

Title: To amend the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 to establish an Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Tribal Relations, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the [“ _____ Act of ____ ”].

SEC. 2. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR TRIBAL RELATIONS.

(a) In General.—Section 218 of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6918) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Tribal Relations.”;

(2) in subsection (b), by striking “(1) or (3)” and inserting “(1), (3), or (4)”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(d) Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Tribal Relations.—

“(1) APPOINTMENT.—In appointing an individual to the position of Assistant Secretary for Tribal Relations, the Secretary shall give priority to an individual who has a background in Tribal relations or affairs.

“(2) DUTIES.—The Secretary may delegate to the Assistant Secretary for Tribal Relations responsibility for—

“(A) overseeing the Office of Tribal Relations of the Department;

“(B) planning, coordinating, and implementing policies and programs of the Department serving Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations;

“(C) coordinating Tribal programs and activities in all offices and agencies of the Department; and

“(D) being a participant in any negotiated rulemakings relating to, or having an impact on, projects, programs, or funding associated with the Tribal programs of the Department.”.

(b) Compensation.—Section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “Assistant Secretaries of Agriculture (3)” and inserting “Assistant Secretaries of Agriculture (4)”.

(c) Conforming Amendment.—Section 296(b) of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 7014(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(11) The authority of the Secretary to establish within the Department the position of Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Tribal Relations, and delegate duties to the Assistant Secretary, under section 218.”.