

July 9, 2026

Agriculture Act of 2026

The Senate Farm Bill discussion draft, the *Agriculture Act of 2026*, was introduced on June 23, 2026. IFAI has reviewed the 902-page bill and identified provisions that specifically reference Tribes or related keywords, or that may have significant impact on Tribal Nations and Native producers. The tables below summarize these provisions and make comparisons to the House’s Farm Bill, the *Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026* ([H.R.7567](#)), which was passed by the House on April 30, 2026. This summary is not comprehensive, and other provisions may have impacts on Tribal communities.

Title I – Commodities

Sec.	Section title	Description and analysis	Comparison to House Farm Bill
Sec. 1102	Servicing of Loans	This section would require the Secretary to continue processing Market Access Loans (MAL) and Sugar Processing Loans during a government shutdown. These programs are administered by county Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices, which have historically been closed during government shutdowns. Last year, three weeks into the extended 2025 government shutdown, USDA partially reopened FSA offices and allowed them to process MAL, disaster aid, indemnity programs, dairy margin coverage, and ARC/PLC, providing relief to producers. This section would ensure that producers, including Native producers, would continue receiving payments from MAL and sugar processing loans during a future government shutdown. However, it would not address a key challenge for Native producers during the 2025 shutdown: getting two-party checks endorsed. When ranchers with an FSA operating loan sell their livestock, they are frequently issued a two-party check that requires endorsement by FSA to be deposited. When FSA offices were closed, Native ranchers were unable to get their checks endorsed, delaying payments for work they had already completed.	Similar or identical to Sec. 1008
Sec. 1302	Supplemental Agricultural Disaster Assistance	The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) compensates ranchers for above normal loss of livestock due to adverse weather, disease, and attacks by federally protected animals. This provision expands LIP to include above normal loss of unweaned livestock, adds weight	No equivalent provision

		categories for determining payments for calves, and explicitly includes predation by Mexican Gray Wolves and panthers as eligible attacks by federally protected animals. These changes may benefit the 70% of Native American producers who specialize in livestock by expanding eligible losses. The Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-raised Fish (ELAP) compensates producers for losses due to feed or water shortages, disease, or other factors as determined by the Secretary. This provision amends ELAP to explicitly include transportation costs for hauling feed and water, adverse weather, and winter stockpile grazing losses as eligible losses. In practice, ELAP already provided payments for producers for the costs of hauling feed and water for livestock during a drought and for losses due to adverse weather. While ELAP is not specific to Tribes, Native producers may benefit from new clarity and expanded eligible losses under the program	
Sec. 1303	Tree Assistance Program	This section makes changes to the Tree Assistance Program, which provides assistance to orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes, and vines damaged by natural disasters. This section expands eligibility to participate in the program and newly allows assistance for dealing with plant pests. While this program and these changes are not specific to Tribes, Native producers with orchards and nurseries may benefit.	Sec. 1002 of the House Farm Bill makes the same changes but also expands eligibility to producers whose trees are still standing but are no longer economically viable due to a natural disaster. Currently, assistance under TAP is limited to producers who experienced tree loss.
Sec. 1304	Specialty Crop Assistance Framework	This section creates a new disaster assistance framework for specialty crops. Previously, disaster assistance for most specialty crops was delivered on an <i>ad hoc</i> basis or through a patchwork of programs, including the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), the Tree Assistance Program (TAP), and Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP). Native producers in particular have relied on NAP and ELAP in the absence of other programs. The new framework may provide more predictability and assistance for specialty crop growers, which includes 9% of Native producers.	Similar or identical to Sec. 1003 of the House Farm Bill

Title II – Conservation

Sec.	Section title	Senate Farm Bill Description and analysis	Comparison to House Farm Bill
Sec. 2202	Establishment and Administration	<p>Among other changes, this section includes a provision that allows producers to simultaneously participate in EQIP and the Conservation Loan Program for the same practice. While not specific to Tribes or Tribal citizens, this provision may assist Native producers with the high upfront costs of implementing conservation practices.</p> <p>The section also includes a provision aimed at reducing requirements to participate in EQIP by prohibiting USDA from requiring soil testing unless the practice requires soil testing or whole-farm assessments beyond what is needed to implement practices. While not specific to Tribes or Tribal citizens, this change may reduce costs and barriers to implementing conservation practices.</p>	Sec. 2202(a), among other changes, also allows producers to simultaneously participate in EQIP and the Conservation Loan Program for the same practice.
Sec. 2401	Funding	<p>This provision provides \$100 million per fiscal year for CRP cost-sharing agreements. It also reduces funding for EQIP by \$1.92 billion and CSP by \$200 million over the next five years. Finally, the provision establishes mandatory funding for the new Forest Conservation Easement Program established under this legislation, with funding starting at \$25 million for FY27 and rising to \$65 million by FY31.</p> <p>EQIP and CSP are popular, oversubscribed programs, and these cuts could make it harder for Native producers and others to access the program.</p>	Sec. 2501 cuts EQIP funding by \$1.05 billion but does not cut CSP. The Forest Conservation Easement Program is funded at the same level as the Senate bill.
Sec. 2402	Conservation Standards and Requirements	This provision newly requires NRCS to establish a schedule to review and establish new conservation practice standards. While NRCS already regularly reviews and updates conservation practice standards, Sens. Marshall, Ernst, Klobuchar, and Heinrich have criticized the process as slow, bureaucratic, and lacking transparency. Establishing a regular update and review schedule may help NRCS better integrate	Sec. 2502(f) of the House bill also directs USDA to update conservation practice standards every five years.

		new research and practices. This provision is likely adapted from the Streamlining Conservation Practice Standards Act (S.1729)	
Sec. 2403	Establishment and Review of Conservation Practice Standards	<p>This provision directs USDA to review conservation practice standards every five years on a rolling basis and to provide a public comment period on every practice under review. It also directs USDA to establish a streamlined, publicly accessible, administrative process for reviewing, updating, and establishing conservation practice standards; to provide State and local flexibility in the implementation of interim standards; to solicit regular input from State technical committees; and to allow for public submission of practices to be considered as interim conservation practices.</p> <p>Notably, while this section provides opportunity for public comment and input from State technical committees, there is no requirement to solicit input from or consult with Tribes. Tribes and their citizens have stewarded this land since time immemorial, yet many conservation practice standards do not integrate or recognize Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). This provision is likely adapted from the Streamlining Conservation Practice Standards Act (S.1729).</p>	Sec. 2502(f) of the House bill also directs USDA to update conservation practice standards every five years and to consider public comment. Unlike the Senate bill, the House bill explicitly directs USDA to consider input from "native entities" on native Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK).
Sec. 2404	Delivery of Technical Assistance	<p>This provision directs USDA to establish a process for third parties to certify Technical Service Providers (TSPs). TSPs provide tailored, on-the-ground assistance to producers and landowners to address conservation concerns. Senators Bennet, Crapo, and Marshall and Representative Baird, who introduced similar legislation to improve access to TSPs, noted that delays in certifying TSPs have led to delays and challenges implementing conservation practices.</p> <p>Establishing a process and timeline for USDA to approve third parties to certify TSPs may increase access, as well as increasing the number of TSPs with experience working in Indian Country.</p>	Sec. 2502(a) - 2502(d) of the House bill establishes a similar process for third parties to become certifiers of technical service providers. Unlike the Senate version, however, the House version explicitly allows Indian Tribes, in addition to state agencies and other non-federal entities, to become certifiers.

