

Haaland joins Booker on a climate change bill

Written by By office of U. S. Representative Deb Haaland 1st District of New Mexico
Friday, 23 August 2019 02:47



Focuses on farm conservation, reforestation, wetlands

U. S. Representative Deb Haaland (D-NM) joined with U. S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) Aug. 8 to release a climate change bill focused on voluntary farm and ranch conservation practices, massive reforestation and wetlands restoration.

The *Climate Stewardship Act* of 2019 inspired by measures implemented in President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, would support voluntary climate stewardship practices on more than 100 million acres of farmland, plant more than 15 billion trees to revive deforested landscapes and expand urban tree cover, reestablish the Civilian Conservation Corps - one of the New Deal's most popular programs, restore over two million acres of coastal wetlands, and invest in renewable energy for farmers and rural small businesses in the spirit of the New Deal's Rural Electrification Act, which provided low-cost loans to help bring electricity to rural America.

Rep. Deb Haaland (D-NM), Chairwoman of the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands will lead companion legislation in the House of Representatives.

In the wake of last year's [dire United Nations report](#) detailing the urgency and scale at which we must act to address the climate change crisis and reach net zero emissions, this legislation provides nature-based solutions to remove heat-trapping carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Federal greenhouse gas inventories show that currently our soils, forests, and wetlands sequester approximately [11 percent of all U.S. emissions](#).

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A [recent report](#) identified tree planting and ecosystem restoration as one of the most effective potential solutions to mitigating climate change. The trees planted by this bill will [sequester over 13 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide](#) – equivalent to more than two years of current total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.

“Climate change is an immediate threat our communities face that calls for bold solutions. However, deforestation and some current agricultural practices are making global warming worse. I’m excited to work with Senator Cory Booker on the Climate Stewardship Act, to incentivize farming practices that reduce emissions and promote reforestation. These steps are important to reversing climate change impacts that threaten the health and safety of our communities and our planet,” **Haaland** said.

The [2018 National Climate Assessment](#) details how farmers and ranchers are already being harmed by climate change, and outlines how rising temperatures and extreme weather could lead to substantial reductions in future crop yields in many regions of the country.

The *Climate Stewardship Act* will:

- Plant over 4 billion trees by 2030, and 15 billion trees by 2050, on a combination of federal, state, local, tribal, and non-governmental lands. The ambitious level of tree planting outlined in the Climate Stewardship Act makes it the biggest reforestation measure ever to be introduced in Congress.
- Plant over 100 million of these trees in urban neighborhoods across America, with the priority going to low-income neighborhoods and communities of color. In addition to sequestering carbon, trees also absorb harmful air pollutants and reduce temperatures in urban areas.
- Support voluntary climate stewardship practices on over 100 million acres of farmland, [reducing or offsetting agricultural emissions by one-third by 2025](#), through:

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Providing tens of billions of dollars of supplemental funding for USDA working lands conservation programs, with new funding dedicated to stewardship practices such as [rotational grazing](#), [improved fertilizer efficiency](#), and planting tens of millions of new acres of [cover crops](#).

- Protecting millions of acres of environmentally sensitive farmland.
- Doubling funding for agricultural research programs, including more funding for soil health demonstration trials.
- Tripling USDA funding to provide farmers with expert technical assistance on climate stewardship practices.
- Providing grant funding to tens of thousands of farmers, ranchers and rural businesses for renewable energy production, such as solar panels and wind turbines, and energy efficiency improvements.
- Invest in local and regional food systems to increase resilience in rural and urban communities.
- Restore or protect over 2 million acres of coastal wetlands by 2030 to sequester carbon emissions and reduce coastal flooding. Coastal wetlands act as an important sponge during extreme weather events with heavy rainfall.
- Reestablish the Civilian Conservation Corps to provide youth from low-income communities, indigenous communities, and communities of color with skills and work experience in forestry and wetlands restoration.

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The Climate Stewardship Act of 2019 is endorsed by more than 60 farmer, environmental, restoration, and forestry organizations.

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