

104TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 3537

To improve coordination of Federal Oceanographic programs.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 29, 1996

Mr. SAXTON introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Resources, and in addition to the Committees on National Security, and Science, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## A BILL

To improve coordination of Federal Oceanographic programs.

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 “Federal Oceanography  
5       Coordination Improvement Act of 1996”.

6       **SEC. 2. FEDERAL OCEANOGRAPHY COORDINATION IM-**  
7       **PROVEMENT.**

8       The Congress finds the following:

9               (1) The oceans and coastal areas of the United  
10       States are among the Nation’s most valuable natural

1 resources, making substantial contributions to eco-  
2 nomic growth, quality of life, and national security.

3 (2) Oceans drive global and regional climate.  
4 Therefore, they contain information affecting agri-  
5 culture, fishing, and the prediction of severe weath-  
6 er.

7 (3) Understanding of the oceans through basic  
8 and applied research is essential for using the  
9 oceans wisely and protecting their limited resources.  
10 Therefore, the United States should maintain its  
11 world leadership in oceanography as one key to its  
12 competitive future.

13 (4) Ocean research and education activities take  
14 place within Federal agencies, academic institutions,  
15 and industry. These entities often have similar re-  
16 quirements for research facilities, data, and other re-  
17 sources (such as oceanographic research vessels).

18 (5) The need exists for a formal mechanism to  
19 coordinate existing partnerships and establish new  
20 partnerships for the sharing of resources, intellectual  
21 talent, and facilities in the ocean sciences and edu-  
22 cation, so that optimal use can be made of this most  
23 important natural resource for the well-being of all  
24 Americans.

1 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSES OF PROGRAM.**

2 The Secretary of Commerce shall establish a program  
3 to be known as the “National Oceanographic Partnership  
4 Program”. The purposes of the program are as follows:

5 (1) To promote the national goals of assuring  
6 national security, advancing economic development,  
7 protecting quality of life, and strengthening science  
8 education and communication through improved  
9 knowledge of the ocean.

10 (2) To coordinate and strengthen oceanographic  
11 efforts in support of those goals by—

12 (A) identifying and carrying out partner-  
13 ships among Federal agencies, academia, indus-  
14 try, and other members of the oceanographic  
15 scientific community in the areas of data, re-  
16 sources, education, and communication; and

17 (B) reporting annually to Congress on the  
18 program.

19 **SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL OCEAN RESEARCH**  
20 **LEADERSHIP COUNCIL.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is established a National  
22 Ocean Research Leadership Council (hereinafter in this  
23 section referred to as the “Council”).

24 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—The Council is composed of the  
25 following members:

1           (1) The Administrator of the National Oceanic  
2           and Atmospheric Administration, who shall be the  
3           Chairman of the Council.

4           (2) The Secretary of the Navy.

5           (3) The Director of the National Science Foun-  
6           dation.

7           (4) The Administrator of the National Aero-  
8           nautics and Space Administration.

9           (5) The Deputy Secretary of Energy.

10          (6) The Administrator of the Environmental  
11          Protection Agency.

12          (7) The Commandant of the Coast Guard.

13          (8) The Director of the Geological Survey of the  
14          Department of the Interior.

15          (9) The Director of the Defense Advanced Re-  
16          search Projects Agency.

17          (10) The Director of the Minerals Management  
18          Service of the Department of the Interior.

19          (11) The President of the National Academy of  
20          Sciences, the President of the National Academy of  
21          Engineering, and the President of the Institute of  
22          Medicine.

23          (12) The Director of the Office of Science and  
24          Technology.

1           (13) The Director of the Office of Management  
2           and Budget.

3           (14) One member appointed by the Chairman  
4           from among individuals who will represent the views  
5           of ocean industries.

6           (15) One member appointed by the Chairman  
7           from among individuals who will represent the views  
8           of State governments.

9           (16) One member appointed by the Chairman  
10          from among individuals who will represent the views  
11          of academia.

12          (17) One member appointed by the Chairman  
13          from among individuals who will represent such  
14          other views as the Chairman considers appropriate.

15          (c) TERM OF OFFICE.—The term of office of a mem-  
16          ber of the Council appointed under paragraph (14), (15),  
17          (16), or (17) of subsection (b) shall be two years, except  
18          that any person appointed to fill a vacancy occurring be-  
19          fore the expiration of the term for which his or her prede-  
20          cessor was appointed shall be appointed for the remainder  
21          of such term.

22          (d) INITIAL APPOINTMENTS OF COUNCIL MEM-  
23          BERS.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and  
24          Atmospheric Administration shall make the appointments

1 required by subsection (b) by not later than December 1,  
2 1996.

3 (e) RESPONSIBILITIES OF COUNCIL.—The Council  
4 shall have the following responsibilities:

5 (1) To establish the Ocean Research Partner-  
6 ship Coordinating Group as provided in section  
7 7903.

8 (2) To establish the Ocean Research Advisory  
9 Panel as provided in section 6.

10 (3) To submit to Congress an annual report  
11 pursuant to subsection (f).

12 (f) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than March 1 of  
13 each year, the Council shall submit to Congress a report  
14 on the National Oceanographic Partnership Program. The  
15 report shall contain the following:

16 (1) A description of activities of the program  
17 carried out during the fiscal year before the fiscal  
18 year in which the report is prepared. The description  
19 also shall include a list of the members of the Ocean  
20 Research Partnership Coordinating Group, the  
21 Ocean Research Advisory Panel, and any working  
22 groups in existence during the fiscal year covered.