<p>Sec. 2502</p>	<p>Agricultural Land Easements</p>	<p>This provision increases the federal cost-share for an agricultural land easement under the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) to 60%, up from 50%. For grasslands of special environmental significance, the federal cost share is increased to 80%, up from 75%.</p> <p>The provision also establishes a new option where USDA does not have the right of enforcement for terms and conditions of the agricultural land easement if the federal cost share is no more than 25%. Instead, eligible entities meeting certain requirements can establish their own terms and conditions, as long as they meet certain standards, and have the right to enforce standards.</p>	<p>Sec. 2602 also changes the federal cost-share for agricultural land easements, but by a different amount: up to 65%, compared to the Senate's 60%. The House Farm Bill brings forward, but does not change, the federal cost share for grasslands of special environmental significance. Both versions include a low federal cost share option.</p> <p>The House Farm Bill also allows USDA to provide an increased cost share of 90% for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (SDFRs), which includes members of Indian Tribes, and allows USDA to evaluate applications from SDFRs in a separate pool. The increased support for SDFRs in the House Farm Bill may increase access and participation for Tribal citizens.</p>
<p>Sec. 2503</p>	<p>Wetland Reserve Easements</p>	<p>This provision directs USDA to support stewardship of wetland reserve easements by conducting regular assessment and monitoring, providing financial and technical assistance, and creating and executing 5-year stewardship plans. USDA can cover 100% of eligible costs. Among other changes, this provision also allows USDA to enter agreements with Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, among others, to carry out restoration, enhancement, maintenance, repair, and assessment of wetlands.</p>	<p>Sec. 2603 establishes a similar program for supporting stewardship of wetland reserve easements. The House Farm bill also includes a provision allowing USDA to evaluate Wetland Reserve easement applications from Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Rancher (SDFRs), which includes members of Indian Tribes, in a separate pool. This change may make applications from Tribal citizens more competitive.</p>

Sec. 2601	Establishment and Purposes	<p>The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) allows NRCS to form partnerships with producers, landowners, and communities to address natural resource concerns on agricultural land. This provision clarifies that RCPP can address the impacts of flooding and drought, in addition to improvements to flood resilience. While not specific to Tribes or Tribal producers, both are eligible to participate in RCPP and may benefit from this expanded scope.</p>	Similar or identical to Sec. 2801
Sec. 2603	Regional Conservation Partnership	<p>This provision aims to streamline the RCPP application process and sets a deadline of 180 days for USDA to review partnership agreements. It also clarifies that contributions from eligible partners may be used to satisfy cost-sharing requirements for non-USDA federal programs and non-federal programs, and that covered program authorities can be used in the implementation of an agreement. This provision allows USDA to give priority to projects that build new partnerships with local, State, Tribal and private entities. Previously, Tribes were not included as partners in these priority projects.</p> <p>Tribes and Native producers may benefit from streamlined development of agreements as well as the ability to use RCPP contributions as the non-federal cost-share in other programs. Burdensome and slow review processes and cost-share requirements are often barriers to participation for Tribes.</p>	Sec. 2803 also requires USDA to streamline the RCPP application process and sets deadlines of 180 days to review agreements. Unlike the Senate version though, the House version also requires USDA to ensure payments to partners are made within 30 days. The House bill does not add partnerships with Tribes to the priority project criteria.
Sec. 2604	Assistance to Producers	<p>Among other changes, this provision would newly allow USDA to make advance payments to producers and partners under an RCPP agreement.</p> <p>While this provision is not specific to Tribes or Native producers, both may benefit from advance payments. Currently, the high up-front costs of implementing conservation projects and the wait for reimbursement can be challenging for Tribes and Native producers, who are often resource limited. Advance payments may make it easier for these producers to participate in RCPP without upfront capital.</p>	Sec. 2805(c) authorizes advance payments for RCPP, among other changes.

Sec. 2605	Funding	<p>This provision caps the federal cost share for any one RCPP project to \$15 million. This provision also allows USDA to provide payments for indirect costs at 10% to 15%. Previously, USDA did not provide any payments for administrative costs. This change may help Tribes with the costs of administering RCPP agreements; however the cap on the federal cost share may limit the size of projects or shift more costs to Tribes.</p>	Sec. 2805 authorizes USDA to reimburse up to 10% for administrative expenses. The House bill does not include the cap on federal contribution.
Sec. 2606	Critical Conservation Areas	<p>This provision expands priority resource concerns to include wildlife habitat connectivity and wildlife migration corridors. While not Tribal specific, conservation of wildlife habitat migration corridors is critical for the protection of species that are culturally important, are relied on for subsistence, or that Tribes have treaty-protected rights to hunt.</p>	Similar or identical to Sec. 2807
Sec. 2701	Forest Conservation Easement	<p>This provision establishes a new Forest Conservation Easement Program. Under the new program, eligible forest land can be enrolled in either the Forest Land Easement program or the Forest Reserve Easement program. Eligible land, among other types, includes private forest land and forest land held by a Tribe, including individual and Tribal trust land, restricted fee land, fee land held by an Indian Tribe, land held by a Native corporation, land held by Alaska Native Corporations (ANCs), and land that is subject to the use, occupancy, and benefits of an Indian Tribe.</p> <p>The Forest Land Easement Program assists the forest landowner with conserving and protecting natural resources while allowing the forest to be used for economic purposes, as long as it is consistent with a forest management plan. The federal cost share for purchasing a Forest Land Easement Program is 50% unless the land is owned by a socially disadvantaged forest landowner or is a special environmental significance, in which case the max federal cost-share is 75%.</p> <p>The Forest Reserve Easement Program allows the USDA to purchase easements or other interests in land to protect its natural resources,</p>	Similar or identical to Sec. 2701

		endangered species, and forest character, while allowing the landowner to continue using the land for economic purposes consistent with the forest reserve easement plan. Tribes uniquely have the option to enter 30-year contracts with USDA, rather than an easement, allowing them to receive compensation without encumbering the land. 30-year contracts are paid between 50-75% of the payment for a permanent easement.	
Sec. 2801	Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act	<p>Among other changes, this provision rewrites the definition of "local organizations" who are eligible to receive assistance for watershed protection and flood prevention to be easier to read but does not meaningfully change the definition. It still includes Indian Tribes and Tribal Organizations, among others, as local organizations.</p> <p>This provision also directs USDA to provide State Conservationists with the authority to approve watershed projects, allows for variation in construction and engineering standards by State Technical Committees, and increases the total federal contribution from a maximum of \$25 million to \$50 million. The delegation of authority may help speed up the review and approval process for watershed projects, while the increased federal contribution may help Tribes/Tribal organizations take on larger projects.</p>	No equivalent provision. Sec. 2403 also amends the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act programs but makes very different changes. The provision expands eligible projects to include repairs for accelerated deterioration of projects, projects that aren't meeting their expected service life, and damage from extreme storms. It also increases the federal cost share for these types of rehabilitation projects to 90% from 65%.
Sec. 2802	Emergency Conservation Programs	<p>Among other changes, this provision expands the use of the Emergency Conservation Program beyond fence replacement to include other emergency measures to replace or restore farmland or conservation structures. It also increases advance payments from 25% to 75% for fence and structure replacement and to 50% for repair and restoration. It ensures damage caused by the spread of wildfires by natural causes, even if the wildfire is not started by a natural cause, is covered as well as damage caused by fires caused by the Federal Government. The provision expands eligibility for the Emergency Conservation Program to include producers operating on federal or state lands through permits or leases.</p>	<p>Sec. 2404 in the House version makes the same changes for advance payments and wildfire eligibility to ECP but does not expand eligible costs beyond fencing or expand eligibility to producers operating on federal or state lands through permits or leases.</p> <p>Sec. 2405 also expands the emergency Watershed Program to include enhancing hydrological function and to</p>

		<p>This section also makes changes to the Emergency Watershed Program, which provides technical and financial assistance to address threats to life and property caused by natural disasters in a watershed. The section expands the eligible purposes for acquiring a floodplain easement under the program to include restoring and enhancing hydrological function, conserving natural values, and safeguard against flooding, drought and erosion. It also allows USDA to go beyond what's necessary to address imminent threats to the watershed and do longer-term restoration if it improves the long-term health of the watershed and reduces likelihood of additional impairments.</p> <p>Finally, this section expands the Emergency Forest Restoration Program, which helps non-industrial forest owners restore forest health after a natural disaster. The section expands eligible entities to include producers who hold leases or permits for grazing on federal or state land and authorizes advance payments of up to 75%.</p> <p>While these programs are not specific to Tribes or Tribal producers, natural disaster responses like repair or replacement of fencing and structures are a significant cost and barrier for Tribal producers to implement or continue conservation practices such as rotational grazing. In addition, many Tribal producers do not have the upfront capital or cash flow to repair or replace fencing and structures on a reimbursement basis, which may lead to decreased Tribal participation in ECP. Tribal leaders and others have long advocated for shifting federal assistance to an upfront payment rather than reimbursement to increase access.</p>	<p>go beyond what's necessary to address imminent threats if it improves long-term health of the watershed.</p> <p>Sec. 8508 authorizes advanced payments for the Emergency Forest Restoration Program but does not extend assistance to producers holding permits or leases on state or federal land.</p>
Sec. 2805	State Conservation Assistance	This provision establishes a new program to assist eligible States and Indian Tribes with implementing conservation assistance programs to improve soil health, wildlife habitat, or other local resource concerns	Sec. 2302 in the House bill establishes a State Assistance Program for Soil Health. The program is largely identical to the Senate version but focused solely

