

[H.R. 2494, Global Anti-Poaching Act, as amended](#)

FLOOR SITUATION

On Monday, October 26, 2015, the House will consider [H.R. 2494](#), *the Global Anti-Poaching Act, as amended*, under suspension of the rules. H.R. 2494 was introduced on May 21, 2015 by Rep. Ed Royce (R-CA) and was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition, to the Committees on the Judiciary and Natural Resources. The Foreign Affairs Committee ordered the bill reported, as amended, by unanimous consent on June 25, 2015.

SUMMARY

H.R. 2494 includes provisions that support global anti-poaching efforts and counter terrorist and criminal organizations that are profiting from international wildlife trafficking.

Specifically, the bill:

- Requires the Secretary of State to identify, not later than September 15 annually, the foreign countries determined to be a major source, transit point, or consumer of wildlife trafficking products and make a special designation for those countries that have “failed demonstrably” in adhering to international agreements on endangered or threatened species. The Secretary of State is authorized to withhold certain assistance from countries that have received this special designation;
- Makes wildlife trafficking a predicate offense for money laundering and racketeering, and requires fines, forfeitures, and restitution received for such violations to be transferred to federal conservation and anti-poaching efforts;
- Expresses that it is the sense of Congress that the United States should continue to provide defense articles (not including significant military equipment), defense services, and related training to appropriate African security forces for the purposes of countering wildlife trafficking and poaching;
- Expands wildlife enforcement networks to help partner countries strengthen coordination and share information and intelligence on illegal wildlife trafficking on a regional basis; and,

- Encourages appropriate federal agencies and entities to support the increased professionalism of wildlife enforcement officials in partner countries by providing technical assistance for the training, adoption of best practices, legal reforms, and development of institutional systems.

BACKGROUND

The poaching and illicit trade in endangered and threatened wildlife fund worldwide criminal activities by an estimated \$7 to \$10 billion annually. These activities have escalated in scale, sophistication, and violence through the years and risk threatened and endangered species such as elephants, rhinoceros, and tigers. The demand for rare wildlife products has driven their prices to historically high levels. Reports have indicated that terrorist organizations such as al-Shabaab either participate in or draw funding from illicit wildlife trafficking networks. Organized transnational criminal organizations have become increasingly involved in wildlife trafficking, in part, due to insufficient law enforcement and security measures and corruption in certain foreign governments.¹

According to Chairman Royce, “international wildlife trafficking and poaching has become a serious national security threat. With its high profit margins and minimal risk, illicit wildlife trade has become a blood currency for transnational gangs and criminal syndicates. As poaching rates explode, some of the world’s most majestic animals—elephants and rhinos—are being slaughtered and their horns and tusks on the black market.”²

COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that enacting H.R. 2494, as amended, will have “no direct spending effects, and insignificant discretionary costs.”

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information please contact [Jerry White](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 5-0190.

¹ H.R. 2494, Sec. 2, Paragraphs (1) to (7).

² See Press Release—“[Committee Passes Legislation to Combat International Wildlife Trafficking, Strengthen National Security](#),” June 25, 2015.