

DIGITAL COAST REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2025

OCTOBER 31, 2025.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. WESTERMAN, from the Committee on Natural Resources,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 4256]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Natural Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 4256) to reauthorize the Digital Coast Act, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE LEGISLATION

The purpose of H.R. 4256 is to reauthorize the Digital Coast Act.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

In 2007, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) launched its Digital Coast Program in response to coastal managers’ growing need for better access to data, tools, and training to address increasing coastal challenges.¹ Led by NOAA’s Office for Coastal Management, Digital Coast is a centralized online platform that offers tools, training, and other resources that are tailored to help coastal communities make informed, data-driven decisions.² The platform includes a wide array of features—such as high-quality coastal datasets, interactive tools, and online training courses—to help communities reduce flood risk and effectively manage coastal communities and ecosystems across the U.S.³ In December 2020, President Trump signed into law the Digital Coast

¹“About Digital Coast,” National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of Coastal Management, July 22, 2025, [https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/about/#:~:text=The%20Digital%20Coast%20\(authorized%20by,make%20these%20data%20truly%20useful](https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/about/#:~:text=The%20Digital%20Coast%20(authorized%20by,make%20these%20data%20truly%20useful).

²“What is Digital Coast?” National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, June 16, 2024, <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/digital-coast.html>.

³*Id.*

Act,⁴ which formally authorized this program through Fiscal Year (FY) 2025.

H.R. 4256, sponsored by Representative Dave Min (D–CA–47), extends the program’s authorization, at existing levels, through FY 2030. The bill also makes a series of technical enhancements to expand user access and broaden the types of data collected. Notably, the legislation would require that coastal data be fully and freely accessible, ensuring that users can interact with and download data without restriction or cost. Additionally, the bill would widen the scope of data to include underground infrastructure and subsurface utilities, ensuring that Digital Coast’s dataset is as comprehensive as possible.

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 4256 was introduced on June 30, 2025, by Representative Dave Min (D–CA–47). The bill was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries. On September 3, 2025, the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries held a hearing on the bill. On September 17, 2025, the Committee on Natural Resources met to consider the bill. The Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 4256 by unanimous consent. The bill was ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent.

HEARINGS

For the purposes of clause 3(c)(6) of House rule XIII, the following hearing was used to develop or consider this measure: hearing by the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries held on September 3, 2025.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1. Short title

Section 1 names this act the “Digital Coast Reauthorization Act of 2025”.

Section 2. Reauthorization of Digital Coast Act

Section 2 reauthorizes the Digital Coast Program at existing levels through FY 2030. Additionally, this section requires that coastal data be fully and freely accessible and widens the scope of data to include underground infrastructure and subsurface utilities.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Natural Resources’ oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

⁴P.L. 116–223, Digital Coast Act, <https://www.congress.gov/116/statute/STATUTE-134/STATUTE-134-Pg1067.pdf>.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII AND CONGRESSIONAL
BUDGET ACT

1. *Cost of Legislation and the Congressional Budget Act.* With respect to the requirements of clause 3(c)(2) and (3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and sections 308(a) and 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the following estimate for the bill from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

H.R. 4256, Digital Coast Reauthorization Act of 2025			
As ordered reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources on September 17, 2025			
By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2026	2026-2030	2026-2035
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	2	17	20
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?	No	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply? No	
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?	No	Mandate Effects	
		Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

H.R. 4256 would reauthorize the appropriation of \$4 million each year from 2026 through 2030 for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to operate the Digital Coast program. Under that program, NOAA makes geospatial data, decision-support tools, training, and best practices regarding the management of coastal areas available on a public website. Under current law, that authority expired at the end of fiscal year 2025.

The bill also would extend the authority for NOAA to collect and spend fees for training, workshops, and conferences related to the program. The authority to collect those fees and the subsequent spending would be subject to appropriation. CBO estimates that the net effect of those collections and spending would be negligible, because the collections probably would be spent soon after they are received.

CBO assumes that the bill will be enacted early in fiscal year 2026 and that the authorized amounts will be provided in each year. Based on historical spending patterns for similar activities, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 4256 would cost \$17 million over the 2026–2030 period.