		<p>on agricultural lands that are broadly consistent with the conservation principles of NRCS.</p> <p>To be eligible to apply, an Indian Tribe must be implementing a new or existing conservation assistance program in an area under their jurisdiction, and meeting or exceeding their own standards for performance. The competitive grants can be used for technical assistance, financial assistance, on-farm research and demonstration, education, outreach, and training, monitoring and evaluation, and other activities deemed appropriate by USDA.</p> <p>While the federal cost share for states is 50% (up to \$5 million), the federal cost share for Tribes is 75% (also up to \$5 million). If a Tribe or a State is found to be non-compliant with the terms of their grant, they can be prohibited from participation for a year.</p> <p>The program is funded at \$50 million per fiscal year from FY27 to FY31.</p> <p>The increased federal cost share for Tribes will likely be beneficial, given Tribes are often resource limited and their agricultural lands may have poor soil health, historical pollution, and contamination. Because the federal contribution is capped at \$5 million, regardless of cost share, though, Tribal projects may ultimately be smaller than State projects. A Tribe can choose to be incorporated into a State's application, but would not then benefit from the increased cost share.</p>	<p>on soil health improvements. The House bill provides twice the funding at \$100 million per fiscal year.</p>
--	--	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Title III – Trade

Sec.	Section title	Description and analysis	Comparison to House Farm Bill
------	---------------	--------------------------	-------------------------------

Sec. 3204	Agricultural Trade Promotion and Facilitation	<p>Among other changes, this provision significantly increases funding for the Market Access Program (MAP) and Foreign Market Development (FMD) program. MAP funding is increased from \$200 million to \$421 million in FY27 and then \$437 million through FY31. FMD is increased from \$34.5 million to \$73.5 million in FY27 and then \$75.5 million through FY31.</p> <p>While MAP and FMD are not specific to Tribes and Tribal producers, these programs are critical for developing international markets for Tribes and Tribal producers. Using funding from MAP, for example, the American Indian Foods (AIF) program at the Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) supports Tribal producers and agribusinesses in attending international trade shows and trade visits, facilitating new purchasing agreements.</p>	<p>Sec. 3201(c) increases funding for MAP to \$400 million in FY27 and then \$410 million through FY31.</p> <p>FMD funding is increased to \$70.5 million FY27 and then \$82 million through FY31.</p>
Sec. 3402	Report on International Shrimp Trade	<p>This provision directs GAO to analyze the Secretary's authority for shrimp and other seafood products, access to financial support for shrimp and other seafood producers, and ways to facilitate inter-agency coordination around common goals for shrimp and other seafood producers.</p> <p>While this provision is not specific to Tribal producers, there has historically been limited support from USDA on seafood production. Identifying opportunities for USDA to support domestic production of seafood and international trade opportunities may indirectly benefit Tribal seafood producers.</p>	Similar or identical to Sec. 3312

Title IV - Nutrition

Sec.	Section title	Description and analysis	Comparison to House Farm Bill
Sec. 4101	Food Distribution	The Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) includes a program for the USDA to purchase traditional, locally, and	Sec. 4113 reauthorizes the Traditional and Locally and Regionally-Grown

	<p>Program on Indian Reservations</p>	<p>regionally grown foods for FDPIR participants. Where feasible, at least 50% of food purchased under this program should be produced by Tribal producers. This provision reauthorizes the program but does not increase the authorization of appropriations, which has been set at \$5 million since 2008 despite significant increases in the cost of foods.</p> <p>This provision also makes several changes to FDPIR and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) to address supply chain disruptions and increase consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires USDA to consult with Tribes and Tribal organizations prior to evaluating new warehouse and distribution contracts for FDPIR, and to consider Tribal feedback throughout the evaluation process. • Requires USDA to designate an emergency contractor within 45 days if the Secretary determines there has been a supply chain disruption for CSFP or FDPIR, including those caused by a warehousing issue • In the event of a supply chain disruption for FDPIR, authorizes the Secretary to provide direct payments to FDPIR ITOs to purchase certain foods. The total amount of these direct payments must not exceed the amount USDA would otherwise expend for each ITO during the same time under the food distribution program. • Requires USDA to conduct annual consultations with Tribes/ITOs on CSFP and to implement CSFP in a way that is responsive to the needs of Tribes. • Encourages State agencies to consult with Tribes prior to making changes to CSFP State Plans and requires USDA to provide technical assistance to States on proper consultation practices. 	<p>Food Fund in FDPIR, but does not include the other changes.</p>
--	---------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------

		<p>Some of these provisions while well-intentioned may create issues for both the USDA and Tribes during the bidding process for new warehouse contractors. Direct review of bids by non-federal actors may open USDA to bid protests under federal acquisitions law, and potentially conflict a Tribal entity out of a bid opportunity.</p> <p>Additionally, this provision still does not give USDA direct access to broader emergency authorities that it could have used to support Tribes during the 2024 supply chain crisis. If passed into law, however, a future Tribal consultation could give space for Tribes and USDA officials, including someone from the USDA Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP), to discuss how to implement these provisions in a way that values Tribal input but keeps bid options open for Tribal entities and avoids a situation where a bid protest and litigation would slow down the award of a warehouse contract, which would be harmful for FDPIR, CSFP, and all of the households that rely on these programs.</p>	
Sec. 4107	Staffing Flexibility	<p>This provision newly allows State agencies to contract out SNAP certification or other limited functions if the State is unable to process SNAP applications in a timely manner due to pandemics, seasonal workforce cycles, temporary staffing shortages, weather or natural disasters; or if the State experiences an increase in SNAP applications.</p> <p>Contractors are explicitly prohibited from determining eligibility, initiating enforcement actions, conducting quality control, conducting administrative hearings, or screening for or making referrals to an employment or training program.</p> <p>The impact of this change on Tribal citizens participating in SNAP is unclear. On the one hand, during the COVID-19 pandemic, State agencies were overwhelmed by a surge in SNAP applications. Flexibility to temporarily hire contractors to conduct limited aspects of the SNAP certification process likely would have been helpful to</p>	Sec. 4103 provides similar staffing flexibility for SNAP. The House bill, however, does not include the same guardrails on contractor activities.

		<p>States. In Indian Country in particular, Tribal citizens may need to travel long distances to enroll with state SNAP offices. Online applications, while helpful, may not reach Indian Country due to lack of access to broadband internet. Contractors with experience working in Indian Country or who are located in Indian Country or other rural and remote areas may be more accessible to Tribal citizens.</p> <p>However, USDA has noted that the use of private contractors has led to "difficulties that led to systematic failures" and other efforts to privatize SNAP administration have not been successful. It's unclear if the guardrails included in this provision are sufficient to safeguard SNAP enrollment; for example, while contractors cannot determine eligibility, it is unclear if a contractor could conduct interviews, pursue missing information in applications, or provide application assistance — actions that could impact a household's eligibility determination. It is also unclear how contractors would be educated on the need to work directly with Tribes to ensure no accidental dual enrollment of households participating in FDPIR, or how contractors would issue de-certification letters to Tribal households wishing to leave SNAP and join FDPIR instead. This could create a serious problem for Tribal households trying to switch between programs, which is not an unusual circumstance in Indian Country. Further, due to upcoming increases in cost-sharing requirements for SNAP administration and benefits, States may be forced to rely on lower-cost contractors and may not have the resources or capacity to effectively train and oversee these contractors.</p>	
Sec. 4111	The Emergency Food Assistance Program	This provision reauthorizes infrastructure grants for the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) through 2031 but does not increase the authorization of appropriations. The authorization of appropriations has remained flat at \$15 million per fiscal year since FY2008, despite significant increases in the infrastructure such as cold storage. The provision also extends TEFAP to 2031. While TEFAP is not specific to Tribes or Tribal citizens, food insecurity among Tribal communities is	Similar or identical to Sec. 4112

