117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. ______

To establish an international terrestrial carbon sequestration program and provide international technical assistance for carbon market development, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. HOYER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To establish an international terrestrial carbon sequestration program and provide international technical assistance for carbon market development, 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 "America Mitigating
5 and Achieving Zero-emissions Originating from Nature for
6 the 21st Century Act" or the "AMAZON21 Act".
SEC. 2. INTERNATIONAL TERRESTRIAL CARBON SEQUESTRATION PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall establish a program, to be known as the “International Terrestrial Carbon Sequestration Program”, to provide results-based payments for eligible projects in developing countries that reduce emissions and enhance carbon sequestration from forests and other terrestrial and coastal ecosystems.

(b) GOALS.—In carrying out the program established pursuant to subsection (a), the Secretary shall work with developing countries and appropriate local partners in developing countries to identify, develop, and implement projects that—

(1) will help the developing country meet the emission reductions goals corresponding to that country’s nationally determined contribution to the Paris Agreement; and

(2) have the potential to avoid dangerous global climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5 degrees Celsius (compared to pre-industrial levels).

(c) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—
(1) IN GENERAL.—A project shall be eligible for results-based payments under the program established pursuant to subsection (a) if—

(A) the project is identified by the Secretary as a project whose primary purpose is to—

(i) reduce deforestation and forest degradation and restore forests to support enhanced carbon sequestration within the host country, at the national or sub-national level; or

(ii) preserve, including through integrated land-use programs, other terrestrial ecosystems within the host developing country, such as wetlands, mangroves, or grasslands;

(B) in the determination of the Secretary, the host developing country or local partner will be able to fulfill its obligations under any agreement with respect to the funding of such project through the program established pursuant to subsection (a), including (as applicable) with respect to—

(i) host country standards of governance and respect for rule of law;
(ii) environmental and social safeguards; and

(iii) potential for corruption or misuse of payments made by the Secretary;

(C) the project is appropriately designed to use results-based payments; and

(D) the host developing country or local partner, as applicable, agrees to—

(i) transparency requirements with respect to the use of amounts received under the program established pursuant to subsection (a);

(ii) measuring, reporting, and verification requirements, including third-party verification, necessary to provide results-based payments;

(iii) share any emissions reductions achieved under this program, linking such reductions to reporting requirements under the Paris Climate Agreement; and

(iv) ensure that women, Indigenous Communities, and other local stakeholders are empowered and enabled to meaningfully participate in these processes.
(2) ADDITIONAL FORMS OF ELIGIBILITY.—A project may also be determined to be eligible under this subsection if—

(A) the project includes a combination or aggregation of existing terrestrial carbon mitigation projects in the host country; or

(B) the project is recognized under a national or sub-national terrestrial carbon mitigation program in the host country, without regard to whether the project is below the sub-national level or scale.

(d) GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Upon determining that a project is an eligible project, the Secretary is authorized to enter into multi-year agreements to provide results-based payments to a host developing country or appropriate local partners in the host developing country, including in the form of grants from the International Forestry Carbon Mitigation Fund established in subsection (f), to carry out such eligible project. Such agreements may also include terms that leverage funding from non-profits, businesses, other developed countries, and multilateral financing and development agencies.
(2) **RECIPROCAL COMMITMENT.**—The Secretary shall take such steps as may be necessary to ensure that the host developing country or appropriate local partners in the host developing country, as applicable, reciprocates the commitments to achieving the goals of the section.

(3) **TERMINATION.**—An agreement under this subsection may be unilaterally terminated by the Secretary if the Secretary determines that the host developing country or a local partner is failing or has failed to uphold the terms and conditions established for the project.

(4) **DOUBLE COUNTING OF PAYMENTS.**—The Secretary shall take such steps as may be necessary to prevent the double counting of, or double payment for, emissions reduction or carbon sequestration results.