23 (2) A general outline of the activities planned  
24 for the program during the fiscal year in which the  
25 report is prepared.



1 Coordinating Group” (hereinafter in this section referred  
2 to as the “Coordinating Group”).

3 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—The Coordinating Group shall  
4 consist of members appointed by the Council, with one  
5 member appointed from each Federal department or agen-  
6 cy having an oceanographic research or development pro-  
7 gram.

8 (c) CHAIRMAN.—The Council shall appoint the Chair-  
9 man of the Coordinating Group.

10 (d) RESPONSIBILITIES.—Subject to the authority, di-  
11 rection, and control of the Council, the Coordinating  
12 Group shall have the following responsibilities:

13 (1) To prescribe policies and procedures to im-  
14 plement the National Oceanographic Partnership  
15 Program.

16 (2) To review, select, and identify and allocate  
17 funds for partnership projects for implementation  
18 under the program, based on the following criteria:

19 (A) Whether the project addresses critical  
20 research objectives or operational goals, such as  
21 data accessibility and quality assurance, sharing  
22 of resources, education, or communication.

23 (B) Whether the project has broad partici-  
24 pation within the oceanographic community.

1 (C) Whether the partners have a long-term  
2 commitment to the objectives of the project.

3 (D) Whether the resources supporting the  
4 project are shared among the partners.

5 (E) Whether the project has been sub-  
6 jected to adequate peer review.

7 (3) To promote participation in partnership  
8 projects by each Federal department and agency in-  
9 volved with oceanographic research and development  
10 by publicizing the program and by prescribing guide-  
11 lines for participation in the program.

12 (4) To submit to the Council an annual report  
13 pursuant to subsection (h).

14 (e) PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM OFFICE.—The Coordi-  
15 nating Group shall establish in the National Ocean Service  
16 and oversee a partnership program office to carry out such  
17 duties as the Chairman of the Coordinating Group consid-  
18 ers appropriate to implement the National Oceanographic  
19 Partnership Program, including the following:

20 (1) To establish and oversee working groups to  
21 propose partnership projects to the Coordinating  
22 Group and advise the Group on such projects.

23 (2) To manage peer review of partnership  
24 projects proposed to the Coordinating Group and  
25 competitions for projects selected by the Group.

1           (3) To submit to the Coordinating Group an  
2           annual report on the status of all partnership  
3           projects and activities of the office.

4           (f) CONTRACT AND GRANT AUTHORITY.—The Co-  
5           ordinating Group may authorize in the National Ocean  
6           Service to enter into contracts and make grants, using  
7           funds appropriated pursuant to an authorization for the  
8           National Oceanographic Partnership Program, for the  
9           purpose of implementing the program and carrying out  
10          the Coordinating Group’s responsibilities.

11          (g) FORMS OF PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS.—Partner-  
12          ship projects selected by the Coordinating Group may be  
13          in any form that the Coordinating Group considers appro-  
14          priate, including memoranda of understanding, dem-  
15          onstration projects, cooperative research and development  
16          agreements, and similar instruments.

17          (h) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than February 1  
18          of each year, the Coordinating Group shall submit to the  
19          Council a report on the National Oceanographic Partner-  
20          ship Program. The report shall contain, at a minimum,  
21          copies of any recommendations or reports to the Coordi-  
22          nating Group by the Ocean Research Advisory Panel.

23          **SEC. 6. OCEAN RESEARCH ADVISORY PANEL.**

24          (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Council shall appoint an  
25          Ocean Research Advisory Panel (hereinafter in this sec-

1 tion referred to as the “Advisory Panel”) consisting of not  
2 less than 10 and not more than 18 members.

3 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—Members of the Advisory Panel  
4 shall be appointed from among persons who are eminent  
5 in the fields of marine science or marine policy, or related  
6 fields, and who are representative, at a minimum, of the  
7 interests of government, academia, and industry.

8 (c) RESPONSIBILITIES.—

9 (1) REVIEW OF PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS.—The  
10 Coordinating Group shall refer to the Advisory  
11 Panel, and the Advisory Panel shall review, each  
12 proposed partnership project estimated to cost more  
13 than \$500,000. The Advisory Panel shall make any  
14 recommendations to the Coordinating Group that  
15 the Advisory Panel considers appropriate regarding  
16 such projects.

17 (2) OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Advisory  
18 Panel shall make any recommendations to the Co-  
19 ordinating Group regarding activities that should be  
20 addressed by the National Oceanographic Partner-  
21 ship Program that the Advisory Panel considers ap-  
22 propriate.

23 (d) INITIAL APPOINTMENTS OF ADVISORY PANEL  
24 MEMBERS.—The Council shall make the appointments to  
25 the Advisory Panel by not later than January 1, 1997.

1 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Of the amounts authorized to be  
3 appropriated to the Department of Defense, \$30,000,000  
4 is authorized for the National Oceanographic Partnership  
5 Program.

6 (b) REQUIRED FUNDING FOR PROGRAM OFFICE.—  
7 Of the amount appropriated for the National Oceano-  
8 graphic Partnership Program for fiscal year 1997, at least  
9 \$500,000, or 3 percent of the amount appropriated,  
10 whichever is greater, shall be available for operations of  
11 the partnership program office established under section  
12 5(e) for such fiscal year.

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