

119TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**S.** \_\_\_\_\_

To amend the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to give preference to local contractors in awarding contracts to carry out certain hazardous fuel reduction projects on Federal land.

---

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

---

Mr. LUJÁN (for himself and Mr. DAINES) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

---

**A BILL**

To amend the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to give preference to local contractors in awarding contracts to carry out certain hazardous fuel reduction projects on Federal land.

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 “Local Employment Ac-  
5 cess for our Forests Act of 2025” or the “LEAF Act of  
6 2025”.

1 **SEC. 2. CONTRACT PREFERENCE FOR LOCAL CONTRAC-**  
2 **TORS FOR CERTAIN HAZARDOUS FUEL RE-**  
3 **DUCTION PROJECTS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title I of the Healthy Forests  
5 Restoration Act of 2003 is amended—

6 (1) by redesignating sections 107 and 108 (16  
7 U.S.C. 6517, 6518) as sections 108 and 109, respec-  
8 tively; and

9 (2) by inserting after section 106 (16 U.S.C.  
10 6516) the following:

11 **“SEC. 107. CONTRACT PREFERENCE FOR LOCAL CONTRAC-**  
12 **TORS FOR CERTAIN HAZARDOUS FUEL RE-**  
13 **DUCTION PROJECTS.**

14 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

15 “(1) APPROPRIATE LOCAL CONTRACTOR.—The  
16 term ‘appropriate local contractor’ means an entity  
17 that carries out, pursuant to a contract or agree-  
18 ment, 1 or more authorized projects located—

19 “(A) in a State in which—

20 “(i) the entity has its principal place  
21 of business, as certified by the entity or an  
22 individual representing the entity; and

23 “(ii) not fewer than 26 percent of the  
24 total workforce assigned to the applicable  
25 contract or agreement (including sub-  
26 contractors at any tier) will reside, as cer-

1           tified by the entity or an individual rep-  
2           resenting the entity; or

3           “(B) within a 60-mile radius of the State  
4           in which the entity is registered as a business  
5           or has its principal place of business, as cer-  
6           tified by the entity or an individual representing  
7           the entity.

8           “(2) AUTHORIZED PROJECT.—The term ‘au-  
9           thorized project’ includes any of the following activi-  
10          ties, as authorized under this Act:

11           “(A) A vegetation management activity, in-  
12           cluding mechanical thinning, mastication, pre-  
13           scribed burning, cultural burning (as deter-  
14           mined by an applicable Indian tribe), timber  
15           harvesting, and grazing, carried out—

16           “(i) to control vegetation growth, com-  
17           position, health, or quality of Federal land;  
18           or

19           “(ii) otherwise to reduce the risk of  
20           wildfires on Federal land.

21           “(B) Creating a fuel break or fire break.

22           “(C) Removing hazard trees, dead trees, or  
23           dying trees, as determined by the Secretary.

24           “(D) Developing, approving, or conducting  
25           routine maintenance under a vegetation man-

1           agement, facility inspection, and operation and  
2           maintenance plan under section 512(c) of the  
3           Federal Land Policy and Management Act of  
4           1976 (43 U.S.C. 1772(c)).

5           “(E) Removing trees to address over-  
6           stocking or crowding in a forest stand, con-  
7           sistent with achieving the appropriate basal  
8           area of the forest stand, as determined by the  
9           Secretary.

10          “(F) Using treatments to address insects  
11          or disease or to control vegetation competition  
12          or invasive species.

13          “(G) A wet-meadow, floodplain, or riparian  
14          restoration activity that increases wildfire re-  
15          sistance.

16          “(H) A forest stand improvement activity  
17          necessary to protect life and property from cat-  
18          astrophic wildfire, as determined by the Sec-  
19          retary.

20          “(I) Any combination of activities de-  
21          scribed in this paragraph.

22          “(3) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’ means  
23          the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the  
24          Chief of the Forest Service.

1       “(b) CONTRACT PREFERENCE.—Effective beginning  
2 on the date of enactment of the LEAF Act of 2025, the  
3 Secretary shall give preference in awarding a contract to  
4 carry out an authorized project in a State to an appro-  
5 priate local contractor, to the maximum extent practicable.

6       “(c) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date  
7 of enactment of the LEAF Act of 2025, and not less fre-  
8 quently than annually thereafter, the Secretary shall sub-  
9 mit to Congress a report that includes—

10           “(1) a quantitative analysis of the number and  
11 percentage of contracts awarded to appropriate local  
12 contractors, the total dollar value of those contracts,  
13 and an assessment of the economic impact of the  
14 contract preference under subsection (b) on local  
15 employment and contractor capacity;

16           “(2) a description of the reasons for awarding  
17 a contract to carry out an authorized project in a  
18 State to an individual or entity that is not an appro-  
19 priate local contractor; and

20           “(3) a description of the implementation by the  
21 Secretary of this section.

22       “(d) MONITORING AND EVALUATION.—

23           “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall estab-  
24 lish a monitoring and evaluation process—

1 “(A) to assess compliance with the require-  
2 ments of this section, including the contract  
3 preference under subsection (b); and

4 “(B) to support the reports required under  
5 subsection (c).

6 “(2) PARTICIPANTS.—The process described in  
7 paragraph (1) may include participation by—

8 “(A) any cooperating governmental agen-  
9 cies, including Tribal governments; and

10 “(B) any other interested groups or indi-  
11 viduals.”.

12 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents  
13 contained in section 1(b) of the Healthy Forests Restora-  
14 tion Act of 2003 (Public Law 108–148; 117 Stat. 1887)  
15 is amended by striking the items relating to sections 107  
16 and 108 and inserting the following:

“Sec. 107. Contract preference for local contractors for certain hazardous fuel  
reduction projects.

“Sec. 108. Effect of title.

“Sec. 109. Authorization of appropriations.”.