		significantly higher than the national average and many rely on TEFAP.	
Sec. 4201	Delivering for Rural Seniors	<p>This provision creates a pilot program for home delivery of Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) food packages in rural areas. USDA will allocate funding through a competitive grant process to administering ITOs and State agencies. Agencies will distribute those funds to local and distributing agencies for transportation, home delivery, staffing, and outreach costs.</p> <p>Home delivery may particularly benefit older Tribal citizens who lack access to a vehicle. According to a 2016 Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) report, 31% of FDPIR participants lack access to a vehicle. However, less than a dozen Tribes administer CSFP currently.</p>	Similar or identical to Sec. 4202(3)
Sec. 4203	Commodity Supplemental Food Program	<p>This provision reauthorizes the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) which provides foods to low-income older adults.</p> <p>While not specific to Tribes, CSFP provides funding for both state agencies and Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs) to distribute food packages.</p>	Similar or identical to Sec. 4202(1) and (2)
Sec. 4301	Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program	This provision extends authorization for the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program through 2031 and incorporates tree nuts. While not specific to Tribes, the program provides funding to both Tribes and states to provide low-income seniors with access to locally grown fruits, vegetables, honey herbs, and tree nuts.	Sec 4201 adds tree nuts and maple syrup to the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program.
Sec. 4303	Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program Reauthorization	This provision reauthorizes and modifies the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP), an incentive program accessible to Tribes and States to assist low-income people with purchasing and accessing fruits and vegetables. While not specific to Tribes and Tribal members, this provision, among other changes, modifies the program to allow USDA to waive a 50% cost share requirement in areas with persistent poverty, and expands foods	Sec. 4303 of the House Farm Bill reauthorizes GusNIP and includes the cost-share waiver but does not expand the produce prescription program from fresh fruits and vegetables to all forms of fruits, vegetables, and legumes.

		<p>eligible for prescription from just “fresh fruits and vegetables” to all forms of fruits, vegetables, and legumes.</p> <p>For rural and remote areas of Indian Country where fresh fruits and vegetables may not be readily available, this expanded definition could increase the reach and utility of produce prescriptions.</p>	
Sec. 4305	Dietary Guidelines	<p>Among other changes, this provision prohibits the USDA from including information on taxation, social welfare, purchases under Federal feeding programs, food and agriculture production practices, food labeling, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, culture, or nutrition regulations in updates to the Dietary Guidelines of America. As a result, differences in access to food among Tribal communities and culturally relevant information will not be included in future updates.</p>	Similar or identical to Sec. 4308
Sec. 4306	Strengthening Local Food Security Program	<p>This provision establishes a new, non-competitive program for the USDA to enter into cooperative agreements with Tribal and State agencies to purchase locally produced and minimally processed foods for distribution to the local community. At least 51% of purchased foods must be from small-sized producers, mid-sized producers, beginning farmers or ranchers, or veteran farmers. Funds can also be used to provide technical assistance to support local producers, including with obtaining food safety training, and to support growth of the local agricultural value chain. Ten percent of funds are set aside for Tribal governments and will be allocated via a funding formula.</p> <p>The program is modeled on the Local Food Purchasing Agreement program (LFPA) established under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and terminated in 2025. Over 90 Tribes participated in LFPA. However, unlike LFPA, this program does not include a requirement to purchase foods from socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers (SDFRs). The provision authorizes \$200 million in appropriations per fiscal year, a significant decrease from LFPA: Tribes received</p>	Section 4306 establishes a similar program, but specifies only 25%, not 51%, of food must be purchased from small- and mid-sized producers, beginning farmers or ranchers, or veteran producers.

		\$128,404,183 through LFPA , or 64% of the appropriation this new program would offer to all Tribes and States combined.	
--	--	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--

Title V – Credit

Sec.	Section title	Description and analysis	Comparison to House Farm Bill
5101	Extension of Credit to Businesses Providing Services to Producers or Harvesters of Aquatic Products	Currently, the Farm Credit System only provides loans to farmers, ranchers, producers or harvesters of aquatic products, persons furnishing farm-related services, and owners of rural homes. This provision would expand eligibility to persons who furnish aquatic producer services to producers or harvesters of aquatic products. Seafood production and harvesting often has high capital costs, and Tribal seafood producers and harvesters often have limited access to capital.	Similar or identical to Sec. 5501 in the House bill
5103	Support for Rural Water Systems	This provision authorizes the bank for cooperatives (CoBank) to make loans and provide technical assistance for entities operating facilities managing wastewater or producing electricity. Access to capital remains challenging in Indian Country. According to the Native CDFI Network, 86% of Native communities lack a financial institution. At the same time, according to Native News Online, more than 50% of Native households lack access to clean drinking water and sanitation. Allowing CoBank, one of the largest providers of credit in rural America, to make loans on wastewater disposal and electricity generation may benefit Native communities.	Sec. 5503 in the House bill makes similar changes but would also authorize CoBank to make loans and technical assistance for telecom facilities.
Sec. 5104	Financing for Essential Rural Community Facilities	This provision would allow Farm Credit System banks to provide loans and technical assistance for developing, building, maintaining, or providing other supports for essential community facilities in rural areas or Tribal areas. Applicants must be a public or private non-profit entity. Tribal areas are defined as areas under the jurisdiction of an	Sec. 5107 in the House bill also authorizes Farm Credit System banks to provide loans and technical assistance for essential community facilities projects. The House

		<p>Indian Tribe. Community facilities in Tribal areas do not need to demonstrate rurality to be eligible for a loan.</p> <p>This provision would significantly expand access to capital for essential community facilities in Tribal areas, such community centers, healthcare facilities, childcare facilities, and more. Currently, community facility loans are only offered through USDA Rural Development, which may not have the capacity or loan authority to meet Tribal needs. Tribes may also be unable to finance essential community facilities through traditional commercial banks due to their lack of presence in rural and remote areas or higher interest rates.</p> <p>However, NCAIED and other Tribal organizations have long advocated to allow Native CDFIs to administer Rural Development funding, including the community facilities loan program. Native CDFIs are trusted partners in Indian Country with deep understanding of the unique challenges accessing credit for Native communities.</p>	<p>provision does not include a definition of Tribal areas, so projects in areas under Tribal jurisdiction may need to demonstrate rurality to be eligible.</p>
<p>Sec. 5201</p>	<p>Limitations on loan amounts</p>	<p>This provision increases the maximum loan amount for FSA farm ownership and farm operating loans and loan guarantees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The maximum farm ownership loan is increased to \$850,000 from \$600,000, and the maximum farm ownership loan guarantee is increased to \$3.5 million from \$1.75 million. • The maximum farm operating loan is increased to \$750,000 from \$400,000 and farm operating loan guarantees is increased to \$3 million from \$1.75 million. <p>These increases better reflect the actual costs of purchasing or operating a farm. However, without a concomitant increase in FSA's loan authority, these changes could result in fewer producers receiving loans. The FY27 House Agriculture Appropriations bill cuts FSA Direct Farm Ownership Loan funding to \$1.24 billion, a cut of over</p>	<p>Sec. 5105 in the House bill increases loan limits for farm ownership loans but not farm operating loans. Farm ownership loans are increased to the same amount as the Senate bill.</p>

		50%. While the committee increased the FSA Farm Ownership Guaranteed Loan funding to \$4.6 billion, an increase of 33%, Native producers may benefit less from loan guarantee changes due to the lack of access to traditional financial institutions.	
5204	Down Payment Loan Program	<p>This provision eliminates the \$300,150 cap on the Beginning Farmer Down Payment Loan program. Instead, the maximum loan size is the lesser of 45% of the purchase price of a farm OR 45% of the appraised value of the farm, up to the maximum value of a regular Direct Farm Ownership Loan.</p> <p>Equalizing the Beginning Farmer Down Payment loan amount and the Direct Farm Ownership Loan amount was a 2024 recommendation from the USDA Tribal Advisory Committee. The change better reflects the increased cost of land and may make it easier for beginner farmers and ranchers to acquire farms.</p>	Similar or identical to Sec. 5108 of the House bill
5207	Support for Resolving Ownership and Succession Issues Relating to Farmland	Among other changes, this provision establishes a new program for eligible entities to provide legal or accounting services to underserved heirs to resolve heirs' property issues with farmland, forest land, or land transitioning into agriculture. An underserved heir is defined as an heir with a household income below a certain threshold, an heir whose property is in a persistent poverty area or a socially vulnerable area, an heir who is a veteran, or an heir who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group, which could include Tribal citizens. Eligible entities would assist heirs with resolving heirs' property issues at no cost to the heir. The section authorizes \$60 million in annual appropriations for the program.	Similar or identical to Sec. 5109 of the House bill
Sec. 5208	Limitation on Microloan Amounts	This provision increases the maximum FSA microloan from \$50,000 to \$100,000, which may better reflect the actual cost of establishing or operating a farm or ranch. This change was recommended in the 2024 USDA Tribal Advisory Committee report.	Similar or identical to Sec. 5203 of the House bill

