

**Suspend the Rules and Pass the Bill, H. R. 4819, With an  
Amendment**

**(The amendment strikes all after the enacting clause and inserts a  
complete new text)**

115<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 4819

To promote inclusive economic growth through conservation and biodiversity programs that facilitate transboundary cooperation, improve natural resource management, and build local capacity to protect and preserve threatened wildlife species in the greater Okavango River Basin of southern Africa.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 18, 2018

Mr. FORTENBERRY (for himself, Mr. ROYCE of California, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Ms. BASS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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## A BILL

To promote inclusive economic growth through conservation and biodiversity programs that facilitate transboundary cooperation, improve natural resource management, and build local capacity to protect and preserve threatened wildlife species in the greater Okavango River Basin of southern Africa.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Defending Economic  
3 Livelihoods and Threatened Animals Act” or the  
4 “DELTA Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

6 Congress finds the following:

7 (1) The greater Okavango River Basin, which  
8 ranges from the highland plateau of Angola to  
9 northeastern Namibia and northern Botswana, and  
10 also provides critical natural resources that sustain  
11 wildlife in Zambia and Zimbabwe, is the largest  
12 freshwater watershed in southern Africa.

13 (2) The greater Okavango River Basin is the  
14 main source of water and livelihoods for over  
15 1,000,000 people, and the effective management and  
16 protection of this critical watershed will help ad-  
17 vance important conservation and economic growth  
18 objectives for Angola, Botswana, Namibia, local  
19 communities, and the broader region.

20 (3) The greater Okavango River Basin is home  
21 to the largest remaining elephant population in the  
22 world, as well as other threatened wildlife species.

23 (4) Poaching and trafficking of threatened wild-  
24 life species in the greater Okavango River Basin has  
25 increased in recent years, and has the potential to  
26 undermine regional stability by disrupting local gov-

1 ernance and management of resources, and sup-  
2 planting key economic opportunities for community  
3 members.

4 (5) Governments in the region have taken im-  
5 portant steps to coordinate through existing con-  
6 servation frameworks to combat trafficking, ensure  
7 responsible resource management, support local live-  
8 lihoods, and protect threatened wildlife species.

9 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

10 It is the sense of Congress that it is in the interest  
11 of the United States to engage, as appropriate, with the  
12 Governments of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, and neigh-  
13 boring countries, and in partnership with donors, regional  
14 organizations, nongovernmental organizations, local com-  
15 munities, and the private sector, to advance conservation  
16 efforts and promote economic growth and stability in the  
17 greater Okavango River Basin and neighboring water-  
18 sheds and conservation areas.

19 **SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

20 It is the policy of the United States to promote inclu-  
21 sive economic growth through conservation and biodiver-  
22 sity programs that facilitate transboundary cooperation,  
23 improve water and natural resource management, and  
24 build local capacity to protect and preserve threatened

1 wildlife species in the greater Okavango River Basin and  
2 neighboring watersheds and conservation areas.

3 **SEC. 5. STRATEGY.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary and the Adminis-  
5 trator, in coordination with the heads of other relevant  
6 Federal agencies, shall seek, as appropriate, to work with  
7 the Governments of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, and  
8 neighboring countries, and in partnership with donors, re-  
9 gional organizations, nongovernmental organizations, local  
10 communities, and the private sector, to develop a strategy  
11 to—

12 (1) create and advance a cooperative framework  
13 to promote responsible natural resource, water, and  
14 wildlife management practices in the greater  
15 Okavango River Basin;

16 (2) protect traditional migration routes of ele-  
17 phants and other threatened wildlife species;

18 (3) combat wildlife poaching and trafficking;

19 (4) address human health and development  
20 needs of local communities; and

21 (5) catalyze economic growth in such countries  
22 and across the broader region.

23 (b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy established pursuant  
24 to subsection (a) shall—

1           (1) promote cooperative and responsible water,  
2           natural resource, and wildlife management policies  
3           and practices within and among the countries of An-  
4           gola, Botswana, and Namibia, with a particular  
5           focus on the greater Okavango River Basin and the  
6           critical headwaters located in Angola;

7           (2) protect and restore wildlife habitats and  
8           traditional migratory patterns of elephants and  
9           other threatened species;

10          (3) combat wildlife poaching and trafficking in  
11          Angola, Botswana, Namibia, and those areas of  
12          Zambia and Zimbabwe that border Angola, Bot-  
13          swana, or Namibia, including within regional and  
14          national parks and reserves, by building the capacity  
15          of the governments of such countries, local law en-  
16          forcement, community leaders, and park rangers to  
17          detect, disrupt, and prosecute poachers and traf-  
18          fickers;

