

Calendar No. 503

113TH CONGRESS }
2d Session }

SENATE

{ REPORT
113-235 }

MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION
FUNDS SEMIPOSTAL STAMP
REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2013

R E P O R T

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

TO ACCOMPANY

S. 231

TO REAUTHORIZE THE MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION
FUNDS SEMIPOSTAL STAMP



JULY 31, 2014.—Ordered to be printed

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

39-010

WASHINGTON : 2014

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JULY 31, 2014.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. CARPER, from the Committee on Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany S. 231]

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, to which was referred the bill (S. 231) to reauthorize the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

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I. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

S. 231 would require the United States Postal Service to continue offering the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp for an additional four years. The Multinational Species Conservation Funds is a small program administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It supports conservation efforts benefiting tigers, rhinoceroses, Asian and African elephants, marine turtles and great apes. Semipostal stamps are stamps bearing a surcharge above typical postal rates. Members of the public may voluntarily purchase semipostal stamps as a means of donating to the cause promoted by the stamp. Continuing to direct funds raised from the sale of this semipostal stamp to the Multinational Species Con-

ervation Funds is an effective way to increase financial support for the program's important work without having to increase its annual appropriations.

II. BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE LEGISLATION

Since 1998, the U.S. Postal Service (“the Postal Service” or “USPS”) has issued several “semipostal” stamps—stamps purchasers may use to mail a First-Class letter, but for which they voluntarily pay a surcharge over the usual First-Class Mail rates as a means to donate to the cause commemorated by the stamp. Each of these semipostal stamps has been issued at the direction of Congress.¹ A variety of causes have benefited from the sale of these stamps, including breast cancer research,² domestic violence prevention programs,³ and assistance to the families of rescue workers killed or disabled in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.⁴

To help fund conservation efforts, in 2010 Congress authorized the creation of a semipostal stamp⁵ to benefit the Multinational Species Conservation Funds (“MSCF”). Congress created the MSCF in 1999 to recognize an unprecedented international decline of certain species and to help save some of the world's fastest disappearing animals in their natural habitats.⁶ The MSCF currently benefits tigers, six species of rhinoceroses, Asian and African elephants, marine turtles, and great apes. The MSCF supports conservation efforts benefiting these species, often in conjunction with efforts under the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), to which the United States is a party. The MSCF provides funding in the form of cost-sharing grants for species and habitat conservation as well as efforts to combat poaching activities and illegal trafficking of these species. Additionally, the MSCF offers technical assistance for conserving the species benefitted by the program. These efforts also benefit from funding and in-kind support provided by partners and collaborators.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which runs the program, more than \$122 million was provided by non-federal sources for efforts under the MSCF from Fiscal Year 2007 to Fiscal Year 2013. This is significantly more than the amount appropriated for these efforts by Congress during the same time period.⁷

Despite the success and popularity of the MSCF projects, annual appropriations for the MSCF have never exceeded \$10 million. Demand for grant funding, however, remains high, and applications under the different MSCF initiatives far exceed available funding. In addition, proponents of MSCF note that each federal dollar invested in the MSCF routinely leverages three or four times the amount in non-federal matching contributions and increases overall

¹ In 2000, Congress gave the Postal Service authority to issue semipostal stamps pursuant to the Semipostal Authorization Act (P.L. 106–253). However, the Postal Service has not yet issued a semipostal stamp pursuant to the Act because it decided not to approve new semipostal stamps while any other semipostal stamps are in circulation. Such stamps have been on sale continuously since the initial enactment of the Stamp Out Breast Cancer Act (P.L. 105–41).

² Stamp Out Breast Cancer Act (P.L. 105–41).

³ Stamp Out Domestic Violence Act of 2001 (P.L. 107–67).

⁴ The 9/11 Heroes Stamp Act of 2001 (P.L. 107–67).

⁵ The Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp Act of 2010 (P.L. 111–241).

⁶ The MSCF (16 U.S.C. 4246) was created as part of Title I of the Department of the Interior and Relation Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 which was later incorporated into the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999 (P.L. 105–277).

⁷ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Multinational Species Conservation Funds FY13 Update, <http://www.fws.gov/international/pdf/factsheet-species-funding.pdf>.

financial support for wildlife conservation. The issuance of a semipostal stamp for the MSCF was therefore an effective way to increase financial support for wildlife conservation without affecting appropriations for other programs outside of the MSCF.

Since its establishment in September 2011, the semipostal stamp program has generated approximately \$2.5 million in revenue for 47 MSCF projects in 31 different countries, with nearly 25 million stamps sold to the public over the course of the 27 months it was available to purchase.⁸ Moreover, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced that the funds raised by this stamp have led to an additional \$3.6 million donated to MSCF projects through outside contributions.⁹ Due to a lack of a legislative mandate for the Postal Service to continue offering the stamp, the Postal Service ceased sales of the stamps after December 2013. The unsold stamps were put into storage in January 2014 and have remained there ever since. The Committee, recognizing that the Postal Service currently possesses 75 million of these semipostal stamps,¹⁰ recommends passage of this legislation in order to enable the continued sale of these stamps for an additional four years.¹¹

III. LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

S. 231 was introduced by Senators Portman and Udall (NM) on February 7, 2013. The bill was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. The bill is cosponsored by Senators Feinstein, Gillibrand, Levin, Stabenow, Warren and Whitehouse.