(e) **TRANSPARENCY.**—The Secretary shall make publicly available a list of each grant made available to developing countries and local partners under the program established by subsection (a) and shall update on an annual basis the progress or any lack of progress in the implementation of the corresponding eligible projects and the achievement of their goals.
(f) AGENCY COORDINATION.—In carrying out the
program under this section, the Secretary shall consult as
appropriate with the heads of other relevant Federal de-
partments and agencies, including—

(1) with respect to terrestrial carbon sequestra-
tion, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of
the Interior, the Administrator of the National Oce-
anic and Atmospheric Administration, the Chief
Forester of the Forest Service, and the Adminis-
trator of the Environmental Protection Agency; and

(2) with respect to project monitoring, report-
ing and verification, the Administrator of the Na-
tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the
Administrator of the National Aeronautics and
Space Administration, the Administrator of the
United States Agency for International Develop-
ment, the Administrator of the Environmental Pro-
tection Agency, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the
Chief Forester of the Forest Service.

(g) TRUST FUND.—There is established in the Treas-
ury the “International Terrestrial Carbon Sequestration
Fund”, which shall consist of—

(1) amounts appropriated pursuant to the au-
thorization in subsection (h)(1) to carry out this sec-
tion; and
(2) such gifts, bequests, or devises of property for the benefit of, or in connection with carrying out this section as the Secretary may accept in the form of donations by individuals or entities, including private entities, non-profit entities, and multinational entities.

(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION.—There is authorized to be appropriated $9,000,000,000 to carry out this section.

(2) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated to carry out this section are authorized to remain available until expended and shall be used solely for the purposes of this section.

(3) SALARIES AND EXPENSES.—Of the amounts made available for any fiscal year pursuant to the authorization under paragraph (1), not more than $10,000,000 is authorized to be made available for the salaries and expenses of employees of the Department of State to carry out this section.

(i) RESULTS-BASED PAYMENTS DEFINED.—The term "results-based payments" means a mechanism for the provision of United States assistance in which—

(1) a developing country, or appropriate local partners in a developing country, assumes responsi-
bility for achieving measurable results in the reduction of emissions through a project;

(2) such measurable results are defined in advance of the obligation of assistance by the United States for the project; and

(3) such assistance is expended in the form of payments to such developing countries or partners only upon independent verification of such pre-defined results.

SEC. 3. INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR CARBON MARKET DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION.

(a) In General.—The Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, in consultation with the Secretary of State, shall conduct a program to provide resources and technical assistance to developing countries to conserve, manage, and restore forests and other terrestrial and coastal carbon sinks, to support nature-based carbon sequestration as a means to addressing global climate change, including by providing such resources and assistance with respect to projects for the goals described in section 2(b). Projects under such program shall be directed in countries meeting each of the following criteria:
(1) The country contains globally important forests or other terrestrial or coastal terrestrial carbon sinks that are threatened with destruction or fragmentation or where the degradation of wetlands, peatlands, or agricultural land impairs development and significantly drives greenhouse gas emissions.

(2) Legitimate land owners or use rights’ holders in the country are permitted to sell carbon credits to voluntary and carbon compliance markets.

(3) The country has developed, or is in the process of developing, comprehensive policies to monitor, report, and verify the environmental, social, and financial integrity of any such projects, including, if applicable, policies to ensure that the host country avoids double-counting the resulting reductions greenhouse gas emissions.

(4) The country presently contains large reserves of terrestrial carbon that cannot be recuperated once lost.

(b) TECHNICAL SUPPORT PRIORITIZATION.—In conducting the program described in subsection (a), the Administrator shall prioritize technical support for and investment in the following activities:

(1) Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation, fragmentation, and forest degradation.
(2) Enhancing sequestration through carbon sinks by restoring natural forests and other terrestrial and coastal carbon sinks as well as building resilience.

(3) Monitoring, reporting, and verification of the environmental, social, and financial integrity of the project as an important component of the work.

(4) Assisting governments, willing, legitimate land owners, and willing use rights' holders in developing projects to engage in emissions trading through—

(A) carbon credits sold in existing carbon compliance markets or to voluntary buyers; or

(B) projects providing results-based payments.

(5) Developing the administrative and legal capacity and technical infrastructure necessary to implement carbon-pricing initiatives in recipient countries that drive investment in nature-based solutions to climate change.

(6) Developing domestic infrastructure for creating and tracking carbon credits, such as registries, and preparing countries to implement nature-based solution initiatives.
(7) Ensuring that women, Indigenous Communities, and other local stakeholders are empowered and enabled to meaningful participation in all such activities.

(c) AUTHORIZATION.—There is authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.