

HR 8473

Veterinary Services to Improve Public Health in Rural Communities Act

Congress: 119 (2025–2027, Current)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Native Americans

Introduced: Apr 23, 2026

Current Status: Subcommittee Hearings Held

Latest Action: Subcommittee Hearings Held (Jun 9, 2026)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/8473>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Begich, Nicholas J. [R-AK-At Large]

Party: Republican • **State:** AK • **Chamber:** House

Cosponsors

No cosponsors are listed for this bill.

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Agriculture Committee	House	Referred To	Apr 23, 2026
Energy and Commerce Committee	House	Referred To	Apr 23, 2026
Natural Resources Committee	House	Referred To	Apr 23, 2026
Natural Resources Committee	House	Referred to	Jun 3, 2026
Natural Resources Committee	House	Hearings By (subcommittee)	Jun 9, 2026

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Native Americans

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
119 S 620	Identical bill	Dec 15, 2025: Held at the desk.

Veterinary Services to Improve Public Health in Rural Communities Act

This bill expands support for public health veterinary services (e.g., disease surveillance or vaccination) in tribal communities to address zoonotic infectious diseases (i.e., diseases that spread between humans and animals).

Specifically, the bill authorizes the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), acting through the Indian Health Service (IHS), to expend funds for public health veterinary services to prevent and control zoonotic disease infection and transmission in IHS areas where the risk for disease occurrence in humans and wildlife is endemic.

HHS may assign or deploy veterinary public health officers from the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps to IHS areas.

Additionally, HHS must submit a biennial report to Congress on the use of funds, the assignment and deployment of veterinary public health officers from the USPHS Commissioned Corps, data related to the monitoring and disease surveillance of zoonotic diseases, and related services.

The bill also includes the IHS as a coordinating agency in the National One Health Framework. (This framework addresses zoonotic diseases and advances public health preparedness in the United States.)

The bill requires the Department of Agriculture to conduct a feasibility study on the delivery of oral rabies vaccines to wildlife reservoir species that are connected to the transmission of rabies to tribal members living in Arctic regions of the United States. The study must (1) evaluate the efficacy of the oral rabies vaccines, and (2) make recommendations to improve the delivery of these vaccines.

Actions Timeline

- **Jun 9, 2026:** Subcommittee Hearings Held
- **Jun 3, 2026:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs.
- **Apr 23, 2026:** Introduced in House
- **Apr 23, 2026:** Referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

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