

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7276

To establish an interagency working group to develop a comprehensive, strategic plan to eradicate locust outbreaks in the East Africa region and address future outbreaks in order to avert mass scale food insecurity and potential political destabilization, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 18, 2020

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself and Ms. BASS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To establish an interagency working group to develop a comprehensive, strategic plan to eradicate locust outbreaks in the East Africa region and address future outbreaks in order to avert mass scale food insecurity and potential political destabilization, 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 “East Africa Locust
5 Eradication Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

2 It is the policy of the United States to address
3 proactively threats to food security in the East Africa re-
4 gion and elsewhere, as well as the concomitant potential
5 for political instability, caused by periodic locust out-
6 breaks, and to promote resilience in affected countries.

7 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

8 Congress finds the following:

9 (1) The United States Agency for International
10 Development reports that the East Africa region is
11 currently suffering the worst locust outbreaks in
12 decades, which will devour crops and pasture across
13 that region.

14 (2) As of June 2020, there were more than 26
15 million people experiencing acute food insecurity in
16 Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania,
17 Uganda, Sudan, and Djibouti, and untold more will
18 be at risk if the locusts are not controlled.

19 (3) The World Food Programme reports that
20 there may be insufficient resources to conduct aerial
21 spraying to address the locust outbreaks that are
22 currently devastating the East Africa region, and
23 the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organiza-
24 tion warns that the current outbreaks could develop
25 into a plague by the end of 2020 if they are not con-
26 trolled.

1 (4) The locust outbreaks in the Horn of Africa
2 region, particularly in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Soma-
3 lia, represents an unprecedented threat to food secu-
4 rity and livelihoods, and potentially, by extension,
5 political stability in the region.

6 (5) A relatively small investment now to help
7 eradicate the locust outbreaks will obviate or amelio-
8 rate the need for a much larger United States emer-
9 gency food aid effort later, as well as help promote
10 political stability and build resilience.

11 (6) In order to optimize a United States re-
12 sponse to the locust outbreaks and future outbreaks,
13 it is necessary to establish an interagency working
14 group to develop and implement a comprehensive,
15 strategic plan to eradicate locust outbreaks in the
16 East Africa region and address future outbreaks.

17 **SEC. 4. INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP.**

18 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established an inter-
19 agency working group to develop a comprehensive, stra-
20 tegic plan to eradicate locust outbreaks in the East Africa
21 region and address future outbreaks in order to avert
22 mass scale food insecurity and potential political desta-
23 bilization.

24 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—The interagency working
2 group shall be composed of—

3 (A) the United States Ambassador to the
4 United Nations Agencies for Food and Agri-
5 culture;

6 (B) one member who is an officer or em-
7 ployee of the National Security Council, who
8 shall be appointed by the Assistant to the Presi-
9 dent for National Security Affairs;

10 (C) one member who is an officer or em-
11 ployee of the Department of State, who shall be
12 appointed by the Secretary of State;

13 (D) one member who is an officer or em-
14 ployee of the Department of Defense, who shall
15 be appointed by the Secretary of Defense;

16 (E) one member who is an officer or em-
17 ployee of the Department of Agriculture, who
18 shall be appointed by the Secretary of Agri-
19 culture; and

20 (F) two members who are officers or em-
21 ployees of the United States Agency for Inter-
22 national Development, who shall be appointed
23 by the Administrator of the Agency.

24 (2) CHAIR.—The President shall designate one
25 member of the interagency working group specified

1 in paragraph (1) to serve as chair of the interagency
2 working group.

3 (c) DUTIES.—The interagency working group shall—

4 (1) assess the scope of the locust outbreaks in
5 the East Africa region and its impact on food secu-
6 rity and political stability in the region, including in
7 the context of restrictions relating to the coronavirus
8 disease 2019 (commonly referred to as “COVID-
9 19”) pandemic;

10 (2) review the effectiveness of regional and mul-
11 tilateral efforts to eradicate the locust outbreaks in
12 the East Africa region and the coordination among
13 relevant United States Government agencies, re-
14 gional governments, and international organizations,
15 including the World Food Programme and the
16 United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization;
17 and

18 (3) develop a comprehensive, strategic plan to
19 eradicate locust outbreaks in the East Africa region
20 and address future outbreaks in the region in order
21 to avert mass scale food insecurity and potential po-
22 litical destabilization, including—

23 (A) to more effectively address the out-
24 breaks, including improving—

1 (i) the coordination among relevant
 2 United States Government agencies, re-
 3 gional governments, and international or-
 4 ganizations, including the World Food Pro-
 5 gramme and the United Nations Food and
 6 Agriculture Organization; and

7 (ii) the delivery of necessary assets to
 8 achieve the eradication of the outbreaks or
 9 otherwise mitigate the impact of such out-
 10 breaks to the extent necessary to avoid
 11 major food insecurity; and

12 (B) prevent or mitigate future locust out-
 13 breaks in Africa and other parts of the world.

14 (d) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date
 15 on which the interagency working group is established
 16 under subsection (a), the interagency working group shall
 17 submit to the President a report that contains the com-
 18 prehensive, strategic plan required by subsection (c)(3).

19 **SEC. 5. IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPREHENSIVE, STRA-**
 20 **TEGIC PLAN.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the
 22 date on which the comprehensive, strategic plan is sub-
 23 mitted to the President as required by section 4(d), the
 24 President shall designate one member of the interagency

1 working group to coordinate implementation of the com-
2 prehensive, strategic plan.

3 (b) INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP SUPPORT.—The
4 interagency working group shall continue to meet not less
5 than semi-annually to facilitate implementation of the
6 comprehensive, strategic plan required by section 4(c)(3).

7 (c) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.—Upon request of the
8 member of the interagency working group designated by
9 the President under subsection (a), the Administrator of
10 the United States Agency for International Development
11 shall provide necessary and appropriate administrative
12 support of the Agency to facilitate implementation of the
13 comprehensive, strategic plan required by section 4(c)(3).

14 **SEC. 6. REPORT.**

15 Not later than 90 days after appointment of the
16 member of the interagency working group designated by
17 the President under section 5(a), the member shall submit
18 to Congress a report on the status of the implementation
19 of the comprehensive, strategic plan required by section
20 4(c)(3).

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