

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 4373

To reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System, maintain a National Coordinated Soil Moisture Monitoring Network, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 27, 2023

Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. BAIRD, and Mr. MILLER of Ohio) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

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## A BILL

To reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System, maintain a National Coordinated Soil Moisture Monitoring Network, 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 “Weather Information  
5 for Agriculture Act.”

1 **SEC. 2. NATIONAL INTEGRATED DROUGHT INFORMATION**  
2 **SYSTEM.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3 of the National Inte-  
4 grated Drought Information System Act of 2006 (15  
5 U.S.C. 313d) is amended—

6 (1) in subsection (b)—

7 (A) in paragraph (5), by striking “and”  
8 after the semicolon;

9 (B) in paragraph (6), by striking the pe-  
10 riod and inserting a semicolon; and

11 (C) by adding at the end the following new  
12 paragraphs:

13 “(7) advance and deploy next generation tech-  
14 nologies related to drought and related publicly  
15 available data, such as forecasting capabilities uti-  
16 lizing artificial intelligence, machine learning, and  
17 cloud technologies; and

18 “(8) strengthen observational networks and  
19 drought indicators across a variety of spatial and  
20 temporal scales by optimizing data and resources  
21 from across the Federal Government, including in-  
22 vestigating and addressing gaps in snowpack moni-  
23 toring, in-situ soil moisture monitoring, groundwater  
24 data, and rapid intensification events.”;

25 (2) in subsection (c)—

1 (A) in paragraph (2), by striking “and”  
2 after the semicolon;

3 (B) in paragraph (3), by striking the pe-  
4 riod and inserting “; and”; and

5 (C) by adding at the end the following new  
6 paragraph:

7 “(4) in partnership with the National Mesonet  
8 Program, establish memoranda of understanding to  
9 provide coordinated, high-quality, nationwide  
10 drought information for the public good.”; and

11 (3) by amending subsection (f) to read as fol-  
12 lows:

13 “(f) MODELING UPDATE.—The Under Secretary, in  
14 partnership with the Climate Prediction Center of the Na-  
15 tional Weather Service, shall undertake an effort to mi-  
16 grate existing products to probabilistic forecasts and in-  
17 corporate new and improved dynamical and statistical  
18 forecast modeling tools.”.

19 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 4 of the National  
21 Integrated Drought Information System Act of 2006  
22 (15 U.S.C. 313d note) is amended to read as fol-  
23 lows:

24 “(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—From  
25 amounts made available to Operations, Research, and Fa-

1 cilities of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Adminis-  
2 tration, there are authorized to be appropriated to carry  
3 out this section the following:

4 “(1) \$15,000,000 for fiscal year 2024.

5 “(2) \$15,500,000 for fiscal year 2025.

6 “(3) \$16,000,000 for fiscal year 2026.

7 “(4) \$16,500,000 for fiscal year 2027.

8 “(5) \$17,000,000 for fiscal year 2028.”.

9 (2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made  
10 by paragraph (1) shall take effect and apply begin-  
11 ning on October 1, 2023.

12 **SEC. 3. NATIONAL COORDINATED SOIL MOISTURE MONI-**  
13 **TORING NETWORK.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary shall sup-  
15 port the development, deployment, and maintenance of soil  
16 moisture monitoring networks by managing the National  
17 Coordinated Soil Moisture Monitoring Network of the Na-  
18 tional Integrated Drought Information System under sec-  
19 tion 3 of the National Integrated Drought Information  
20 System Act of 2006 (15 U.S.C. 313d) (in this section re-  
21 ferred to as the “network”).

22 (b) ACTIVITIES.—The Under Secretary shall ensure  
23 the network includes activities that carry out the fol-  
24 lowing:

25 (1) Establishing a visible, user-friendly website.

1           (2) Developing a set of criteria for high-quality  
2 data sources.

3           (3) Supporting research necessary to develop or  
4 improve soil moisture monitoring products at the  
5 National scale.

6           (4) Increasing the number of long-term, high-  
7 quality, in situ soil moisture monitoring stations  
8 across the United States.

9           (5) Sharing methodologies and validation proto-  
10 cols with the private sector.

11           (6) Engaging with the citizen science commu-  
12 nity.

13           (7) Developing, releasing, and promoting new,  
14 nationwide point-based and gridded soil moisture  
15 data products that meet the needs of diverse end-  
16 user groups.

17       (c) PARTNERSHIPS.—In partnership with the Na-  
18 tional Integrated Drought Information System under sec-  
19 tion 3 of the National Integrated Drought Information  
20 System Act of 2006 (15 U.S.C. 313d) and the National  
21 Mesonet Program, the network may establish memoranda  
22 of understanding to acquire and provide coordinated, high-  
23 quality, nationwide soil moisture information for the pub-  
24 lic good.

1           (d) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “Under  
2 Secretary” has the meaning given such term in section  
3 2 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation  
4 Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 8501).

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