Sec. 5210	Refinancing of Guaranteed Loans into Direct Loans	This provision would authorize FSA to refinance distressed guaranteed loans into direct loans. A borrower with a guaranteed loan may be eligible to refinance if they do not have positive cash flow, have tried to work with the lender but were unsuccessful, have defaulted on the loan and have been notified of pending foreclosure or liquidation, and have a reasonable chance for success. This change was recommended in the 2024 USDA Tribal Advisory Committee report.	Similar or identical to Sec. 5103 of the House bill
Sec. 5211	Pilot Projects for Preapproval of Direct Farm Ownership Loans	<p>This provision establishes a pilot program for FSA to pre-approve or pre-qualify certain producers for FSA loans using financial benchmarks and a streamlined loan assessment process.</p> <p>Native producers operating on trust land often face significant delays obtaining FSA loans. Tribal producers must often wait on BIA to obtain title status reports and appraisals, and FSA loan officers may not be familiar with paperwork submitted by Tribes. An expedited process to pre-approve or pre-qualify producers may help ensure producers have timely access to credit, but unless the pilot specifically considers the unique challenges of accessing credit on trust land, the pilot program may not benefit Indian Country.</p>	Similar or identical to Sec. 5111 of the House bill
Sec. 5212	Definition of Qualified Beginning Farmer Or Rancher	This provision strikes a requirement that members, stockholders, partners, joint operators, or owners of a legal entity must be related by blood or marriage for the entity to qualify as a beginning farmer or rancher. All other requirements remain. This change was recommended by the 2024 USDA Tribal Advisory Committee report.	Similar or identical to Sec. 5508(i) of the House bill
Sec. 5216	Farm Operating Loans for Commercial Fishing	This amendment would make individuals engaged in commercial fishing or fish processing eligible for Farm Operating Loans through the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Operating loans can be used for acquiring, operating, or maintaining a commercial fishing vessel. This amendment could increase access to capital for Tribes and Native fishers.	Sec.12420 of the House bill made commercial fishers and fish processing facilities eligible for both FSA operating and ownership loans. The Senate provision is limited to commercial fishers and operating loans.

Sec. 5303	Loan Fund Set-Asides	FSA currently reserves 50% of FSA operating and ownership loans for beginning farmers and ranchers through Sept. 1 and two-thirds of farm ownership loans for the downpayment program through April 1. This provision extends those set asides through 2031 but provides flexibility to FSA to use set-aside funds for other producers prior to the April 1 or Sept. 1 deadline. This change was recommended by the 2024 USDA Tribal Advisory Committee report.	Sec. 5403 extends the 50% operating loan fund set aside but does not provide flexibility to FSA to use set-asides prior to the deadlines.
Sec. 5304	Temporary Prohibition of Loans to Borrowers that Have Received Debt Forgiveness	This provision would allow borrowers who have previously received debt forgiveness for a loan or loan guarantee to be eligible for FSA loans after seven years. Previously, borrowers who received debt forgiveness from FSA were indefinitely prohibited from accessing FSA loans. This change was recommended by the 2024 USDA Tribal Advisory Committee report.	No equivalent provision.

Title VI – Rural Development

Sec.	Section title	Description and analysis	Comparison to House Farm Bill
Sec. 6101	Streamlining Broadband Authorities	<p>The ReConnect Program provides broadband access to rural communities. In March 2024, the Federal Communications Commission updated its broadband standards, designating the minimum speed for 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload. This legislation codifies the ReConnect Program, updates the program to reflect these new standards, and authorizes funding for communities to establish adequate infrastructure.</p> <p>The provision also changes the funding target from areas with a minimum of 50% of households lacking access to broadband infrastructure to areas</p>	<p>Sec. 6201 of the House bill also codifies the ReConnect Program but differs significantly in prioritization criteria and other program details.</p> <p>The House authorizes \$350 million in appropriations, considerably more than the Senate version.</p>

		<p>with 90% lacking access. This change may help target funds to the most in-need areas, which may benefit more rural and remote reservations.</p> <p>The legislation authorizes \$100 million in appropriations through FY31. The legislation does not include a Tribal set-aside.</p> <p>According to the Gaining Ground report on Farm Bill priorities in Indian Country, 35% of individuals living on Tribal lands lack access to broadband internet. Tribal projects have struggled to compete against larger, more resourced projects. Without a Tribal set-aside in the ReConnect Program and other Rural Development programs, Tribes may continue to struggle to compete for funds despite significant need for broadband investments in Indian Country.</p>	<p>Among other differences, the House legislation also explicitly includes Indian Tribes as eligible grant recipients and provides secondary priority for projects that would serve geographically underserved and distressed areas, which will likely include many Tribal areas, and to projects that are developed in partnership among local organizations, including Tribal governments. While the House bill does not include a Tribal set-aside, it provides considerably more funding and uses prioritization criteria that will likely benefit Tribes.</p>
Sec. 6104	Last Mile Broadband Deployment/ Last Acre	<p>This provision establishes a new program, The Last Acre program, to provide grants and loans to farmers and ranchers to deploy broadband services on their farmland, enabling precision agriculture. Limited resource farmers and ranchers are eligible for an enhanced cost share of 90%, compared to the usual 80%. Among other criteria, priority is provided to projects in remote areas, which may assist Tribal producers in more rural and remote areas. \$25 million is authorized to be appropriated to this program every year through 2031.</p>	<p>No equivalent provision</p>
Sec. 6201	Water, Waste Disposal, and Wastewater Facility Grants	<p>This section increases the amount of funds that Tribes, among others, can receive for projects related to the development, storage, treatment, purification, or distribution of water, or the collection, treatment, or disposal of waste, in rural areas. The maximum financing amount is increased from \$200,000 to \$500,000.</p>	<p>Sec. 6401 of the House bill reauthorizes Water, Waste Disposal, and Wastewater Facility Grants but does not increase the maximum financing amount or authorization of appropriations.</p>
Sec. 6202	SEARCH Grants	<p>This provision allows in-kind contributions to meet the non-federal cost share of the Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and</p>	<p>No equivalent provision</p>

		<p>Households (SEARCH) Grant. This grant assists very small, financially distressed rural communities with pre-development steps for a water or waste disposal project.</p> <p>Tribes, among others, are eligible for the grant if they are located in a rural area with a population of 2,500 or less and median income below the poverty line or less than 80% of the statewide non-metropolitan household income. Cost-share requirements are often a barrier for Tribes. Allowing in-kind contributions may make it easier for Tribes to access these grants.</p>	
Sec. 6205	Rural Water and Wastewater Circuit Rider Program	The Circuit Rider Program provides tailored technical assistance to rural water systems through partnerships with local non-profits. This provision would allow the Circuit Rider Program to continue during a government shutdown and increases authorization of appropriations from \$25 million to \$30 million. It does not otherwise change the underlying statute, leaving the existing program structure intact.	Sec. 6402 of the House bill codifies the Circuit Rider program, establishing clear statutory requirements for the types of technical assistance and disaster assistance that Circuit Riders can provide. It establishes requirements that limit Circuit Rider activities to areas with 10,000 or fewer residents for technical assistance or 50,000 or fewer for disaster assistance and to serving public bodies, non-profits, or Indian Tribes. The House provision does not increase the authorization of appropriations.
Sec. 6207	Tribal College and University Community Facilities	This provision extends, but does not change, the Tribal College and University (TCU) Essential Community Facilities program. The authorization of appropriations for this program has been set at \$10 million since fiscal year 2008, despite inflation and significant increases in the cost of construction. This program is one of the few sources of federal funding for TCUs to improve educational facilities and purchase equipment. Flat funding this program continues the historical underinvestment in Indian higher education.	Similar or identical to Sec. 6404 of the House bill

