

MICCOSUKEE RESERVED AREA  
AMENDMENTS ACT

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 560, S. 2783.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2783) to amend the Miccosukee Reserved Area Act to authorize the expansion of the Miccosukee Reserved Area and to carry out activities to protect structures within the Osceola Camp from flooding, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. SCHATZ. I know of no further debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (S. 2783) was passed as follows:

S. 2783

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the “Miccosukee Reserved Area Amendments Act”.

**SEC. 2. MICCOSUKEE RESERVED AREA ADDITION.**

Section 4(4) of the Miccosukee Reserved Area Act (16 U.S.C. 410 note; Public Law 105-313) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(C) ADDITIONAL AREA.—In addition to the land described in subparagraph (B), the term ‘Miccosukee Reserved Area’ or ‘MRA’ includes the portion of the Park that is known as ‘Osceola Camp’ and is depicted on the map entitled ‘Everglades National Park, Proposed Expansion—Miccosukee Reserved Area, Osceola Camp’, numbered 160/188443, and dated July 2023, copies of which shall—

“(i) be kept available for public inspection in the offices of the National Park Service; and

“(ii) be filed with appropriate officers of Miami-Dade County and the Tribe.”.

**SEC. 3. PROTECTION OF THE OSCEOLA CAMP FROM FLOODING.**

Section 8 of the Miccosukee Reserved Area Act (16 U.S.C. 410 note; Public Law 105-313) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(j) PROTECTION OF OSCEOLA CAMP FROM FLOODING.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary, in consultation with the Tribe, shall take appropriate actions to protect structures within the area described in section 4(4)(C) from flooding.

“(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary such sums as are necessary to carry out paragraph (1) for fiscal year 2024 and each fiscal year thereafter, but not more than a total \$14,000,000.”.

Mr. SCHATZ. I ask that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

INDIAN BUFFALO MANAGEMENT  
ACT

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 561, S. 2908.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2908) to assist Tribal governments in the management of buffalo and buffalo habitat and the reestablishment of buffalo on Indian land.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill which had been reported from the Committee on Indian Affairs with amendments as follows:

(The parts of the bill intended to be stricken are in boldface brackets, and the parts of the bill intended to be inserted are in italics.)

S. 2908

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the “Indian Buffalo Management Act”.

**SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSES.**

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) buffalo sustained a majority of Indian Tribes in North America for many centuries before buffalo were nearly exterminated by non-Indian hunters in the mid-1800s;

(2) the historical, cultural, and spiritual connection between buffalo and Indian Tribes has not diminished over time;

(3) Indian Tribes have long desired the reestablishment of buffalo throughout Indian country for cultural, spiritual, and subsistence purposes; and

(4) the successful restoration of buffalo would allow an Indian Tribe to benefit from—

(A) the reintroduction of buffalo into the diets of the members of the Indian Tribe;

(B) the rekindling of the spiritual and cultural relationship between buffalo and the Indian Tribe; and

(C) the use of buffalo for economic development, in the case of an Indian Tribe that chooses to use buffalo for economic development.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to fulfill the government-to-government relationship between Tribal governments and the United States in the management of buffalo and buffalo habitat;

(2) to promote and develop the capacity of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations to manage buffalo and buffalo habitat;

(3) to protect, conserve, and enhance buffalo, which are important to the subsistence, culture, and economic development of many Indian Tribes;

(4) to promote the development and use of buffalo and buffalo habitat for the maximum practicable benefit of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, through management of buffalo and buffalo habitats in accordance

with integrated resource management plans developed by Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations;

(5) to develop buffalo herds and increase production of buffalo in order to meet Tribal subsistence, health, cultural, and economic development needs; and

(6) to promote the inclusion of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations in Department of the Interior, local, regional, national, or international—

(A) decision-making processes; and

(B) forums.

**SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

In this Act:

(1) BUFFALO.—The term “buffalo” means an animal of the subspecies *Bison bison bison*.

(2) BUFFALO HABITAT.—The term “buffalo habitat” means Indian land that is managed for buffalo.

