

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4014

To amend title 18, United States Code, to establish criminal penalties for the reckless importation or handling of dangerous agricultural pathogens.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 13, 2025

Mr. NUNN of Iowa (for himself and Mr. RILEY of New York) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To amend title 18, United States Code, to establish criminal penalties for the reckless importation or handling of dangerous agricultural pathogens.

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Preventing Lethal Ag-
5 ricultural and National Threats (PLANT) Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. RECKLESS IMPORTATION OF DANGEROUS AGRI-**
7 **CULTURAL PATHOGENS.**

8 Title 18 U.S.C. is amended by inserting after section
9 175b the following:

1 **“§ 175c. Reckless importation of dangerous agricul-**
2 **tural pathogens.**

3 “(a) OFFENSE.—Whoever knowingly or recklessly
4 imports a biological agent, toxin, or organism—

5 “(1) without the required permit or authoriza-
6 tion from the U.S. Department of Agriculture or
7 other appropriate agency; and

8 “(2) where such agent, toxin, or organism is
9 designated by regulation as a high-risk agricultural
10 pathogen capable of causing significant harm to
11 U.S. crops, livestock, or agricultural ecosystems,
12 Shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than
13 10 years, or both.

14 “(b) AGGRAVATING FACTORS.—If the offense:

15 “(1) involves concealment of origin;

16 “(2) is committed by a person acting on behalf
17 of, or funded by, a foreign government; or

18 “(3) results in actual economic damage exceed-
19 ing \$1,000,000;

20 Then the term of imprisonment may be up to 20 years.

21 “(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

22 “(1) the term ‘recklessly’ means the person con-
23 sciously disregarded a substantial and unjustifiable
24 risk that the pathogen could cause significant harm.

1 “(2) the term ‘high-risk agricultural pathogen’
2 shall be defined by the Secretary of Agriculture and
3 published via regulation.”.

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