Sec. 6209	Emergency Preparedness and Response Technical Assistance Program	This provision establishes a new emergency preparedness and response technical assistance program to support communities, including Indian Tribes, with preparing, restoring, and protecting critical water and wastewater services in response to manmade or natural disasters. While the program does not specifically mention Tribes, eligible activities include supporting disadvantaged communities with addressing significant health, safety, and sanitary concerns with water and wastewater systems.	No equivalent provision
Sec. 6210	Assistance to Provide Water and Wastewater Services in Financially Distressed Rural Areas	This provision establishes a new program to provide financial and technical assistance to distressed rural water and wastewater systems that are unable to provide services in rural areas that are low-income or economically distressed. While not specific to Tribes, this program may benefit Tribes located in eligible areas.	No equivalent provision
Sec. 6213	Additional Assistance for Rural Water Systems	<p>This provision would allow USDA to award grants, zero percent or one-percent interest loans, loan forgiveness, or refinancing to rural water systems in disadvantaged or economically distressed communities.</p> <p>To determine eligibility for assistance, USDA will establish an indicator of water service affordability in each State, local, or geographic area or establish factors related to disadvantaged or economically distressed areas. The provision does not explicitly direct USDA to consider Tribal areas separately from other jurisdictions. Access to water and wastewater services on Indian reservations may not be adequately reflected in state-based or county-based data. Tribal communities often have a lower median income than surrounding communities and pay higher rates for basic services.</p>	Sec. 6403 of the House bill makes similar changes, though it does not authorize grants. Eligibility requirements are also different. Rather than create an indicator of water service affordability, the House bill would make rural water systems that are (1) in socially disadvantaged communities, persistent poverty counties, colonias, or distressed tribal areas or (2) facing an economic hardship eligible for assistance. By specifically including distressed tribal areas in the program, the House provision could make it easier for Tribal rural water systems to receive

			assistance, compared to the Senate provision.
Sec. 6214	Water Systems for Rural and Native Villages in Alaska	This program reauthorizes the Water Systems for Rural and Native Villages in Alaska program and expands eligible uses to include community-based systems. It also adds a requirement to consult with the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, in addition to the State of Alaska. This program provides funding to the State of Alaska, Alaska Native Corporations, and Native Villages to provide development and construction of water and wastewater systems in rural or Native villages. The authorization of appropriations for the program has been flat at \$30 million since 2008, despite inflation and significant increases in the cost of construction.	Sec. 6406 of the House bill reauthorizes the program but makes no changes.
Sec. 6215	Rural Decentralized Water Systems	The Rural Decentralized Water Systems Program provides grants to non-profits who then provide loans and subgrants to low-income households for the construction, refurbishing, and servicing of individual household water well systems and individually owned household decentralized wastewater systems in rural areas. This provision expands eligibility for the program to individuals making up to 100% the median income of the area, up from the current level of 60%. It also increases the maximum subgrant or loan from \$15,000 to \$25,000. The provision also allows Indian Tribes, in addition to non-profits, to receive grants for regranteeing or lending to individuals.	Sec. 6407 of the House Bill also expands eligibility for the program, but only to individuals making up to 80% of the area's median income, compared to the Senate's 100%. It increases the maximum subgrant to \$20,000, compared to the Senate's \$25,000. Among other differences, the House provision does not make Indian Tribes eligible for grants for regranteeing or lending but adds water quality testing as an eligible expense.
Sec. 6216	Healthy Drinking Water Affordability Assistance Program	This provision establishes a new Healthy Drinking Water Affordability Assistance Program to provide grants for water quality testing and purchasing, installing, and maintaining water filtration systems for homeowners, renters, and licensed child-care facilities in rural areas. While the grant program is not specific to Tribes, Tribal communities are at higher risk of water contamination. Sustained federal investment is	No equivalent provision

		needed for long-term solutions to water and wastewater challenges in Indian Country. In the interim, assistance purchasing home-use water filtration systems may be helpful.	
Sec. 6217	Solid Waste Management Grants	This provision newly makes Indian Tribes eligible for Solid Waste Management Grants. Previously only local and regional governments and related agencies were eligible. This provision also increases the authorization of appropriations from \$10 million to \$20 million.	Sec. 6409 of the House bill also expands eligibility to Indian Tribes but does not increase the authorization of appropriations.
Sec. 6230	Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program	The Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program provides grants and loans to support rural microenterprises. The program operates by offering loans to Microenterprise Development Organizations (MDO) which then issue grants or loans to microentrepreneurs. Tribes, among others, are authorized to be MDOs. This provision amends the program by increasing the maximum microloan to microenterprises from \$50,000 to \$75,000. It also clarifies that MDOs can use federal funds to cover 100% of a microloan made to a microenterprise. Access to capital is a major challenge for Native producers and agribusinesses. The increased loan limit and federal cost share may help Native business owners better access this program.	Sec. 6422 also increases the microloan limit and allows MDOs to use federal funds to cover 100% of a microloan. However, the House version also reduces the matching requirement for MDOs making grants from 15% to 5% if the MDO is serving a persistent poverty county.
Sec. 6232	Strategic Community Investment Plans	This provision modifies the Strategic Community Investment Plan to authorize technical assistance grants. The Strategic Community Investment Plan program supports rural communities in economic development, planning, assessment, and implementation. Priority for technical assistance grants are given to organizations who serve Indian Tribes with demonstrated support from the Tribe's leadership, among others.	Sec. 6424 of the House bill reauthorizes the program but makes no changes.
Sec. 6234	Rural Development Innovation Center	This provision codifies the Rural Development Innovation Center and tasks it with, among other tasks, reviewing RD programs and identifying inefficiencies, redundancies, and barriers to access, including consulting with private and public stakeholders, and implementing improvements.	Sec. 6307 of the House bill also codifies the Rural Development Innovation Center but also directs it to establish and regularly update a modernization plan to facilitate

		Tribal communities often face challenges accessing RD programs due to burdensome applications and/or program requirements that don't reflect the unique needs and challenges in Indian Country. The Center is not tasked with consulting with Tribes, but Tribal leaders may consider requesting a consultation to highlight challenges in Indian Country and opportunities for improvement.	innovations and improvements in administering RD programs.
Sec. 6301	Improving the Rural Care Economy Prioritizations	This provision establishes new priorities for the Distance Learning and Telemedicine program and for Rural Development loans. For the Distance Learning and Telemedicine program, projects that provide mental health or behavioral health services receive priority, in addition to the current priority for substance use disorder treatment and prevention. For RD Community Facilities loans and grants, projects supporting healthcare facilities, mental/behavioral health facilities, or childcare programs receive priority. Childcare facilities also receive priority for Rural Business programs. Childcare providers that are licensed or regulated by Indian Tribes are explicitly eligible for prioritization.	Sec. 6101 of the House bill establishes similar prioritizations for the Distance Learning and Telemedicine program and Community Facilities program, but adds maternal health in addition to mental and behavioral health. Sec. 630 of the House bill also establishes similar priority for childcare facilities.
Sec. 6302	Rural Hospital Revitalization Loans	This section authorizes zero-interest loans for rural hospitals for the construction of replacement hospital facilities or the improvement/renovation of existing facilities. While there is no direct Tribal reference, many hospitals in Indian Country would be eligible for this program.	No equivalent provision
Sec. 6311	Distance Learning and Telemedicine	The Distance Learning and Telemedicine program provides grants to rural communities to support broadband development for telemedicine and distance learning. Tribes are eligible for grants. Among other changes, this provision removes the fund matching requirement for entities with demonstrated need, and for Tribes.	Sec. 6102 of the House Farm Bill reauthorizes the program but does not make changes.
Sec. 6313	Rural Energy Savings Program	The Rural Energy Savings Program provides loans to rural utilities and other eligible entities to help rural families and small businesses implement cost-effective, energy-efficient measures. These measures include structural improvements, investments to increase energy efficiency, such as renewable energy and energy storage systems, and	Sec. 6301 of the House Farm Bill also adds Indian Tribes as eligible entities, among other changes.

		replacements and/or improvements of manufactured housing units. Among other changes, this provision would newly allow Indian Tribes to receive these loans.	
Sec. 6314	Interagency Task Force on Outdoor Recreation Coordination	This provision establishes a taskforce to review and make recommendations for improving federal programs and investments that support tourism and outdoor recreation in rural communities with an emphasis on rural communities in or around Federal lands. The provision does not define "Federal land", so Tribal lands may be implicated.	No equivalent provision
Sec. 6315	New, Mobile, and Expanded Meat and Poultry Processing and Rendering Grants	This provision establishes a new grant program for small and very small meat and poultry processors. Grants may be awarded to eligible entities (including Tribes and educational institutions) to incentivize new, innovative, or mobile enterprises to increase or improve local and regional meat or poultry processing and rendering, as well as permanent infrastructure for livestock and poultry to support humane slaughter practices. The grant funds may be used in any way that supports these business ventures, including the purchase of cold storage, by-products, and economic planning. The provision authorizes \$25 million in appropriations per year through FY31.	Sec. 6304 of the House bill establishes an identical grant program but only authorizes \$3 million in appropriations.

