

**H.R. 2606, SUSTAINS Act**

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Agriculture on May 17, 2022

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2022	2022-2027	2022-2032
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	*	*
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	*	*
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	0	0	0
Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	Yes	<b>Mandate Effects</b>	
Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2033?	< \$5 billion	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No
* = between zero and \$500,000.			

Under current law, the Department of Agriculture (USDA) may collect and spend donations from nonfederal entities to carry out agricultural conservation programs. H.R. 2606 would authorize USDA to spend additional funds equal to the amount of the donations it receives to carry out those programs. The bill also would allow contributing entities to designate their donations for a specific program or geographic area.

For this estimate, CBO assumes that the bill will be enacted late in fiscal year 2022; as a result, CBO expects that any spending under the bill would not begin until 2023.

Under H.R. 2606, USDA could use existing appropriations and funding authorities to make those matching payments. For agricultural conservation programs that received specified appropriations under the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, CBO expects that any amounts spent to match donations would be offset by less spending on other activities. Thus, on net, there would be no significant change in outlays for those programs. Some agricultural programs—such as the Conservation Reserve Program or the Conservation Stewardship Program under the Agricultural Act of 2014—have indefinite budget authority. That is, spending by USDA for those programs is not constrained by a specific appropriation. If USDA makes matching payments out of those accounts there would be no offsetting reductions and direct spending for those programs would increase. However, using



information from USDA, CBO estimates any increase in direct spending for matching donations would be insignificant over the 2022-2032 period.

CBO is uncertain how nonfederal entities would respond to USDA's authority to make matching payments under the bill. If donations increase because of enactment, spending by the agency would increase accordingly.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Janani Shankaran. The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.