



H.R. 1771 – CRANE CONSERVATION ACT OF 2008

FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 1771 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) on March 27, 2007. The bill was ordered to be reported from the Committee on Natural Resources as amended, by voice vote, on April 30, 2008.

H.R. 1771 is expected to be considered on the floor on May 13, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.R. 1771 establishes the Crane Conservation Fund within the Multinational Species Conservation Fund. The bill authorizes \$5 million for each of fiscal year 2009 through 2013 for the Crane Conservation Fund.

The bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to provide financial assistance for projects that are focused on the recovery of the crane population. The Secretary is required to give priority consideration to projects that are designed to ensure effective, long-term conservation of cranes and habitats of cranes or projects that have available matching funds. In addition, the Secretary may convene an advisory group made up of public and private organizations that are actively involved in the conservation of cranes.

BACKGROUND

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), eleven of the world's fifteen species of cranes are at risk of extinction. The North American whooping crane is the most in danger of extinction and the population has been rebuilding since reaching a low of 21 birds in 1941. Currently, the FWS estimates that there are 485 whooping cranes in existence today, with 145 living in captivity.

Each year, whooping cranes migrate from Wisconsin's Necedah National Wildlife Refuge to breeding grounds in Florida's Chassahowitzka Wildlife Refuge. The 1,300 mile migration requires a cooperative effort between federal and state governments, landowners, and non-governmental organizations to ensure the safety of the cranes as they migrate.

COST

According to the Congressional Budget Office, "Assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts (beginning in 2009), CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 1771 would increase discretionary spending by \$19 million over the 2009-2013 period and by \$1 million after 2013. H.R. 1771 also would authorize the agency to invest unneeded balances of appropriated funds in federal securities and spend any proceeds from those investments without further appropriation. Enacting this legislation would therefore increase direct spending by an estimated \$200,000 a year beginning in 2010. The bill also would authorize the agency to accept and spend (also without further appropriation) donations from nonfederal sources, but any increase in revenues (from donations) would be offset by additional direct spending of such amounts." ([CBO Cost Estimate](#))

STAFF CONTACT

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