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105TH CONGRESS
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H. CON. RES. 131

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 28, 1998
Received and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Acknowledging 1998 as the International Year of the Ocean and expressing the sense of Congress regarding the ocean.

Whereas the ocean, which comprises nearly three-quarters of the Earth's surface, sustains a large part of the Earth's biodiversity, provides an important source of food, and interacts with and affects global weather and climate;

Whereas the ocean is critical to national security, is the common means of transportation among coastal nations, and carries 95 percent of the United States foreign trade;

Whereas the ocean and sea floor contain vast energy and mineral resources that are critical to the economy of the United States and the world;

Whereas ocean resources are limited and susceptible to change as a direct and indirect result of human activities, and such changes can impact the ability of the ocean to provide the benefits upon which the Nation depends;

Whereas the vast majority of the deep ocean is unexplored and unknown, and the ocean is truly the last frontier on Earth for science and civilization;

Whereas there exists significant promise for the development of new ocean technologies for stewardship of ocean resources that will contribute to the economy through business and manufacturing innovations and the creation of new jobs;

Whereas any nation's use or misuse of ocean resources has effects far beyond that nation's borders;

Whereas it has been 30 years since the Commission on Marine Science, Engineering, and Resources (popularly known as the Stratton Commission) met to examine the state of United States ocean policy and issued recommendations that led to the present Federal structure for oceanography and marine resource management; and

Whereas 1998 has been declared the International Year of the Ocean, and in order to observe such celebration, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and other Federal agencies, in cooperation with organizations concerned with ocean science and marine resource,s have resolved to promote exploration, utilization, conservation, and public awareness of the ocean: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) the ocean is of paramount importance to the economic future, environmental quality, and national security of the United States;

(2) the United States has a responsibility to exercise and promote comprehensive stewardship of the ocean and the living marine resources it contains; and

(3) Federal agencies are encouraged to take advantage of the United States and international focus on the oceans in 1998, to—

(A) review United States oceanography and marine resource management policies and programs;

(B) identify opportunities to streamline, better direct, and increase interagency cooperation in oceanographic research and marine resource management policies and programs; and

(C) develop scientific, educational, and resource management programs which will advance the exploration of the ocean and the sustainable use of ocean resources.

Passed the House of Representatives November 13, 1997.

Attest: ROBIN H. CARLE,

Clerk.