Title VII – Research and Extension

Sec.	Section title	Description and analysis	Comparison to House Farm Bill
Sec. 7107	Education Grants to Alaska Native Serving Institutions and Native Hawaiian	This provision increases the authorization of appropriations for Education Grants to Alaska Native Serving Institutions and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions from \$10 million to \$15 million each. The authorization of appropriations has not been increased since 2001, despite inflation and significant increases in costs.	Sec. 7107 reauthorizes the grants and establishes a new maximum grant length of five years. The provision does not increase the authorization of appropriations.

	Serving Institutions		
Sec. 7115	New Beginnings for Tribal Students	<p>The New Beginnings for Tribal Students program provides competitive grants to land-grant colleges/universities to support Tribal students. This support can be achieved through recruitment, tuition and related fees, experiential learning, and student services such as tutoring, counseling, academic advising, and other supports that may increase the retention and graduation rates of Tribal students enrolled at these institutions. States are limited to \$500,000 in grant funding per year.</p> <p>This provision reauthorizes but does not modify the program.</p>	Sec. 7115 of the House bill also reauthorizes the New Beginnings for Tribal Students program but also eliminates the \$500,000 per state cap. As a result, states with a high proportion of Tribal students may be able to secure more funding.
Sec. 7412	Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network	<p>The Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN) connects producers to stress-assistance programs to improve mental health awareness, literacy, and outcomes. Programs may include hotlines, support groups, training programs for advocates, and outreach services.</p> <p>This provision would allow grant recipients to establish referral relationships with local health clinics and hospitals to ensure producers are connected with mental/behavioral health services. This provision also increases the authorization of appropriations from \$10 million to \$15 million.</p>	Sec. 7402 of the House Farm Bill also includes language on referrals but does not increase appropriations. Unlike the Senate provision, it also directs USDA to report to Congress on the availability and usage of mental health services by producers and recommendations for improvement.
Sec. 7503	Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status of 1994	<p>This provision increases flexibility in the authorization of appropriations for Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs, also called 1994 Institutions). Previously, the authorization of appropriations for grants to TCUs was capped at \$100,000 times the number of TCUs. This provision removes the \$100,000 cap, potentially allowing Congress to pass increased appropriations for TCUs.</p> <p>In addition, this provision extends authorization for endowments for 1994 Institutions.</p>	Similar or identical to Sec. 7501 of the House bill

		Finally, this provision allows research grants to TCUs to be used for purchasing equipment and eliminates a requirement that research at TCUs be conducted through a cooperative agreement with ARS or with certain non-TCU institutes of higher education. Removing this provision allows TCUs to conduct research independently, like other land grant institutions.	
Sec. 7504	Report on the Extension Service Needs of Tribal Lands and Populations	This section requires the GAO to conduct a study of extension service needs for Tribal lands and populations, regardless of location. Extension programs on reservations are authorized under the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990. This study will examine whether the program objectives are being met. The GAO must submit their report to Congress within 60 days of completion. The report will include recommendations that, as the GAO determines, will result in a system in which the program's needs are met in "an equitable and effective manner." While it is positive that Congress is looking into access to extension services in Indian Country, this GAO study is duplicative. Congress held hearings in the late 1980s on the challenges in Indian agriculture that noted the lack of access to extension services in Indian Country. As a result, Congress created the Extension Indian Reservation Program in the 1990 Farm Bill to remedy the lack of extension services in Indian Country. Now called the Federally Recognized Tribe Extension Program (FRTEP), the program has never been fully funded by Congress. Today, just 35 of the 575 federally recognized Tribes have a FRTEP agent. By contrast, almost every county in the country has an extension office. FRTEP offices are expected to serve approximately 2,100 producers per agent ; county offices serve 226 producers per agent.	No equivalent provision

Title VIII – Forestry

Sec.	Section title	Description and analysis	Comparison to House Farm Bill
------	---------------	--------------------------	-------------------------------

Sec. 8211	Hazardous Fuel Reduction on Federal Lands	This provision reauthorizes the Hazardous Fuel Reduction on Federal Land program under the Healthy Forest Restoration program. Under Title I of the HFRA, USFS and BLM are legally required to facilitate collaboration with Tribes when preparing and prioritizing hazardous fuel reduction projects.	Similar or identical Sec. 8202 of the House bill
Sec. 8235	Water Source Protection Program	Among other changes, this provision expands funding, eligibility, and geographic scope for water and forest resilience projects under the Water Source Protection Program to include adjacent, non-federal lands, including explicitly Tribal lands. The provision also reduces the minimum non-federal cost share to 20% of the federal contribution and newly allows USDA to waive the cost-share. By recognizing Tribal lands as “adjacent,” supporting Good Neighbor Authority projects with Tribes, and requiring federal cooperation with non-federal partners, this provisions creates more opportunities for Tribes to access funding, participate in project design, and lead efforts addressing drought, wildfire, and watershed protection in their communities.	Sec. 8203 of the House bill makes similar changes but does not include "Tribal lands" in the definition of adjacent lands, does not reduce the non-federal cost-share, and does not increase the authorization of appropriations.
Sec. 8238	Modification of Good Neighbor Authority	This provision explicitly includes Tribes as eligible partners under Good Neighbor Authority, allows Tribes to retain revenue from timber sales for restoration projects, and allows funding to be used for new permanent roads in certain cases. The provision allows Tribes to participate more directly in forest restoration projects and reinvest revenue into critical infrastructure. This strengthens Tribal involvement in land management decisions and increases their ability to implement and benefit from forest health and restoration efforts on and near their lands.	Similar or identical to Sec. 8412 of the House bill
Sec. 8239	Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program	Among other changes, this provision increases funding for the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program and newly directs USDA to provide special consideration to projects that reduce wildfire risk and support ecological restoration, including on Tribal lands, while adding new requirements that shape how proposals are evaluated. The provision also increases the maximum funding for any one project to \$8 million from the current max of \$4 million. This creates opportunities for Tribes to compete for larger awards and align projects with federal priorities—	Sec. 8413 of the House bill makes similar changes but does not increase the maximum funding level for projects. The House version instead repeals a limit on the number of awards per fiscal year and allows up to 4 awards in any one National Forest System area per fiscal year.

		especially around watershed health, wildfire prevention, and ecosystem restoration that directly impact Tribal communities.	
Sec. 8240	Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership Program	Among other changes, this provision directs USDA to consider if a proposal supports priorities outlined in a Tribal integrated resource management plan or a Tribal forest management plan, in addition to state forest action plans, in evaluating and selecting a proposal. It expands program priorities to include wildfire recovery and soil and water improvements while formally incorporating Tribal forest and resource management plans into federal processes. It also increases accountability through regular reporting to Congress and the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs (SCIA), giving Tribes more visibility and influence in how projects are implemented and evaluated over time.	Sec. 8419 of the House bill reauthorizes the program and requires reporting every two years but makes no other changes.
Sec. 8501	White Oak Restoration Initiative Coalition	This section establishes a new national collaborative coalition for white oak restoration. The coalition explicitly includes Tribes, creating opportunities for Tribes to shape research, outreach, and land management efforts. This strengthens Tribal participation in cross-jurisdictional conservation work and helps ensure Tribal priorities are considered in restoring culturally and economically important forest resources.	Similar or identical to Sec. 8602 of the House bill
Sec. 8503	White Oak Regeneration and Upland Oak Habitat	This provision creates a coordinated, multi-level restoration program to coordinate white oak restoration priorities among Federal, State, and Tribal governments, among others. The provision requires Tribal consultation, and subject to appropriations, provides opportunities for grants and technical assistance. This gives Tribes a seat at the table in setting restoration priorities and provides new opportunities to secure funding and support for conserving culturally important white oak ecosystems.	Sec. 8604 of the House bill establishes a similar program but does not mandate consultation with Tribes.
Sec. 8504	Tree Nursery Shortages	This section directs USDA to develop a national reforestation strategy to increase the capacity of tree nurseries operated by Indian Tribes, among others. The national reforestation strategy is directed to consider Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). This creates opportunities for Tribes to influence how reforestation is implemented, increase capacity of	Similar or identical to Sec. 8605 of the House bill

