

116TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

**S.** \_\_\_\_\_

To amend the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 to require the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force to develop a priority list for reducing, mitigating, and controlling invasive species within the South Florida ecosystem, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mr. SCOTT of Florida) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

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**A BILL**

To amend the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 to require the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force to develop a priority list for reducing, mitigating, and controlling invasive species within the South Florida ecosystem, and for other purposes.

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 “Suppressing Looming  
5 Invasive Threats Harming Everglades Restoration Act” or  
6 the “SLITHER Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. INVASIVE SPECIES RISK ASSESSMENT,**  
2 **PRIORITIZATION, AND MANAGEMENT.**

3 Section 528(f)(2) of the Water Resources Develop-  
4 ment Act of 1996 (110 Stat. 3771) is amended—

5 (1) by redesignating subparagraphs (I) and (J)  
6 as subparagraphs (J) and (K), respectively;

7 (2) by inserting after subparagraph (H) the fol-  
8 lowing:

9 “(I) shall, using existing amounts appro-  
10 priated to the Task Force, develop and update,  
11 as appropriate, a priority list of invasive species  
12 that—

13 “(i) reflects an assessment of ecologi-  
14 cal risk that the listed invasive species rep-  
15 resent populations of invasive plants and  
16 animals that—

17 “(I) are significantly impacting  
18 the structure and function of ecologi-  
19 cal communities, native species, or  
20 habitat within the South Florida eco-  
21 system; or

22 “(II) demonstrate a strong po-  
23 tential to reduce, obscure, or other-  
24 wise alter key indicators used to  
25 measure Everglades restoration  
26 progress; and

1                   “(ii) shall be used by the Task Force  
2                   and agencies and entities represented on  
3                   the Task Force to focus cooperative and  
4                   collaborative efforts—

5                                 “(I) to guide applied research;

6                                 “(II) to develop innovative strate-  
7                                 gies and tools to facilitate improved  
8                                 management, control, or eradication  
9                                 of listed invasive species;

10                                “(III) to implement specific man-  
11                                agement, control, or eradication ac-  
12                                tivities at the appropriate periodicity  
13                                and intensity necessary to reduce or  
14                                neutralize the impacts of listed  
15                                invasive species, to include the use of  
16                                qualified skilled volunteers when ap-  
17                                propriate; and

18                                “(IV) to develop innovative strat-  
19                                egies and tools to prevent future in-  
20                                troductions of nonnative species;”;

21                   (3) in subparagraph (J) (as so redesignated),  
22                   by striking “ecosystem” and inserting “ecosystem,  
23                   including the activities described in subparagraph  
24                   (I)”;

1           (4) in clause (i) of subparagraph (K) (as so re-  
2           designated), by inserting “, including the priority list  
3           under subparagraph (I) and the activities described  
4           in that subparagraph” after “Task Force”.