

S 2595

Ensuring Accountability for Equity at USDA Act

Congress: 118 (2023–2025, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Agriculture and Food

Introduced: Jul 27, 2023

Current Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry. (Jul 27, 2023)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/2595>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Smith, Tina [D-MN]

Party: Democratic • **State:** MN • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (2 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Duckworth, Tammy [D-IL]	D · IL		Jul 27, 2023
Sen. Lujan, Ben Ray [D-NM]	D · NM		Jul 27, 2023

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee	Senate	Referred To	Jul 27, 2023

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Agriculture and Food

Related Bills

No related bills are listed.

Ensuring Accountability for Equity at USDA Act

This bill directs the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to improve the equitable availability and distribution of USDA services and program benefits through specific actions.

Under the bill, USDA must

- include within the performance evaluations for USDA senior leadership a review of an individual's direct efforts to improve equity in USDA programs and services;
- issue uniform, department-wide guidance on collecting and responding to feedback and using that feedback to improve efforts to provide more equitable and consistent services; and
- build frontline USDA customer service staff capacity to make eligible services or benefits available to customers.

USDA must also notify Congress when it has identified an opportunity to improve equity in a particular program or service, but lacks the authority to make the necessary changes.

Further, the bill requires additional information to be included in USDA's annual data report (which is meant to assess and hold USDA accountable for the nondiscriminatory participation of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in USDA programs). The report must also describe trends in the data and include a discussion of efforts to implement necessary improvements to equity.

In addition, USDA must use collected data to examine and assess USDA programs and policies to identify and understand communities, organizations, groups, and individuals in need of USDA services or benefits.

Actions Timeline

- **Jul 27, 2023:** Introduced in Senate
- **Jul 27, 2023:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.