

Global Wildlife Health and Pandemic Prevention Act

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The Need

Close contact between humans and wildlife, whether due to poorly regulated commercial markets where live wildlife is sold for human consumption or human encroachment into wild places, poses a serious risk in the spread of zoonotic disease. Previous pandemics have been linked to these activities, and while the origins of the current COVID-19 pandemic are unknown, many of the patients at the epicenter have been linked to a large live animal market, according to the CDC. In order to prevent another crippling global health crisis, we must act to immediately close down high risk wildlife markets, minimize human expansion into wildlife habitat, and ensure that human, animal, and environmental health expertise are integrated in our zoonotic disease prevention, detection, and response efforts. These efforts must also be coupled with investment in food security to ensure that communities dependent on wildlife for food have access to alternative sources of protein.

The Legislation

The *Global Wildlife Health and Pandemic Prevention Act* directs relevant federal agencies to address outbreaks of zoonotic disease from wildlife by swiftly shutting down high risk wildlife markets around the world and encouraging coordinated efforts around human, animal, and environmental health (One Health approach).

Specific provisions included in the bill:

- Directs State, USAID, Fish and Wildlife, and USDA to prioritize the closure of high risk wildlife markets through international cooperation and diplomacy, including coordination with existing efforts to combat wildlife trafficking.
- Elevates closure of high risk wildlife markets as a priority issue for the National Security Council.
- Authorizes the President to sanction nations that continue to permit high risk wildlife markets, with exceptions made for indigenous peoples and communities that depend on wildlife for food security.
- Directs State, USAID, CDC, Fish and Wildlife, the U.S. Geological Survey, and USDA to identify which markets and species pose the highest risk for zoonotic disease outbreak and to support a One Health approach to zoonotic disease preparedness.
- Directs those same agencies to reduce disease transmission by increasing global capacity for zoonotic disease prevention and detection and reducing human interactions with wildlife in the wild, while also working to protect and support food insecure communities that currently depend on wildlife.