

S 3623

Research for Healthy Soils Act

Congress: 118 (2023–2025, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Agriculture and Food

Introduced: Jan 18, 2024

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. (Jan 18, 2024)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/3623>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Merkley, Jeff [D-OR]

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

Cosponsors (4 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Booker, Cory A. [D-NJ]	D · NJ		Jan 18, 2024
Sen. Van Hollen, Chris [D-MD]	D · MD		Jan 18, 2024
Sen. Whitehouse, Sheldon [D-RI]	D · RI		Jan 18, 2024
Sen. Wyden, Ron [D-OR]	D · OR		Jan 18, 2024

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee	Senate	Referred To	Jan 18, 2024

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Agriculture and Food

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
118 HR 3871	Related bill	Jul 28, 2023: Referred to the Subcommittee on Conservation, Research, and Biotechnology.

Research for Healthy Soils Act

This bill includes research on the agricultural impacts of microplastics in land-applied biosolids on farmland as a Department of Agriculture (USDA) high-priority research and extension area. *Microplastic* is a plastic or plastic-coated particle that is less than 5 millimeters in size.

The bill specifically allows grants for carrying out or enhancing research in this area (e.g., through the development or analysis of wastewater treatment techniques to filter out or biodegrade microplastics from biosolids intended to be used for agricultural purposes).

Further, the bill reauthorizes USDA grants to support competitive specialized research and extension activities, including high-priority areas, through FY2028. The bill also specifically reauthorizes through FY2028

- the Pulse Crop Health Initiative;
- the Comprehensive Food Safety Training Network;
- pollinator protection research and extension grants;
- increased USDA capacity and infrastructure to address and conduct research on colony collapse disorder and other pollinator issues; and
- a USDA-conducted nationwide honey bee pest, pathogen, health, and population status surveillance program.

Actions Timeline

- **Jan 18, 2024:** Introduced in Senate
- **Jan 18, 2024:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.