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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

**H. R.** \_\_\_\_\_

To direct the Secretary of Agriculture to establish the Mountain Pine Beetle Response Program under which the Secretary may issue competitive grants for use carrying out emergency mountain pine beetle response projects on National Forest Service lands, and for other purposes.

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**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Ms. PETTERSEN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**A BILL**

To direct the Secretary of Agriculture to establish the Mountain Pine Beetle Response Program under which the Secretary may issue competitive grants for use carrying out emergency mountain pine beetle response projects on National Forest Service lands, 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 “Emergency Mountain  
5       Pine Beetle Response Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE RESPONSE PROGRAM.**

2 (a) PROGRAM ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of  
3 Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Serv-  
4 ice, shall establish a competitive grant program to be  
5 known as the “Mountain Pine Beetle Response Program”  
6 (referred to in this section as the “Program”) under which  
7 the Secretary may issue a grant to sponsor for use car-  
8 rying out an emergency mountain pine beetle response  
9 project described in subsection (c).

10 (b) SELECTION.—

11 (1) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a  
12 grant under the Program, a sponsor shall submit to  
13 the Secretary an application at such time, in such  
14 form, and containing such information as the Sec-  
15 retary may require, including a description of the  
16 emergency mountain pine beetle response project  
17 proposed to be carried out with grant funds.

18 (2) SELECTION PRIORITY.—In selecting an ap-  
19 plicant to receive a grant under the Program, the  
20 Secretary shall give priority to applicants that pro-  
21 pose to carrying out emergency mountain pine beetle  
22 response project—

23 (A) designed to protect municipal water  
24 supplies and critical infrastructure;

25 (B) designed to reduce wildfire risk to  
26 communities in the wildland-urban interface;

1 (C) focused on an area that has experi-  
2 enced, or is experiencing, a mountain pine bee-  
3 tle outbreak resulting in high tree mortality or  
4 low natural ecological regeneration; and

5 (D) that aligns with a State forest action  
6 plan or watershed strategy.

7 (c) EMERGENCY MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE RE-  
8 SPONSE PROJECT.—An emergency mountain pine beetle  
9 response project described in this subsection is a project  
10 carried out on National Forest System lands for purposes  
11 of restoring forest health in an area that experienced, or  
12 is experiencing, a mountain pine beetle outbreak resulting  
13 in significant tree mortality, that may include the fol-  
14 lowing activities:

15 (1) Removal of beetle-killed or beetle infested  
16 hazard trees.

17 (2) Processing of beetle-killed or beetle infested  
18 hazard trees.

19 (3) Forest thinning and other fuels reduction of  
20 plant debris associated with mountain pine beetle  
21 mortality to alter or clear fuels created by the out-  
22 break and address a public safety, critical infrastruc-  
23 ture, or watershed health need.

24 (4) Reforestation, including tree planting.

1           (5) Ecological restoration designed to promote  
2       biodiversity.

3           (6) Watershed protection and stabilization  
4       measures, including—

5               (A) slope stabilization;

6               (B) sediment and runoff control;

7               (C) flood and erosion mitigation; and

8               (D) planning, monitoring, and technical as-  
9       sistance for purposes of maintaining watershed  
10      health.

11      (d) DISBURSEMENT.—In disbursing grant funds  
12      awarded to a grant recipient under the Program, the Sec-  
13      retary—

14           (1) may disburse all or part of such grant funds  
15      to the recipient at any time during the period begin-  
16      ning on the date on which the grant is awarded and  
17      ending 30 days after the date described in para-  
18      graph (2); and

19           (2) shall ensure that all such grant funds are  
20      disbursed not later than 30 days after the date on  
21      which the Secretary receives written notification  
22      from the recipient attesting that the emergency  
23      mountain pine beetle response project for which the  
24      grant was awarded is complete.

25      (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

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

5           (2) NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—The term  
6           “National Forest System” has the meaning given  
7           such term in section 11(a) of the Forest and Range-  
8           land Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16  
9           U.S.C. 1609(a)).

10          (3) SPONSOR.—The term “sponsor” means—  
11                (A) a State or local government;  
12                (B) an Indian Tribe;  
13                (C) a water management district, water  
14                conservation district, special district, or a public  
15                water, wastewater, and stormwater utility; and  
16                (D) an electric utility, transmitting utility,  
17                or transmission organization (as such terms are  
18                defined, respectively, in section 3 of the Federal  
19                Power Act (16 U.S.C. 796) or electrical trans-  
20                mission provider.

21          (4) WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE.—The term  
22           “wildland-urban interface” has the meaning given  
23           the term in section 101 of the Healthy Forests Res-  
24           toration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511).