

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

To encourage and facilitate efforts by States and other stakeholders to conserve and sustain the western population of monarch butterflies, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To encourage and facilitate efforts by States and other stakeholders to conserve and sustain the western population of monarch butterflies, 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 “Monarch Action, Re-
5 covery, and Conservation of Habitat Act of 2020” or the
6 “MONARCH Act of 2020”.

7 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

8 Congress finds that—

1 (1) the population of western monarch butter-
2 flies is at imminent risk of extinction;

3 (2) over the past 3 decades, the population of
4 western monarch butterflies has declined by more
5 than 99 percent due to prolonged drought, loss of
6 milkweed and native pollinator habitat, loss of breed-
7 ing and overwintering habitat, and climate change;

8 (3) in 2019, the population of western monarch
9 butterflies maintained a historic low of approxi-
10 mately 29,000 butterflies, falling below the predicted
11 extinction threshold;

12 (4) the extinction of the population of migra-
13 tory western monarch butterflies is now likely to
14 occur within the next 2 decades if urgent action is
15 not taken;

16 (5) actively restoring native milkweed and nec-
17 tar plants, monarch overwintering habitat, and other
18 pollinator habitat, and ensuring that key habitats
19 are protected from destruction, are critical to ensur-
20 ing the survival of western monarch butterflies and
21 can also help facilitate conservation of other essen-
22 tial pollinators; and

23 (6) enhancing pollinator populations can result
24 in improved pollination services for neighboring land,
25 including agriculture and wildlife ecosystems.

1 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) CONSERVATION.—The term “conservation”
4 means the use of each method or procedure nec-
5 essary to protect habitats of western monarch but-
6 terflies, including—

7 (A) the protection, restoration, and man-
8 agement of overwintering, breeding, and migra-
9 tory habitats;

10 (B) assistance in the development and im-
11 plementation of national, regional, State, and
12 local conservation and management plans; and

13 (C) community outreach and education.

14 (2) FUND.—The term “Fund” means the West-
15 ern Monarch Butterfly Rescue Fund established by
16 section 5(a).

17 (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
18 the Secretary of the Interior.

19 (4) WESTERN MONARCH BUTTERFLY.—The
20 term “western monarch butterfly” means the mon-
21 arch butterfly population that overwinters along the
22 coast of the State of California and breeds across
23 the States of California, Arizona, Nevada, Wash-
24 ington, Oregon, Idaho, and Utah.

1 **SEC. 4. WESTERN MONARCH BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION**
2 **GRANT PROGRAM.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of
4 funds and in consultation with other Federal officials, the
5 Secretary of Agriculture (referred to in this section as the
6 “Secretary”) shall use amounts in the Fund to provide
7 grants for projects for the conservation of western mon-
8 arch butterflies for which project proposals are approved
9 by the Secretary in accordance with this section.

10 (b) PROJECT PROPOSALS.—

11 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—An entity that is eli-
12 gible to receive a grant for a project under this sec-
13 tion is—

14 (A) a relevant local or Tribal government
15 agency, research institution, or nonprofit orga-
16 nization with expertise required for the con-
17 servation of western monarch butterflies; and

18 (B) any other entity, as determined appro-
19 priate by the Secretary, with the expertise re-
20 quired for the conservation of western monarch
21 butterflies.

22 (2) FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES.—
23 A State or Federal agency—

24 (A) may not be a lead entity or receive a
25 grant for a project under this section; but

1 (B) may be included as a partner or col-
2 laborator on a project that receives a grant
3 under this section.