19          (4) promote conservation as a foundation for  
20          inclusive economic growth and development within a  
21          comprehensive assistance strategy that places An-  
22          gola, Botswana, and Namibia on a trajectory toward  
23          graduation from the need for United States foreign  
24          assistance;

1           (5) identify opportunities and mechanisms to le-  
2           verage regional organizations, nongovernmental or-  
3           ganizations, and public-private partnerships to con-  
4           tribute to support the implementation of the strat-  
5           egy;

6           (6) establish monitoring and evaluation mecha-  
7           nisms, including measurable goals, objectives, and  
8           benchmarks of success, that are included in grants,  
9           contracts, and cooperative agreements to ensure the  
10          effective use of United States foreign assistance; and

11          (7) coordinate with and build the capacity of re-  
12          gional conservation frameworks in order to advance  
13          regional conservation objectives.

14 **SEC. 6. UNITED STATES SUPPORT.**

15          (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary and the Adminis-  
16          trator, in coordination with the heads of other relevant  
17          Federal agencies, are authorized to prioritize and advance  
18          ongoing efforts to—

19               (1) promote inclusive economic growth and de-  
20               velopment through responsible water and natural re-  
21               source management and wildlife protection activities  
22               in the greater Okavango River Basin;

23               (2) provide technical assistance to governments  
24               and local communities in Angola, Botswana, and  
25               Namibia to create a policy-enabling environment for

1 such responsible water and natural resource man-  
2 agement and wildlife protection activities; and

3 (3) build the capacity of local law enforcement,  
4 park rangers, and community leaders to combat  
5 wildlife poaching and trafficking.

6 (b) COORDINATION AND INTEGRATION WITH RE-  
7 GIONAL CONSERVATION FRAMEWORKS.—The Secretary  
8 and the Administrator, in coordination with the heads of  
9 other relevant Federal agencies, shall coordinate assist-  
10 ance provided by Department of State, the United States  
11 Agency for International Development, and such other rel-  
12 evant Federal agencies with existing regional conservation  
13 frameworks in order to ensure regional integration of con-  
14 servation, wildlife trafficking, and water management ini-  
15 tiatives, to prevent duplication of efforts, and to advance  
16 regional conservation objectives.

17 (c) COORDINATION WITH PRIVATE SECTOR.—The  
18 Secretary and the Administrator, in coordination with the  
19 heads of other relevant Federal agencies, are authorized  
20 to work with the private sector and nongovernmental orga-  
21 nizations to leverage public and private capital to promote  
22 responsible resource management, combat wildlife poach-  
23 ing and trafficking, and support inclusive economic growth  
24 and local livelihoods in the greater Okavango River Basin.

1 (d) MONITORING AND EVALUATION.—The Secretary  
2 and the Administrator shall establish monitoring and eval-  
3 uation mechanisms, to include measurable goals, objec-  
4 tives, and benchmarks, to ensure the effective use of  
5 United States foreign assistance to achieve the objectives  
6 of this section.

7 **SEC. 7. REPORT.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the  
9 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the  
10 Administrator, in coordination with the heads of other rel-  
11 evant Federal agencies, shall submit to the appropriate  
12 congressional committees a report on the implementation  
13 of this Act.

14 (b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report re-  
15 quired under subsection (a) shall include a description of  
16 the strategy required by section 5, including—

17 (1) the monitoring and evaluation plans and in-  
18 dicators used to measure performance under the  
19 strategy;

20 (2) any legislative impediments to meeting the  
21 objectives of such strategy;

22 (3) the extent to which Angola, Botswana, and  
23 Namibia have demonstrated a commitment and will-  
24 ingness to cooperate to advance efforts described in  
25 section 5(b);



1           (4) progress made to date in meeting the objec-  
2           tives of such strategy;

3           (5) efforts to coordinate, deconflict, and stream-  
4           line conservation programs in order to maximize re-  
5           source effectiveness;

6           (6) the extent to which Angola, Botswana, and  
7           Namibia and other government in the region are in-  
8           vesting resources to advance conservation initiatives;  
9           and

10          (7) the extent to which other funding sources,  
11          including through private sector investment and  
12          other investment by Angola, Botswana, and Na-  
13          mibia, have been identified to advance conservation  
14          initiatives.

15 **SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.**

16          In this Act:

17           (1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Adminis-  
18           trator” means the Administrator of the United  
19           States Agency for International Development.

20           (2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-  
21           TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-  
22           mittees” means—

23                   (A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and  
24                   the Committee on Appropriations of the House  
25                   of Representatives; and

1                   (B) the Committee on Foreign Relations  
2                   and the Committee on Appropriations of the  
3                   Senate.

4                   (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
5                   the Secretary of State.