The Committee considered the bill at its business meeting on June 25, 2014, and ordered the bill favorably reported by voice vote. Members present for the voice vote on the bill were Senators Carper, Levin, McCaskill, Tester, Heitkamp, Coburn, McCain, Johnson and Portman.

IV. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1. Short title

Section 1 designates the name of the act as the “Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp Reauthorization Act of 2013.”

Section 2. Reauthorization

Section 2 amends Section 2(c)(2) of the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp Act of 2010 (39 U.S.C. 416 note) by striking “2 years” and inserting “6 years.”. The Multi-

⁸U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, “Americans Play Key Role in Conservation of Elephants, Rhinos, and Other Imperiled Species by Purchasing Save Vanishing Species Semipostal Stamps” (December 19, 2013), <http://www.fws.gov/news/ShowNews.cfm?ID=0C9AE706-AC3D-DD24-F83EB0530D58FD72>; See also <http://www.fws.gov/international/save-vanishing-species-stamp.html>.

⁹U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, “Americans Play Key Role in Conservation of Elephants, Rhinos, and Other Imperiled Species by Purchasing Save Vanishing Species Semipostal Stamps” (December 19, 2013), <http://www.fws.gov/news/ShowNews.cfm?ID=0C9AE706-AC3D-DD24-F83EB0530D58FD72>.

¹⁰Data provided to the Committee on June 20, 2014 by the United States Postal Service’s Stamp Services.

¹¹Since the authorizing statute requires not just that the stamp exist, but that it be available to the public for a period of time, the Committee expects that any time since January 1, 2014 when the stamp was taken out of circulation will not count toward the new time frame established in S. 231.

national Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp Act of 2010 directs the U.S. Postal Service to issue a Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp which would be available for voluntary purchase on the part of postal patrons for a period of time (currently two years) after the enactment of this bill. In keeping with the requirements of the Semipostal Authorization Act (39 U.S.C. Sec. 14), the statute sets the rate of the semipostal stamp at a cost equal to the rate of a First-Class stamp, plus a differential of no less than 15%. It also requires the rate to be evenly divisible by 5.

The 2010 law also directs the transfer of all amounts available from the sale of the stamp twice yearly to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and directs the Fish and Wildlife Service to divide the proceeds equally for operations among the African Elephant Conservation Fund, the Asian Elephant Conservation Fund, the Great Ape Conservation Fund, the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund, the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Fund, and other international wildlife conservation funds authorized by Congress after the date of the enactment of the Act. These funds are not to be considered as an offset in the level of appropriations or other federal funding.

V. EVALUATION OF REGULATORY IMPACT

Pursuant to the requirements of paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee has considered the regulatory impact of this bill. The Congressional Budget Office states that the bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandate Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments, or private entities. The enactment of this legislation will not have significant regulatory impact.

VI. CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

JULY 18, 2014.

Hon. TOM CARPER,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for S. 231, the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp Reauthorization Act of 2013.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Mark Grabowicz.

Sincerely,

DOUGLAS W. ELMENDORF.

Enclosure.

S. 231—Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp Reauthorization Act of 2013

CBO estimates that implementing S. 231 would have no significant discretionary cost to the federal government. Because the act would affect on-budget direct spending, pay-as-you-go procedures apply, but CBO estimates that those effects would not be significant. S. 231 would not affect revenues.

The Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–241) directed the United States Postal Service (USPS) to issue a special stamp for first-class mail. Any amounts collected from the special stamp (called a semipostal), after accounting for USPS administrative costs, were transferred to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for expenditure on programs to support endangered species. The Postal Service stopped selling these stamps at the end of 2013; S. 231 would direct USPS to make these stamps available until at least October of 2017.

We anticipate that the Postal Service would charge 60 cents for each multinational species semipostal stamp, and payments above the regular first-class postage rate (currently 49 cents) would be treated as offsetting collections (that is, a credit against spending) of the Postal Service. Based on past sales of this semipostal, we expect that the increase in offsetting collections from enacting S. 231 would be about \$1 million annually. Payments of those funds to the USFWS would be outlays of the Postal Service and offsetting collections to the USFWS, which would spend those amounts, mostly in the same year. CBO estimates that the net change in outlays of the Postal Service (which is off-budget) and the USFWS (which is on-budget) would not be significant in any year.

S. 231 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Mark Grabowicz. The estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

VII. CHANGES TO EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with paragraph 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, changes in existing law made by S. 231, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in *italic*, and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION FUNDS SEMIPOSTAL STAMP ACT OF 2010

* * * * *

(2) Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp

(a) * * *

(b) * * *

(c) OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—

(1) * * *

(2) DURATION.—The Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp shall be made available to the public for a period of at least [2 years] *6 years*, beginning no later than 12 months after the date of the enactment of this Act [Sept. 30, 2010].

* * * * *