4 (3) REQUIRED ELEMENTS.—A proposal for a
5 project under this section shall include—

6 (A) a statement of the purposes of the
7 project;

8 (B) the name of the entity with overall re-
9 sponsibility for the project;

10 (C) a description of—

11 (i) the qualifications of the entity that
12 will conduct the project;

13 (ii) methods for project implementa-
14 tion and outcome assessment; and

15 (iii) anticipated outcomes;

16 (D) assurances that the project will be im-
17 plemented in consultation with relevant wildlife
18 management authorities, Indian Tribes, and
19 other appropriate local government, State gov-
20 ernment, and Federal Government officials;

21 (E) assurances that the conservation ef-
22 forts outlined in the proposal do not conflict
23 with food safety measures or practices;

24 (F) information that demonstrates the
25 clear potential of the project to contribute to

1 the conservation and recovery of western mon-
2 arch butterflies; and

3 (G) such other information as the Sec-
4 retary may require.

5 (c) PROJECT REVIEW AND APPROVAL.—The Sec-
6 retary shall annually—

7 (1) solicit project proposals for funding under
8 this section; and

9 (2) review each proposal described in paragraph
10 (1) on a timeline that recognizes the urgency of the
11 declining number of western monarch butterflies to
12 determine whether the proposal meets the criteria
13 specified in subsection (d).

14 (d) CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL.—The Secretary may
15 approve a project proposal under this section if the pro-
16 posal demonstrates a likelihood that the project will con-
17 tribute to the conservation of western monarch butterfly
18 populations in the wild.

19 (e) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall
20 provide technical assistance for a project that receives a
21 grant under this section.

22 (f) PROJECT REPORTING.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—Each entity that receives a
24 grant for a project under this section shall submit
25 to the Secretary, at such intervals as the Secretary

1 may require, reports that include any information
2 that the Secretary determines is necessary to evalu-
3 ate the progress and success of the project for the
4 purposes of ensuring positive results, assessing prob-
5 lems, and fostering improvements.

6 (2) AVAILABILITY TO STATE LEGISLATURES.—
7 Each entity that receives a grant for a project under
8 this section shall submit each report under para-
9 graph (1) to the State legislature of the State in
10 which the project is conducted.

11 (3) AVAILABILITY TO THE PUBLIC.—The Sec-
12 retary shall make available to the public, in a timely
13 manner—

14 (A) each report submitted under para-
15 graph (1); and

16 (B) any other documents relating to
17 projects for which a grant is provided under
18 this section.

19 **SEC. 5. WESTERN MONARCH BUTTERFLY RESCUE FUND.**

20 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the
21 Treasury of the United States a fund, to be known as the
22 “Western Monarch Butterfly Rescue Fund”.

23 (b) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Of the amounts
24 available in the Fund for each fiscal year, the Secretary

1 may expend not more than 3 percent to pay the adminis-
2 trative expenses necessary to carry out this Act.

3 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
4 authorized to be appropriated to the Fund \$12,500,000
5 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2025.

6 **SEC. 6. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WESTERN MONARCH**
7 **BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION PLAN.**

8 Of amounts available to the Secretary that are not
9 otherwise obligated, the Secretary shall transfer to the Na-
10 tional Fish and Wildlife Foundation \$12,500,000 for each
11 of fiscal years 2021 through 2025 to facilitate the imple-
12 mentation of the Western Monarch Butterfly Conservation
13 Plan prepared by the Western Association of Fish and
14 Wildlife Agencies and dated January 2019.

15 **SEC. 7. REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 31 of
17 each year, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report
18 describing the status of western monarch butterflies, in-
19 cluding, with respect to the year for which the report is
20 submitted—

21 (1) a summary of the projects for which the
22 Secretary of Agriculture has provided funding under
23 section 4 and an evaluation of those projects; and

24 (2) a summary of the projects for which the
25 Secretary has provided funding through the Western

1 Monarch Butterfly Conservation Plan prepared by
2 the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agen-
3 cies and dated January 2019.

4 (b) PROVISION OF INFORMATION BY THE DEPART-
5 MENT OF THE INTERIOR.—To facilitate the preparation
6 of each report under subsection (a), the Secretary of Agri-
7 culture shall provide to the Secretary information relating
8 to projects described in paragraph (1) of that subsection.