

**Suspend the Rules and Pass the Bill, H. R. 1079, With an  
Amendment**

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

117<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
1<sup>ST</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 1079

To establish an interagency working group to develop a comprehensive, strategic plan to control locust outbreaks in the East Africa region and address future outbreaks in order to avert mass scale food insecurity and potential political destabilization, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 15, 2021

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself and Ms. BASS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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## A BILL

To establish an interagency working group to develop a comprehensive, strategic plan to control locust outbreaks in the East Africa region and address future outbreaks in order to avert mass scale food insecurity and potential political destabilization, and for other purposes.

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 “Desert Locust Control  
3 Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

5 It is the policy of the United States to prioritize ef-  
6 forts to control the ongoing desert locust outbreak in East  
7 Africa and other affected regions, mitigate the impacts on  
8 food security, economic productivity, and political sta-  
9 bility, improve interagency coordination to prevent future  
10 outbreaks, and promote resilience in affected countries.

11 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

12 Congress finds the following:

13 (1) The United States Agency for International  
14 Development reports that countries in East Africa  
15 are currently suffering the worst desert locust out-  
16 break in decades, which will devour crops and pas-  
17 ture and destroy local livelihoods across the region.

18 (2) As of December 2020, the Food and Agri-  
19 culture Organization reported that there were 42  
20 million people experiencing acute food insecurity in  
21 East Africa, which numbers are projected to in-  
22 crease if the desert locust outbreak is not controlled.

23 (3) The desert locust outbreak in East Africa,  
24 particularly in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia, is neg-  
25 atively impacting food security, local livelihoods and

1 economic productivity, and may threaten political  
2 stability in the region.

3 (4) Proactive investments now to control the  
4 desert locust outbreak could reduce the need for a  
5 much larger United States humanitarian response  
6 effort later, as well as support economic and political  
7 stability and build resilience in affected countries.

8 (5) In order to optimize the United States re-  
9 sponse to the desert locust outbreak, an interagency  
10 working group should be established to develop and  
11 implement a comprehensive, strategic plan to control  
12 the desert locust outbreak in East Africa and other  
13 affected regions, mitigate impacts on food security,  
14 economic productivity, and political stability and  
15 prevent future outbreaks.

16 **SEC. 4. INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP.**

17 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The President shall establish  
18 an interagency working group to coordinate the United  
19 States response to the ongoing desert locust outbreak in  
20 East Africa and other affected regions, including the de-  
21 velopment of a comprehensive, strategic plan to control the  
22 outbreak, mitigate the impacts on food security, economic  
23 productivity, and political stability, and prevent future  
24 outbreaks.

25 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—The interagency working  
2 group shall be composed of the following:

3           (A) Two representatives from the United  
4 States Agency for International Development.

5           (B) One representative from each of the  
6 following:

7           (i) The United States Mission to the  
8 United Nations Agencies for Food and Ag-  
9 riculture.

10           (ii) The National Security Council.

11           (iii) The Department of State.

12           (iv) The Department of Defense.

13           (v) The Department of Agriculture.

14           (vi) Any other relevant Federal de-  
15 partment or agency.

16           (2) CHAIR.—The President shall designate one  
17 of the representatives from the United States Agen-  
18 cy for International Development described in para-  
19 graph (1)(A) to serve as chair of the interagency  
20 working group.

21           (c) DUTIES.—The interagency working group shall—

22           (1) assess the scope of the desert locust out-  
23 break in East Africa and other affected regions, in-  
24 cluding its impact on food security, economic pro-  
25 ductivity, and political stability in affected countries;

1           (2) assess the impacts of restrictions relating to  
2           the coronavirus disease 2019 (commonly referred to  
3           as “COVID–19”) pandemic on efforts to control the  
4           desert locust outbreak and mitigate its impacts and  
5           in exacerbating food insecurity;

6           (3) monitor the effectiveness of ongoing assist-  
7           ance efforts to control the desert locust outbreak  
8           and mitigate its impacts and identify gaps and op-  
9           portunities for additional support to such programs;

10          (4) review the effectiveness of regional and mul-  
11          tilateral efforts to control the desert locust outbreak  
12          and the coordination among relevant United States  
13          Government agencies, regional governments, and  
14          international organizations, including the World  
15          Food Programme and the United Nations Food and  
16          Agriculture Organization; and

17          (5) not later than 90 days after the establish-  
18          ment of the interagency working group under sub-  
19          section (a), develop and submit to the President and  
20          the appropriate congressional committees a com-  
21          prehensive, strategic plan to control the desert locust  
22          outbreak, including a description of efforts to—

23                  (A) improve coordination among relevant  
24                  United States Government agencies, regional  
25                  governments, and international organizations,

1 including the World Food Programme and the  
2 United Nations Food and Agriculture Organiza-  
3 tion;

4 (B) ensure delivery of necessary assets  
5 control the desert locust outbreak and humani-  
6 tarian and development assistance to address  
7 and mitigate impacts to food security, economic  
8 productivity, and political stability; and

9 (C) to the extent practicable, prevent and  
10 mitigate future desert locust and other, similar  
11 destructive insect outbreaks (such as Fall  
12 Armyworm) in Africa and other parts of the  
13 world, which require a humanitarian response.

14 (d) INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP SUPPORT.—The  
15 interagency working group shall continue to meet not less  
16 than semi-annually to facilitate implementation of the  
17 comprehensive, strategic plan required by subsection  
18 (c)(5).

19 (e) SUNSET.—This Act shall terminate on the date  
20 that is 2 years after the date of the enactment of this  
21 Act, or at such time as there is no longer an upsurge in  
22 the desert locust outbreak in East Africa, whichever oc-  
23 curs earlier.

1 (g) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES

2 DEFINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate con-

3 gressional committees” means—

4 (1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the

5 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-

6 resentatives; and

7 (2) the Committee on Foreign Relations and

8 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.