(3) DEPARTMENT.—The term “Department” means the Department of the Interior.

(4) INDIAN LAND.—The term “Indian land” has the meaning given the term in paragraph (2) of section 2601 of the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (25 U.S.C. 3501), except that, in that paragraph, the term “Indian reservation” shall be considered to have the meaning given the term “Indian reservation” in paragraph (3) of that section, without regard to the date specified in paragraph (3) of that section.

(5) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe” has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

(6) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(7) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term “Tribal organization” means a legally established organization of Indians that is chartered under section 17 of the Act of June 18, 1934 (commonly known as the “Indian Reorganization Act”) (25 U.S.C. 5124) with demonstrable experience in the restoration of buffalo and buffalo habitat on Indian land.

(7) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term “Tribal organization” means any legally established organization of Indians that—

(A)(i) is chartered under section 17 of the Act of June 18, 1934, (commonly known as the “Indian Reorganization Act”); 25 U.S.C. 5124) and recognized by the governing body of one or more Indian Tribes; or

(ii) is a Tribal corporation federally chartered under section 3 of the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act (25 U.S.C. 5203); and

(B) has demonstrable experience in the restoration of buffalo and buffalo habitat on Indian land.

**SEC. 4. BUFFALO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.**

(a) PROGRAM ESTABLISHED.—The Secretary shall establish a permanent program within the Department for the purposes of—

(1) promoting and developing the capacity of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations to manage buffalo and buffalo habitat;

(2) promoting the ability of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations to protect, conserve, and enhance populations of buffalo that are owned by Indian Tribes or Tribal organizations;

(3) promoting the development and use of buffalo and buffalo habitat for the maximum practicable benefit of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations; and

(4) promoting the inclusion of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations in Department, international, national, regional, and local decision making and forums regarding buffalo and buffalo habitat.

(b) CONTRACTS AND GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into contracts and cooperative agreements with, and award grants to, Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations to enable the Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations—

(A) to plan, conduct, or implement a buffalo restoration or management program;

(B) to plan and execute commercial activities related to buffalo or buffalo products; **[or]**

(C) to support the use and deployment of mobile Tribal or Tribal organization meat processing facilities; or

**[(C)](D)** to carry out other activities relating to buffalo restoration and management.

(2) **NO DIMINISHMENT OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS.**—Nothing in this subsection diminishes any Federal or State law (including regulations) regarding diseased buffalo or buffalo that escape from Indian land.

(c) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**—The Secretary shall provide technical assistance to an Indian Tribe or Tribal organization that enters into a contract or cooperative agreement or receives a grant under this section to assist the Indian Tribe or Tribal organization in—

(1) carrying out the activities of a buffalo or buffalo habitat restoration or management program; and

(2) implementing the activities described in subparagraphs (A) through **[(C)] (D)** of subsection (b)(1).

#### **SEC. 5. CONSULTATION; COORDINATION.**

(a) **CONSULTATION.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and on an ongoing basis thereafter, the Secretary shall consult with Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations on initiatives of the Department that affect buffalo or buffalo habitat, including efforts of the Department to contain or eradicate diseased buffalo.

(b) **COORDINATION.**—The Secretary shall develop a policy relating to buffalo and buffalo habitat management activities on Indian land, in accordance with—

(1) the goals and objectives described in buffalo management programs approved by Indian Tribes; and

(2) Tribal laws and ordinances.

#### **SEC. 6. PROTECTION OF INFORMATION.**

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary shall not disclose or cause to be disclosed any information provided to the Secretary by an Indian Tribe or Tribal organization that is identified by the Indian Tribe or Tribal organization as culturally sensitive, proprietary, or otherwise confidential.

#### **SEC. 7. BUFFALO FROM FEDERAL LAND.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may enter into an agreement with an Indian Tribe or Tribal organization to dispose of surplus buffalo on Federal land administered by the Department, as applicable, by transporting such buffalo onto Indian land.

