

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1753

AN ACT

To promote the research, identification, assessment,
exploration, and development of gas hydrate re-
sources, and for other purposes.

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To promote the research, identification, assessment, exploration, and development of gas hydrate resources, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Gas Hydrate Research
3 and Development Act of 1999”.

4 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

5 In this Act:

6 (1) **CONTRACT.**—The term “contract” means a
7 procurement contract within the meaning of section
8 6303 of title 31, United States Code.

9 (2) **COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.**—The term “co-
10 operative agreement” means a cooperative agree-
11 ment within the meaning of section 6305 of title 31,
12 United States Code.

13 (3) **DIRECTOR.**—The term “Director” means
14 the Director of the National Science Foundation.

15 (4) **GRANT.**—The term “grant” means a grant
16 awarded under a grant agreement, within the mean-
17 ing of section 6304 of title 31, United States Code.

18 (5) **INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**—The
19 term “institution of higher education” means an in-
20 stitution of higher education, within the meaning of
21 section 1201(a) of the Higher Education Act of
22 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1141(a)).

23 (6) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means
24 the Secretary of Energy, acting through the Assist-
25 ant Secretary for Fossil Energy.

1 (7) SECRETARY OF COMMERCE.—The term
2 “Secretary of Commerce” means the Secretary of
3 Commerce, acting through the Administrator of the
4 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

5 (8) SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.—The term “Sec-
6 retary of Defense” means the Secretary of Defense,
7 acting through the Secretary of the Navy.

8 (9) SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.—The term
9 “Secretary of the Interior” means the Secretary of
10 the Interior, acting through the Director of the
11 United States Geological Survey and the Director of
12 the Minerals Management Service.

13 **SEC. 3. GAS HYDRATE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PRO-**
14 **GRAM.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—

16 (1) COMMENCEMENT OF PROGRAM.—Not later
17 than 180 days after the date of the enactment of
18 this Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the Sec-
19 retary of Commerce, the Secretary of Defense, the
20 Secretary of the Interior, and the Director, shall
21 commence a program of gas hydrate research and
22 development.

23 (2) DESIGNATIONS.—The Secretary, the Sec-
24 retary of Commerce, the Secretary of Defense, the

1 Secretary of the Interior, and the Director shall des-
2 ignate individuals to carry out this section.

3 (3) MEETINGS.—The individuals designated
4 under paragraph (2) shall meet not later than 120
5 days after the date on which all such individuals are
6 designated and not less frequently than every 120
7 days thereafter to—

8 (A) review the progress of the program
9 under paragraph (1); and

10 (B) make recommendations on future ac-
11 tivities to occur subsequent to the meeting.

12 (b) GRANTS, CONTRACTS, COOPERATIVE AGREE-
13 MENTS, INTERAGENCY FUNDS TRANSFER AGREEMENTS,
14 AND FIELD WORK PROPOSALS.—

15 (1) ASSISTANCE AND COORDINATION.—The
16 Secretary may award grants or contracts to, or enter
17 into cooperative agreements with, institutions of
18 higher education and industrial enterprises to—

19 (A) conduct basic and applied research to
20 identify, explore, assess, and develop gas hy-
21 drate as a source of energy;

22 (B) assist in developing technologies re-
23 quired for efficient and environmentally sound
24 development of gas hydrate resources;

1 (C) undertake research programs to pro-
2 vide safe means of transport and storage of gas
3 produced from gas hydrates;

4 (D) promote education and training in gas
5 hydrate resource research and resource develop-
6 ment;

7 (E) conduct basic and applied research to
8 assess and mitigate the environmental impacts
9 of hydrate degassing (including both natural
10 degassing and degassing associated with com-
11 mercial development); and

12 (F) develop technologies to reduce the
13 risks of drilling through gas hydrates.

14 (2) COMPETITIVE MERIT-BASED REVIEW.—
15 Funds made available under paragraph (1) shall be
16 made available based on a competitive merit-based
17 process.

