

Suspend the Rules and Pass the Bill, H. R. 7276, With Amendments

(The amendments strike all after the enacting clause and insert a new text and a new title)

116TH CONGRESS
2^D 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 “Desert Locust Control
5 Act”.

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

2 It is the policy of the United States to prioritize ef-
3 forts to control the ongoing desert locust outbreak in East
4 Africa and other affected regions, mitigate the impacts on
5 food security, economic productivity, and political sta-
6 bility, improve interagency coordination to prevent future
7 outbreaks, and promote resilience in affected countries.

8 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

9 Congress finds the following:

10 (1) The United States Agency for International
11 Development reports that countries in East Africa
12 are currently suffering the worst desert locust out-
13 break in decades, which will devour crops and pas-
14 ture and destroy local livelihoods across the region.

15 (2) As of June 2020, there were more than 26
16 million people experiencing acute food insecurity in
17 Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania,
18 Uganda, Sudan, and Djibouti, and these numbers
19 are projected to increase if the desert locust out-
20 break is not controlled.

21 (3) As the desert locust outbreak continues,
22 there may be insufficient resources to continue to
23 conduct aerial spraying and without such resources
24 the current outbreak could develop into a plague by
25 the end of 2020.

1 (4) The desert locust outbreak in East Africa,
2 particularly in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia, is neg-
3 atively impacting food security, local livelihoods and
4 economic productivity, and may threaten political
5 stability in the region.

6 (5) Proactive investments now to control the
7 desert locust outbreak could reduce the need for a
8 much larger United States humanitarian response
9 effort later, as well as support economic and political
10 stability and build resilience in affected countries.

11 (6) In order to optimize the United States re-
12 sponse to the desert locust outbreak, an interagency
13 working group should be established to develop and
14 implement a comprehensive, strategic plan to control
15 the desert locust outbreak in East Africa and other
16 affected regions, mitigate impacts on food security,
17 economic productivity, and political stability and
18 prevent future outbreaks.

19 **SEC. 4. INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP.**

20 (a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The President shall establish
21 an interagency working group to coordinate the United
22 States response to the ongoing desert locust outbreak in
23 East Africa and other affected regions, including the de-
24 velopment of a comprehensive, strategic plan to control the
25 outbreak, mitigate the impacts on food security, economic

1 productivity, and political stability, and prevent future
2 outbreaks.

3 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—The interagency working
5 group shall be composed of the following:

6 (A) Two representatives from the United
7 States Agency for International Development.

8 (B) One representative from each of the
9 following:

10 (i) The United States Mission to the
11 United Nations Agencies for Food and Ag-
12 riculture.

13 (ii) The National Security Council.

14 (iii) The Department of State.

15 (iv) The Department of Defense.

16 (v) The Department of Agriculture.

17 (vi) Any other relevant Federal de-
18 partment or agency.

19 (2) CHAIR.—The President shall designate one
20 of the representatives from the United States Agen-
21 cy for International Development described in para-
22 graph (1)(A) to serve as chair of the interagency
23 working group.

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

1 (1) assess the scope of the desert locust out-
2 break in East Africa and other affected regions, in-
3 cluding its impact on food security, economic pro-
4 ductivity, and political stability in affected countries;

5 (2) assess the impacts of restrictions relating to
6 the coronavirus disease 2019 (commonly referred to
7 as “COVID-19”) pandemic;

8 (3) monitor the effectiveness of ongoing assist-
9 ance efforts to control the desert locust outbreak
10 and mitigate its impacts and identify gaps and op-
11 portunities for additional support to such programs;

12 (4) review the effectiveness of regional and mul-
13 tilateral efforts to control the desert locust outbreak
14 and the coordination among relevant United States
15 Government agencies, regional governments, and
16 international organizations, including the World
17 Food Programme and the United Nations Food and
18 Agriculture Organization; and

19 (5) not later than 90 days after the establish-
20 ment of the interagency working group under sub-
21 section (a), develop and submit to the President and
22 the appropriate congressional committees a com-
23 prehensive, strategic plan to control the desert locust
24 outbreak, including a description of efforts to—

1 (A) improve coordination among relevant
2 United States Government agencies, regional
3 governments, and international organizations,
4 including the World Food Programme and the
5 United Nations Food and Agriculture Organiza-
6 tion;

7 (B) ensure delivery of necessary assets
8 control the desert locust outbreak and humani-
9 tarian and development assistance to address
10 and mitigate impacts to food security, economic
11 productivity, and political stability; and

12 (C) to the extent practicable, prevent and
13 mitigate future desert locust and other, similar
14 destructive insect outbreaks (such as Fall
15 Armyworm) in Africa and other parts of the
16 world, which require a humanitarian response.

17 (d) INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP SUPPORT.—The
18 interagency working group shall continue to meet not less
19 than semi-annually to facilitate implementation of the
20 comprehensive, strategic plan required by subsection
21 (c)(5).

22 (e) SUNSET.—This section shall terminate on the
23 date that is 2 years after the date of the enactment of
24 this Act, or at such time as there is no longer an upsurge

1 in the desert locust outbreak in East Africa, whichever oc-
2 curs earlier.

3 (f) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DE-
4 FINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate congres-
5 sional committees” means—

6 (1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the
7 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
8 resentatives; and

9 (2) the Committee on Foreign Relations and
10 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

Amend the title so as to read: “A bill to establish an interagency working group to develop a comprehensive, strategic plan to control 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.”.