(b) **APPLICATION.**—An Indian Tribe or Tribal organization may submit to the Secretary an application to receive buffalo described in subsection (a) at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(c) **WAIVER OF CHARGES.**—The Secretary may waive any charges for the buffalo described in subsection (a), including any deposit or payment for services as described in section 10.2 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation).

#### **SEC. 8. TREATY RIGHTS RETAINED.**

Nothing in this Act alters, modifies, diminishes, or extinguishes the treaty rights of any Indian Tribe.

#### **SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this Act \$14,000,000 for fiscal year 2024 and each fiscal year thereafter.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendments be withdrawn; that the Heinrich substitute amendment at the desk be considered

and agreed to; and that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendments were withdrawn.

The amendment (No. 3324), in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

#### **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the “Indian Buffalo Management Act”.

#### **SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSES.**

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds that—

(1) buffalo sustained a majority of Indian Tribes in North America for many centuries before buffalo were nearly exterminated by non-Indian hunters in the mid-1800s;

(2) the historical, cultural, and spiritual connection between buffalo and Indian Tribes has not diminished over time;

(3) Indian Tribes have long desired the reestablishment of buffalo throughout Indian country for cultural, spiritual, and subsistence purposes; and

(4) the successful restoration of buffalo would allow an Indian Tribe to benefit from—

(A) the reintroduction of buffalo into the diets of the members of the Indian Tribe;

(B) the rekindling of the spiritual and cultural relationship between buffalo and the Indian Tribe; and

(C) the use of buffalo for economic development, in the case of an Indian Tribe that chooses to use buffalo for economic development.

(b) **PURPOSES.**—The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to fulfill the government-to-government relationship between Tribal governments and the United States in the management of buffalo and buffalo habitat;

(2) to promote and develop the capacity of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations to manage buffalo and buffalo habitat;

(3) to protect, conserve, and enhance buffalo, which are important to the subsistence, culture, and economic development of many Indian Tribes;

(4) to promote the development and use of buffalo and buffalo habitat for the maximum practicable benefit of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, through management of buffalo and buffalo habitats in accordance with integrated resource management plans developed by Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations;

(5) to develop buffalo herds and increase production of buffalo in order to meet Tribal subsistence, health, cultural, and economic development needs; and

(6) to promote the inclusion of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations in Department of the Interior, local, regional, national, or international—

(A) decision-making processes; and

(B) forums.

#### **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

In this Act:

(1) **BUFFALO.**—The term “buffalo” means an animal of the subspecies *Bison bison bison*.

(2) **BUFFALO HABITAT.**—The term “buffalo habitat” means Indian land that is managed for buffalo.

(3) **DEPARTMENT.**—The term “Department” means the Department of the Interior.

(4) **INDIAN LAND.**—The term “Indian land” has the meaning given the term in paragraph (2) of section 2601 of the Energy Policy Act of

1992 (25 U.S.C. 3501), except that, in that paragraph, the term “Indian reservation” shall be considered to have the meaning given the term “Indian reservation” in paragraph (3) of that section, without regard to the date specified in paragraph (3) of that section.

(5) **INDIAN TRIBE.**—The term “Indian Tribe” has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

(6) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(7) **TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.**—The term “Tribal organization” means any legally established organization of Indians that—

(A)(i) is chartered under section 17 of the Act of June 18, 1934, (commonly known as the “Indian Reorganization Act”); 25 U.S.C. 5124) and recognized by the governing body of one or more Indian Tribes; or

(ii) is a Tribal corporation federally chartered under section 3 of the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act (25 U.S.C. 5203); and

(B) has demonstrable experience in the restoration of buffalo and buffalo habitat on Indian land.

#### **SEC. 4. BUFFALO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.**

(a) **PROGRAM ESTABLISHED.**—The Secretary shall establish a permanent program within the Department for the purposes of—

(1) promoting and developing the capacity of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations to manage buffalo and buffalo habitat;

(2) promoting the ability of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations to protect, conserve, and enhance populations of buffalo that are owned by Indian Tribes or Tribal organizations;

(3) promoting the development and use of buffalo and buffalo habitat for the maximum practicable benefit of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations; and

(4) promoting the inclusion of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations in Department, international, national, regional, and local decision making and forums regarding buffalo and buffalo habitat.

