

Union Calendar No. 57

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 988

[Report No. 116–82, Part I]

To provide for a study by the Ocean Studies Board of the National Academies of Science examining the impact of ocean acidification and other stressors in estuarine environments.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 6, 2019

Mr. POSEY (for himself, Ms. BONAMICI, and Mr. MAST) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, 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

MAY 23, 2019

Additional sponsors: Mr. CRIST, Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico, Mr. WALTZ, Mr. CLOUD, and Ms. JOHNSON of Texas

MAY 23, 2019

Reported from the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology with amendments

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italic*]

MAY 23, 2019

Committee on Natural Resources discharged; committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on February 6, 2019]

A BILL

To provide for a study by the Ocean Studies Board of the National Academies of Science examining the impact of ocean acidification and other stressors in estuarine environments.

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 “National Estuaries and*
5 *Acidification Research Act of 2019” or the “NEAR Act of*
6 *2019”.*

7 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

8 *Congress finds the following:*

9 *(1) Ocean acidification impacts human health,*
10 *natural resources, and the environmental, economic,*
11 *and recreational uses of the coastline.*

12 *(2) The current understanding of ocean acidifi-*
13 *cation impacts on estuarine ecosystems is inadequate*
14 *to fully prepare and manage for changing environ-*
15 *mental conditions in nearshore locations.*

16 *(3) While pH can be measured with high preci-*
17 *sion and accuracy in open ocean environments, more*
18 *understanding of the carbonate system in estuarine*
19 *ecosystems is needed for precise and accurate meas-*
20 *urements and observations.*

21 *(4) The interaction of multiple stressors, includ-*
22 *ing salinity, pH, temperature, sea level rise, and nu-*
23 *trient input, within estuarine ecosystems is inad-*
24 *equately understood for managing the health, eco-*

1 *conomic, recreational, and environmental impacts driv-*
2 *en by these interactions.*

3 (5) *A better understanding is needed of how an-*
4 *thropogenic influences in coastal environments affect*
5 *estuarine ecosystems.*

6 (6) *More integration and coordination is needed*
7 *among regional, national, and global environmental*
8 *observations in estuarine environments, supporting*
9 *prior investments in related topics such as nutrient*
10 *loading, hypoxia, ocean acidification, and harmful*
11 *algae bloom research and observational systems.*

12 **SEC. 3. STUDY EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF OCEAN ACIDIFI-**
13 **CATION AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL**
14 **STRESSORS ON ESTUARINE ENVIRONMENTS.**

15 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—*Not later than 60 days after the*
16 *date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Commerce*
17 *shall make appropriate arrangements with the Ocean Stud-*
18 *ies Board of the National Academies under which the Board*
19 *shall conduct a study that—*

20 (1) *examines the existing science of ocean acidifi-*
21 *cation in estuarine environments;*

22 (2) *examines the challenges to studying ocean*
23 *acidification and ocean acidification’s interactions*
24 *with other environment stressors in estuarine environ-*
25 *ments;*

1 (3) provides recommendations for improving fu-
2 ture research with respect to ocean acidification in es-
3 tuarine environments; and

4 (4) identifies pathways for applying science in
5 management and mitigation decisions relating to
6 ocean acidification in estuarine environments.

7 (b) CONTENTS OF STUDY.—The study described under
8 subsection (a) shall include—

9 (1) the behavior of the carbonate system within
10 estuarine environments;

11 (2) the interactions of the carbonate system with
12 other biotic and abiotic characteristics of estuarine
13 ecosystems;

14 (3) how environmental and anthropogenic
15 changes or disturbances could affect abiotic and biotic
16 processes within estuaries;

17 (4) how estuarine biotic and abiotic processes
18 will be affected under predicted environmental
19 changes;

20 (5) the current state of data collection, interpre-
21 tation, storage, and retrieval and observational infra-
22 structure of abiotic and biotic parameters in estua-
23 rine ecosystems;

1 (6) *the gaps that exist in understanding the*
2 *socio-economic and health impacts of ocean acidifica-*
3 *tion in estuaries;*

4 (7) *future directions for scientific research; and*

5 (8) *pathways for applying science in manage-*
6 *ment and mitigation decisions.*

7 (c) *REPORT.—In entering into an arrangement under*
8 *subsection (a), the Secretary shall request that the Board*
9 *transmit to Congress a report on the results of the study*
10 *not later than 24 months after the date of enactment of this*
11 *Act.*

12 (d) *AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are*
13 *authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section*
14 *\$1,000,000.*

Amend the title so as to read: “A bill to provide for a study by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine examining the impact of ocean acidification and other stressors in estuarine environments.”.

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