

112TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1171

To reauthorize and amend the Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and  
Reduction Act.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 17, 2011

Mr. FARR (for himself, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. ROHRBACHER, Ms. BORDALLO, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, and Mr. PIERLUISI) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, 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 reauthorize and amend the Marine Debris Research,  
Prevention, and Reduction Act.

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 “Marine Debris Act Re-  
5 authorization Amendments of 2011”.

1 **SEC. 2. PURPOSES.**

2 Section 2 of the Marine Debris Research, Prevention,  
3 and Reduction Act (33 U.S.C. 1951) is amended to read  
4 as follows:

5 **“SEC. 2. PURPOSES.**

6 “The purposes of this Act are—

7 “(1) to address the adverse impacts of marine  
8 debris to the marine environment, navigation safety,  
9 and the economy through investigation and source  
10 identification, assessment, reduction, removal, and  
11 prevention;

12 “(2) to continue the Interagency Marine Debris  
13 Coordinating Committee; and

14 “(3) to develop and maintain the Federal ma-  
15 rine debris information clearinghouse.”.

16 **SEC. 3. NOAA MARINE DEBRIS PROGRAM.**

17 Section 3 of the Marine Debris Research, Prevention,  
18 and Reduction Act (33 U.S.C. 1952) is amended by strik-  
19 ing so much as precedes subsection (c) and inserting the  
20 following:

21 **“SEC. 3. NOAA MARINE DEBRIS PROGRAM.**

22 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.—There is es-  
23 tablished, within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
24 Administration, a Marine Debris Program to—

1 “(1) investigate, identify sources of, assess, re-  
2 duce, remove, and prevent the occurrence of marine  
3 debris; and

4 “(2) address, and where practicable prevent,  
5 adverse impacts of marine debris on the marine en-  
6 vironment, navigation safety, and the economy.

7 “(b) PROGRAM COMPONENTS.—

8 “(1) INVESTIGATIONS AND ASSESSMENT.—The  
9 Administrator shall, in consultation with relevant  
10 Federal agencies, undertake marine debris investiga-  
11 tion and assessment efforts, with a focus on marine  
12 debris posing a threat to the marine environment,  
13 navigation safety, and the economy, including—

14 “(A) investigation, analysis, and assess-  
15 ment of derelict fishing gear;

16 “(B) investigation, analysis, and assess-  
17 ment of plastics, as pertains to the health of the  
18 marine environment;

19 “(C) the establishment of a process for  
20 maintaining an inventory of marine debris types  
21 and their impacts found in the navigable waters  
22 of the United States and the United States ex-  
23 clusive economic zone, including impacts on the  
24 marine environment, navigation safety, and the  
25 economy; and

1 “(D) measures to identify the source, loca-  
2 tion, and projected movement of marine debris  
3 within United States navigable waters, the  
4 United States exclusive economic zone, and the  
5 high seas, including the use of oceanographic,  
6 atmospheric, satellite, and remote sensing data.

7 “(2) PREVENT, REDUCE, AND REMOVE OCCUR-  
8 RENCE AND IMPACTS.—The Administrator shall im-  
9 prove efforts to prevent, reduce, and remove marine  
10 debris, including activities to address the adverse im-  
11 pacts of derelict fishing gear, including—

12 “(A) working with other Federal agencies  
13 to address land-based sources of marine debris;

14 “(B) developing fishing gear modifications  
15 or alternatives to conventional fishing gear pos-  
16 ing a threat to the marine environment;

17 “(C) developing effective nonregulatory  
18 measures and incentives to cooperatively reduce  
19 the volume of lost and discarded fishing gear  
20 and to aid in its recovery; and

21 “(D) developing and implementing strate-  
22 gies, methods, priorities, and a plan for pre-  
23 venting and removing marine debris in or likely  
24 to enter United States navigable waters or the  
25 United States exclusive economic zone, includ-

1 ing development of local or regional protocols  
2 for removal of derelict fishing gear and other  
3 marine debris.

4 “(3) NATIONAL AND REGIONAL COORDINA-  
5 TION.—The Administrator shall undertake national  
6 and regional coordination to assist States, Indian  
7 tribes, and regional organizations to address marine  
8 debris issues that are particular to their areas, in-  
9 cluding—

10 “(A) facilitating information exchange  
11 within and among States and Indian tribes on  
12 issues relating to marine debris investigation  
13 and assessment, prevention, reduction, and re-  
14 moval activities; and

15 “(B) serving as an expert resource to  
16 State, tribal, and local governments, nongovern-  
17 ment organizations, fishing communities, indus-  
18 try, and other entities with an interest in ma-  
19 rine debris.