(b) **CONTRACTS AND GRANTS AUTHORIZED.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall enter into contracts and cooperative agreements with, and award grants to, Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations to enable the Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations—

(A) to plan, conduct, or implement a buffalo restoration or management program;

(B) to plan and execute commercial activities related to buffalo or buffalo products;

(C) to support the use and deployment of mobile Tribal or Tribal organization meat processing facilities; or

(D) to carry out other activities relating to buffalo restoration and management.

(2) **NO DIMINISHMENT OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS.**—Nothing in this subsection diminishes any Federal or State law (including regulations) regarding diseased buffalo or buffalo that escape from Indian land.

(c) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**—The Secretary shall provide technical assistance to an Indian Tribe or Tribal organization that enters into a contract or cooperative agreement or receives a grant under this section to assist the Indian Tribe or Tribal organization in—

(1) carrying out the activities of a buffalo or buffalo habitat restoration or management program; and

(2) implementing the activities described in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of subsection (b)(1).

#### **SEC. 5. CONSULTATION; COORDINATION.**

(a) **CONSULTATION.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and on an ongoing basis thereafter, the Secretary shall consult with Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations on initiatives of the Department that affect buffalo or buffalo habitat,

including efforts of the Department to contain or eradicate diseased buffalo.

(b) **COORDINATION.**—The Secretary shall develop a policy relating to buffalo and buffalo habitat management activities on Indian land, in accordance with—

(1) the goals and objectives described in buffalo management programs approved by Indian Tribes; and

(2) Tribal laws and ordinances.

**SEC. 6. PROTECTION OF INFORMATION.**

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary shall not disclose or cause to be disclosed any information provided to the Secretary by an Indian Tribe or Tribal organization that is identified by the Indian Tribe or Tribal organization as culturally sensitive, proprietary, or otherwise confidential.

**SEC. 7. BUFFALO FROM FEDERAL LAND.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may enter into an agreement with an Indian Tribe or Tribal organization to dispose of surplus buffalo on Federal land administered by the Department, as applicable, by transporting such buffalo onto Indian land.

(b) **APPLICATION.**—An Indian Tribe or Tribal organization may submit to the Secretary an application to receive buffalo described in subsection (a) at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(c) **WAIVER OF CHARGES.**—The Secretary may waive any charges for the buffalo described in subsection (a), including any deposit or payment for services as described in section 10.2 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation).

**SEC. 8. TREATY RIGHTS RETAINED.**

Nothing in this Act alters, modifies, diminishes, or extinguishes the treaty rights of any Indian Tribe.

**SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this Act \$14,000,000 for fiscal year 2024 and each fiscal year thereafter.

**SEC. 10. SUNSET.**

The authority provided by this Act ceases to be effective on December 31, 2031.

The bill, as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. SCHATZ. I know of no further debate on the bill, as amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the bill?

Hearing none, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (S. 2908), as amended, was passed.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

**TRIBAL FOREST PROTECTION ACT  
AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2024**

**VETERINARY SERVICES TO IMPROVE PUBLIC HEALTH IN RURAL COMMUNITIES ACT**

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of the following bills en bloc, Calendar No. 574, S. 4370; and Calendar No. 563, S. 4365.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bills en bloc, which were reported from the Com-

mittee on Indian Affairs with amendments as follows:

(The part of the bill (S. 4370) intended to be stricken is in boldfaced brackets and the part of the bill intended to be inserted is in italics.)

(The parts of the bill (S. 4365) intended to be stricken are in boldfaced brackets and the parts of the bill intended to be inserted are in italics.)

S. 4370

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the “Tribal Forest Protection Act Amendments Act of 2024”.