		Tribal nurseries, and strengthen their role in addressing seedling shortages that impact forest restoration on Tribal and nearby lands.	
Sec. 8604	Tribal Forestry Protection Management	This provision significantly expands Tribal authorities to conduct forest restoration projects under the Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA). Previously, Tribes were limited to restoration projects on federal lands adjacent to Indian forest or rangeland. Under this provision, Tribes can conduct restoration projects on Indian forest and rangeland; on Alaska Native Corporation lands; and on Federal lands that are culturally, historically, geographically, or ecologically important to them. These changes promote Tribally led forest restoration efforts, including cultural burning and fuels reduction.	The House Farm Bill does not expand Tribal Forest Protection Act authorities. However, Sec. 8420 makes a technical change to make permanent the Tribal Forest Management Demonstration Project, which was included in the 2018 Farm Bill and allowed Tribes to enter 638 agreements to assume administrative, management, and other functions under TFPA. The Senate Farm Bill does not include this technical change, but because the Tribal Forest Management Demonstration Project does not have a sunset date, Tribes would still be eligible to enter 638 agreements.
Sec. 8605	Civilian Conservation Centers	This provision invests in workforce development for forestry and wildland firefighting while requiring consultation with Tribes, among others, to identify workforce needs. This creates opportunities for Tribal input in shaping training programs, expands career pathways for Tribal members, and helps build a workforce that can support forest management and wildfire response in Tribal and rural communities.	No equivalent provision

Title XI – Energy

No relevant provisions

Title X – Horticulture

Sec.	Section title	Description and analysis	Comparison to House Farm Bill
Sec. 10103	Local Agriculture Market Program	<p>This provision reauthorizes the Local Agriculture Market Program (LAMP), which provides support for direct producer-to-consumer sales, local and regional food markets, and value-added ag products. Among other changes, this provision would allow food hubs, in addition to farmers’ markets, roadside stands, direct-to-consumer marketing, and others, to access LAMP. It also adds regional food chain coordination as an allowable use. Finally, the provision directs USDA to solicit public input on streamlining the application and reporting process for LAMP.</p> <p>While LAMP is not specific to Tribes or Tribal producers, it's an important resource for helping producers bring products to market and engage in value-added processes. Simplifying the application process may benefit Tribal producers, who often have limited time and resources to complete complex applications and reporting.</p>	<p>Sec. 10102 of the House Bill makes similar changes to LAMP. Unlike the Senate bill, however, it does not require USDA to solicit public input on streamlining the application and the reporting process.</p> <p>In addition, the House provision allows LAMP funds to be used for purchasing special purpose equipment, which may be especially helpful for small Tribal food and agri-businesses lacking startup capital.</p>
Sec. 10104	Acer Access and Development Program	<p>The Acer Access and Development Program is a competitive grant program for promoting domestic maple syrup. This provision requires USDA to solicit input from the maple syrup industry on research and education priorities prior to any grant cycle. It also prohibits any cost-sharing requirements on grant recipients.</p> <p>Maple syrup and associated products are important traditional foods for many Tribes. Tribes and Tribal leaders may wish to offer input to the program, and USDA should consider directly soliciting input from Tribal stakeholders. Prohibiting any cost-share requirements may also benefit Tribes interested in the program, as Tribes often have limited non-federal resources to meet cost sharing requirements.</p>	<p>Sec. 10103 of the House bill reauthorizes the Acer Access and Development Program and establishes the same public input requirement. However, the House Bill does not prohibit cost-share requirements.</p>
Sec. 10111	Office of Urban Agriculture	<p>Among other changes, this provision expands the mission of the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production to include controlled-environment agriculture. It also directs the Office to support the use of the</p>	<p>Similar or identical to Sec. 10003 of the House bill</p>

	and Innovative Production	resources of USDA, State, Tribal, and local agencies to provide technical assistance for navigating business incorporation, local zoning, and other issues; promote conservation techniques unique to urban agriculture and innovative production; and assist with navigating Federal, State, Tribal, and local regulations. It also allows grant recipients, which include Tribes, to subgrant funds to urban and innovative producers. It also allows USDA to enter cooperative agreements with eligible entities, including Tribes, to promote urban and innovative agriculture. Finally, this provision makes permanent a pilot program to increase compost and reduce food waste and expands eligibility for projects to include Tribes.	
--	---------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--

Title XI – Crop Insurance

Sec.	Section title	Description and analysis	Comparison to House Farm Bill
Sec. 11001	Management of Corporation	Among other changes, this provision adds an underserved producer who is a beginner farmer or rancher to the FCIC Board of Directors. The definition of underserved producer includes socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, which includes Tribal citizens.	No equivalent provision
Sec. 11006	Crop Insurance Support for Beginning and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers	This provision extends the definition of a veteran farmer or rancher to a veteran who has farmed or ranched for less than 10 years, up from five years. The provision increases premium assistance for veteran farmers and ranchers: 15% subsidy for years 1 and 2, 13% for year 3, 11% for year 4, and 10% for years 5-10. Previously, veterans were eligible for a 10% subsidy for 5 years. This change may better support Tribal producers who are veterans to defray the cost of crop insurance. Tribal citizens serve in the armed forces at significantly higher rates than other groups.	Similar or identical Sec. 11007 of the House bill

Title XII – Miscellaneous

Sec.	Section title	Description and analysis	Comparison to House Farm Bill
Sec. 12110	Interstate Internet Sales of Certain State-Inspected Meat and Poultry	Currently, state-inspected meat and poultry products can only be sold in-state. This provision would allow state-inspected meat and poultry to be sold online across state lines if sales are direct to consumers and in normal retail quantities. This change may benefit smaller Tribal ranches that sell direct to consumers by expanding their market.	No equivalent provision.
Sec. 12504	Country of Origin Labeling for Cooked King Crab and Tanner Crab and Cooked and Canned Salmon	This provision establishes mandatory country-of-origin labeling (COOL) for cooked king crab and tanner crab and for cooked and canned salmon. Under this provision, only cooked king crab and tanner crab and cooked and canned salmon that is harvested and processed in the U.S. can be labeled as a product of the U.S. This new COOL requirement may increase transparency in these seafood products and benefit Tribal producers making these products.	No equivalent provision.
Sec. 12505	Establishment of Office of Seafood	This provision codifies the Office of Seafood at USDA. The Office is directed to improve coordination between USDA and other Federal, State, local, and non-governmental entities related to domestic harvesting, processing, and consumption of seafood. Among other activities, the Office is directed to coordinate seafood policies within USDA and with Commerce, FDA, and USTR; provide analysis and coordination of USDA and interagency activities for seafood; coordinate with FAS and ERS on integrating seafood into existing analyses of exports; and identify opportunities to integrate access for domestic seafood into USDA programs. The Office is also directed to consult with seafood harvesters and producers.	Sec. 12419 of the House bill also codifies the Office of Seafood but focuses its responsibilities on coordinating resources across USDA for fishers and working with other federal agencies to support domestic seafood.

		<p>Notably, the provision does not include coordination or consultation with Tribal Governments or coordination with the Office of Tribal Relations. As a result, the Office's work may not adequately address or include Tribal priorities and ensure inclusion of Tribal fishers and harvesters. NCAI recently passed Resolution #MEM-26-009 calling on USDA to consult with Tribes on the Office of Seafood and to ensure seafood programs serve the full spectrum of fishing operations, including Tribal operations.</p>	
Sec. 12506	Study and Report on Expanding Seafood Processing Capacity	<p>This provision directs USDA to conduct a study on improving domestic processing of U.S. caught or harvested seafood. The study would identify coastal communities whose economies depend on fishing, whose seafood processing infrastructure is insufficient to meet demand, and whose members support new or improved seafood processing facilities in their community. The study would also inventory existing Federal and state resources for facilitating expanding domestic processing of seafood.</p> <p>This provision could support the expansion of seafood processing facilities in coastal communities, but the provision does not explicitly direct USDA to consult with or identify coastal Tribes that rely on fishing. Many coastal Tribes rely heavily on seafood production for jobs, support for the local economy, sustenance, and for traditional and cultural practices.</p>	No equivalent provision.
Sec. 12511	Farming Opportunities Training and Outreach	<p>This provision reauthorizes the Farming Opportunities Training and Outreach program (FOTO), a program for coordinating outreach and training opportunities for beginning, veteran, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. While the program is not specific to Tribes, citizens of Tribal Nations are included in the definition of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.</p>	Sec. 7210 of the House bill reauthorizes appropriations for this program but also authorizes the National Institute of Food and Agriculture to support training in budgeting, business planning, and financial management for beginning farmers or ranchers.