local units of govern-
2 ment for the purpose of the program evaluation
3 required under subparagraph (A).

4 “(10) FUNDING.—

5 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Of the funds of the
6 Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary
7 shall make available to carry out this subsection
8 \$20,000,000, to remain available until ex-
9 pended, for each of fiscal years 2019 through
10 2023.

11 “(B) DISCRETIONARY FUNDING.—There is
12 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this
13 subsection \$40,000,000 for each of fiscal years
14 2008 through 2023.

15 “(C) RESERVATION OF FUNDS FOR
16 PROJECTS TO BENEFIT BEGINNING FARMERS
17 OR RANCHERS, SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED
18 FARMERS OR RANCHERS, AND MID-TIER VALUE
19 CHAINS.—

20 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary
21 shall reserve 10 percent of the amounts
22 made available for each fiscal year under
23 this paragraph to fund projects that ben-
24 efit producers described in clauses (ii),
25 (iii), and (iv) of paragraph (6)(A) or that

1 best contribute to creating or increasing
2 marketing opportunities for such pro-
3 ducers.

4 “(ii) MID-TIER VALUE CHAINS.—The
5 Secretary shall reserve 10 percent of the
6 amounts made available for each fiscal
7 year under this paragraph to fund applica-
8 tions of eligible entities described in para-
9 graph (1) that propose to develop mid-tier
10 value chains.

11 “(iii) UNOBLIGATED AMOUNTS.—Any
12 amounts in the reserves for a fiscal year
13 established under clauses (i) and (ii) that
14 are not obligated after the completion of
15 the peer review process for such fiscal year
16 shall be available to the Secretary to make
17 grants under this subsection to eligible en-
18 tities in any State, as determined by the
19 Secretary.

20 “(D) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES AND
21 PROGRAM EVALUATION.—Not more than 5 per-
22 cent of the total amount made available to
23 carry out this subsection for a fiscal year may

- 1 be used for administrative expenses, program
- 2 evaluation, outreach, and technical assistance.”.

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