**SEC. 2. TRIBAL FOREST PROTECTION ACT OF 2004 AMENDMENTS.**

Section 2 of the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 (25 U.S.C. 3115a) is amended—

[(1) in subsection (a)(2)(A)—

(A) by striking “and” at the end and inserting “or”;

(B) by striking “(A) is held” and inserting “(A) (i) is held”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(ii) is in the State of Alaska and held by an Alaska Native Corporation pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.); and”;

(1) in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) **INDIAN FOREST LAND OR RANGELAND.**—The term ‘Indian forest land or rangeland’ means—

“(A) land that is held in trust by, or with a restriction against alienation by, the United States for an Indian tribe or a member of an Indian tribe, and—

“(i) is Indian forest land (as defined in section 304 of the National Indian Forest Resources Management Act (25 U.S.C. 3103));

“(ii) has a cover of grasses, brush, or any similar vegetation; or

“(iii) formerly had a forest cover or vegetative cover that is capable of restoration; and

“(B) land that is in the State of Alaska and held by an Alaska Native Corporation pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.).”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by inserting “OR RESTORE” after “PROTECT”;

(B) in paragraph (1), by striking “to protect Indian forest land or rangeland” and all that follows through “Indian forest land or rangeland)” and inserting “to protect or restore Indian forest land or rangeland, or to carry out a project to protect or restore Federal land”; and

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking “that is—” and all that follows through the period at the end of subparagraph (B) and inserting “or Indian forest land or rangeland.”;

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by inserting “FOR FEDERAL LAND” after “CRITERIA”;

(B) by striking “an Indian tribe,” in the matter preceding paragraph (1) and all that follows through “Indian tribe—” in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2) and inserting the following: “Federal land, are whether—

“(1) the Federal land has a special geographic, historical, or cultural significance to the Indian tribe and—”;

(C) in paragraph (1) (as so designated)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking clause (i) and inserting the following:

“(i) Indian forest land or rangeland; or”;

and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “or watershed” after “land”;

(D) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively;

(E) in paragraph (2) (as so redesignated), by striking “subject” and inserting “Federal”; and

(F) in paragraph (3) (as so redesignated), by striking “Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management” and inserting “Federal”;

(4) in subsection (g), by striking “date of enactment of this Act” and inserting “date of enactment of the Tribal Forest Protection Act Amendments Act of 2024”; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

“(h) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2030.”.

S. 4365

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the “Veterinary Services to Improve Public Health in Rural Communities Act”.

**[SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.]**

[(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds that—

[(1) human, animal, and environmental health are interdependent in Native communities, Alaska Native villages, and on Indian reservations, and holistic approaches to the well-being of all individuals will lead to improved health outcomes and enhanced resilience;

[(2) uncontrolled animal populations and a lack of veterinary care in Native communities, Alaska Native villages, and on Indian reservations increase the risk of parasites and zoonotic diseases, dog bites, food insecurity, and mental health issues among Alaska Natives and American Indians;

[(3) dog bites and other injuries are common in rural areas in the State of Alaska, with the Norton Sound Health Corporation reporting an average of 87 bites per year in the Bering Strait region between 2016 and 2023, and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation reporting an average of 98 bites per year in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region between 2008 and 2017;

[(4) Alaska Native children have the highest incidence of hospitalization for dog bites in the Indian Health Service system;

[(5) in 2021, St. Lawrence Island, Alaska, experienced co-occurring outbreaks of rabies and canine distemper;

[(6) canine distemper is almost 100 percent fatal in marine mammals, which the people of the Native Villages of Savoonga and Gambell rely on heavily as a food source;

[(7) rabies is enzootic in arctic and red fox populations in the northern and western coastal regions of the State of Alaska;

[(8) wildlife outbreaks occur cyclically, and there have been increased human exposures to rabid animals between 2020 and 2023;

[(9) rabies transmission is a significant threat in Alaska Native communities and villages; and

[(10) as of 2024, the Indian Health Service does not employ or use public health veterinarians to combat zoonotic disease outbreaks or to generally advance public health preparedness for Native communities, Alaska Native villages, or Indian reservations, including by providing spay and neuter services and vaccinations for animals.

[(b) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that the Indian Health Service of the Department of Health and Human Services is uniquely suited to empower Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations to address zoonotic disease threats in the communities they serve by providing public health veterinary services through a One Health approach that recognizes the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and their shared environment.]