20 “(4) DEVELOPMENT OF TOOLS AND PROD-  
21 UCTS.—The Administrator shall develop tools and  
22 products to improve efforts to address marine de-  
23bris, and make these available to researchers, the  
24 marine debris community, and the general public.  
25 The tools and products may include—

1 “(A) best practices;

2 “(B) protocols for monitoring marine de-  
3 bris;

4 “(C) technology; and

5 “(D) reporting methods.

6 “(5) INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION.—The Ad-  
7 ministrator, acting through the Marine Debris Pro-  
8 gram, may lead the development and implementation  
9 of a strategy, in coordination with other relevant  
10 programs, that may be pursued by the United States  
11 with other nations and in appropriate international  
12 and regional forums, to promote international action  
13 to reduce the incidence of marine debris, including—

14 “(A) the adoption of effective marine de-  
15 bris prevention and removal measures in inter-  
16 national and regional agreements, including  
17 fisheries agreements and maritime agreements;

18 “(B) the development of standardized na-  
19 tional reporting and information guidelines that  
20 will assist in improving information collection  
21 and identification and monitoring of marine de-  
22 bris;

23 “(C) consistent with the information clear-  
24 inghouse established under section 6, the pro-

1 motion of ‘best practices to address marine de-  
2 bris’;

3 “(D) the establishment of public-private  
4 partnerships and funding sources for pilot pro-  
5 grams that will assist in implementation of ma-  
6 rine debris prevention and removal measures in  
7 international agreements and guidelines;

8 “(E) when appropriate, provision of assist-  
9 ance to the responsible Federal agency in bilat-  
10 eral and multilateral efforts to effectively ad-  
11 dress marine debris prevention; and

12 “(F) actions to implement the relevant rec-  
13 ommendations of the National Research Council  
14 report entitled ‘Tackling Marine Debris in the  
15 21st Century’ and dated 2008.”.

16 **SEC. 4. GLOBAL MARINE DEBRIS COORDINATION CON-**  
17 **ERENCE.**

18 The Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduc-  
19 tion Act (33 U.S.C. 1951 et seq.) is amended by redesign-  
20 ating sections 7, 8, and 9 in order as sections 8, 9, and  
21 10, and by inserting after section 6 the following new sec-  
22 tion:

1 **“SEC. 7. GLOBAL MARINE DEBRIS COORDINATION CON-**  
2 **ERENCE.**

3 “The Administrator, in coordination with representa-  
4 tives of the domestic and nondomestic marine debris com-  
5 munity, shall host a Global Marine Debris Coordination  
6 Conference not less often than every four years, beginning  
7 in 2015. The Conference shall be developed with a steering  
8 committee composed of domestic and nondomestic marine  
9 debris experts, led by the Administrator.”.

10 **SEC. 5. DEFINITION OF MARINE DEBRIS.**

11 Section 8 of the Marine Debris Research, Prevention,  
12 and Reduction Act, as redesignated by section 4 of this  
13 Act, is amended—

14 (1) by moving paragraph (3) (relating to the  
15 definition of “United States exclusive economic  
16 zone”) to appear as the last paragraph of the sec-  
17 tion;

18 (2) by moving paragraph (6) (relating to the  
19 definition of “territorial sea”) to appear immediately  
20 before such last paragraph, as so moved;

21 (3) by amending the paragraphs after para-  
22 graph (2) as paragraphs (4) through (10);

23 (4) by redesignating paragraph (2) as para-  
24 graph (3);

25 (5) by inserting after paragraph (1) the fol-  
26 lowing new paragraph:



1           “(2) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term ‘Indian tribe’  
 2           has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the  
 3           Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance  
 4           Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).”; and

5           (6) by inserting after paragraph (3), as so re-  
 6           designated, the following new paragraph:

7           “(4) MARINE DEBRIS.—The term ‘marine de-  
 8           bris’ means any man-made object that—

9                   “(A) intentionally or unintentionally, is  
 10                  discarded, disposed of, or abandoned; and

11                  “(B) enters the coastal or marine environ-  
 12                  ment—

13                          “(i) directly from a vessel, a facility,  
 14                          or shore; or

15                          “(ii) indirectly, by being carried via a  
 16                          river, stream, or storm drain or by other  
 17                          means.”.

18 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

19           Section 10 of the Marine Debris Research, Preven-  
 20           tion, and Reduction Act, as redesignated by section 4 of  
 21           this Act, is amended by striking “for each fiscal year 2006  
 22           through 2010” and inserting “for each of fiscal years  
 23           2012 through 2016”.

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