18 (c) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall establish
19 an advisory panel consisting of experts from industry, in-
20 stitutions of higher education, and Federal agencies to—

21 (1) advise the Secretary on potential applica-
22 tions of gas hydrate;

23 (2) assist in developing recommendations and
24 priorities for the gas hydrate research and develop-

1 ment program carried out under subsection (a)(1);
2 and

3 (3) report to the Congress within 2 years after
4 the date of the enactment of this Act, or at such
5 later date as the Secretary considers advisable, on
6 the impact on global climate change from gas hy-
7 drate extraction and consumption.

8 (d) LIMITATIONS.—

9 (1) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Not more
10 than 5 percent of the amount made available to
11 carry out this section for a fiscal year may be used
12 by the Secretary for expenses associated with the ad-
13 ministration of the program carried out under sub-
14 section (a)(1).

15 (2) CONSTRUCTION COSTS.—None of the funds
16 made available to carry out this section may be used
17 for the construction of a new building or the acquisi-
18 tion, expansion, remodeling, or alteration of an exist-
19 ing building (including site grading and improve-
20 ment and architect fees).

21 (e) RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SECRETARY.—In car-
22 rying out subsection (b)(1), the Secretary shall—

23 (1) facilitate and develop partnerships among
24 Government, industry, and institutions of higher

1 education to research, identify, assess, and explore
2 gas hydrate resources;

3 (2) undertake programs to develop basic infor-
4 mation necessary for promoting long-term interest in
5 gas hydrate resources as an energy source;

6 (3) ensure that the data and information devel-
7 oped through the program are accessible and widely
8 disseminated as needed and appropriate;

9 (4) promote cooperation among agencies that
10 are developing technologies that may hold promise
11 for gas hydrate resource development; and

12 (5) report annually to Congress on accomplish-
13 ments under this section.

14 **SEC. 4. AMENDMENTS TO THE MINING AND MINERALS POL-**
15 **ICY ACT OF 1970.**

16 Section 201 of the Mining and Minerals Policy Act
17 of 1970 (30 U.S.C. 1901) is amended—

18 (1) by redesignating paragraphs (4) through
19 (7) as paragraphs (5) through (8), respectively;

20 (2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the fol-
21 lowing:

22 “(4) The term ‘gas hydrate’ means a gas clath-
23 rate that—

24 “(A) is in the form of a gas-water ice-like
25 crystalline material; and

1 “(B) is stable and occurs naturally in
2 deep-ocean and permafrost areas.”; and

3 (3) in paragraph (7), as so redesignated by
4 paragraph (1) of this section—

5 (A) in subparagraph (F), by striking
6 “and” at the end;

7 (B) by redesignating subparagraph (G) as
8 subparagraph (H); and

9 (C) by inserting after subparagraph (F)
10 the following:

11 “(G) for purposes of this section and sec-
12 tions 202 through 205 only, gas hydrate; and”.

13 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

14 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
15 retary of Energy to carry out this Act—

16 (1) \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 2000;

17 (2) \$7,500,000 for fiscal year 2001;

18 (3) \$11,000,000 for fiscal year 2002;

19 (4) \$12,000,000 for fiscal year 2003; and

20 (5) \$12,000,000 for fiscal year 2004.

21 Amounts authorized under this section shall remain avail-
22 able until expended.

23 **SEC. 6. SUNSET.**

24 Section 3 of this Act shall cease to be effective after
25 the end of fiscal year 2004.

1 **SEC. 7. REPORTS AND STUDIES.**

2 The Secretary shall simultaneously provide to the
3 Committee on Science of the House of Representatives
4 and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of
5 the Senate copies of any report or study that the Depart-
6 ment of Energy prepares at the direction of any committee
7 of the Congress.

 Passed the House of Representatives October 26,
1999.

Attest:

Clerk.