The costs of the legislation, detailed in Table 1, fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

TABLE 1.—ESTIMATED INCREASES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION UNDER H.R. 4256

	By fiscal year, millions of dollars					
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2026– 2030
Authorization	4	4	4	4	4	20

TABLE 1.—ESTIMATED INCREASES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION UNDER H.R. 4256—Continued

	By fiscal year, millions of dollars					
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2026–2030
Estimated Outlays	2	3	4	4	4	17

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Emilia Oliva. The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

PHILLIP L. SWAGEL,
Director, Congressional Budget Office.

2. *General Performance Goals and Objectives.* As required by clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII, the general performance goal or objective of this bill is to reauthorize the Digital Coast Act.

EARMARK STATEMENT

This bill does not contain any Congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined under clause 9(e), 9(f), and 9(g) of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

UNFUNDED MANDATES REFORM ACT STATEMENT

According to the Congressional Budget Office, H.R. 4256 contains no unfunded mandates as defined by the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

EXISTING PROGRAMS

Directed Rule Making. This bill does not contain any directed rule makings.

Duplication of Existing Programs. This bill does not establish or reauthorize a program of the federal government known to be duplicative of another program. Such program was not included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139 or identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance published pursuant to the Federal Program Information Act (Public Law 95–220, as amended by Public Law 98–169) as relating to other programs.

APPLICABILITY TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that the legislation does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act.

PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

Any preemptive effect of this bill over state, local, or tribal law is intended to be consistent with the bill's purposes and text and the Supremacy Clause of Article VI of the U.S. Constitution.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3(e) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italics, and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

DIGITAL COAST ACT

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SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DIGITAL COAST.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall establish a program for the provision of an enabling platform that integrates geospatial data, decision-support tools, training, and best practices to address coastal management issues and needs. Under the program, the Secretary shall strive to enhance resilient communities, ecosystem values, and coastal economic growth and development by helping communities address their issues, needs, and challenges through cost-effective and participatory solutions.

(2) **DESIGNATION.**—The program established under paragraph (1) shall be known as the “Digital Coast” (in this section referred to as the “program”).

(b) **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.**—In carrying out the program, the Secretary shall ensure that the program provides data integration, tool development, training, documentation, dissemination, and archive by—

(1) making data and resulting integrated products developed under this section readily accessible *and fully and freely available* via the Digital Coast internet website of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the GeoPlatform.gov and data.gov internet websites, and such other information distribution technologies as the Secretary considers appropriate;

(2) developing decision-support tools that use and display resulting integrated data and provide training on use of such tools;

(3) documenting such data to Federal Geographic Data Committee standards; and

(4) archiving all raw data acquired under this Act at the appropriate National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration data center or such other Federal data center as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) **COORDINATION.**—The Secretary shall coordinate the activities carried out under the program to optimize data collection, sharing, and integration, and to minimize duplication by—

(1) consulting with coastal managers and decision makers concerning coastal issues, and sharing information and best practices, as the Secretary considers appropriate, with—

(A) coastal States;

(B) local governments; and

(C) representatives of academia, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations;

(2) consulting with other Federal agencies, including inter-agency committees, on relevant Federal activities, including activities carried out under the Ocean and Coastal Mapping Integration Act (33 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.), the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq.), the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009 (33 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.), and the Hydrographic Services Improvement Act of 1998 (33 U.S.C. 892 et seq.);

(3) participating, pursuant to section 216 of the E-Government Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-347; 44 U.S.C. 3501 note), in the establishment of such standards and common protocols as the Secretary considers necessary to assure the interoperability of remote sensing and other geospatial data with all users of such information within—

(A) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

(B) other Federal agencies;

(C) State and local government; and

(D) the private sector;

(4) coordinating with, seeking assistance and cooperation of, and providing liaison to the Federal Geographic Data Committee pursuant to Office of Management and Budget Circular A-16 and Executive Order 12906 of April 11, 1994 (59 Fed. Reg. 17671), as amended by Executive Order 13286 of February 28, 2003 (68 Fed. Reg. 10619); and

(5) developing and maintaining a best practices document that sets out the best practices used by the Secretary in carrying out the program and providing such document to the United States Geological Survey, the Corps of Engineers, and other relevant Federal agencies.

(d) FILLING NEEDS AND GAPS.—In carrying out the program, the Secretary shall—

(1) maximize the use of remote sensing and other geospatial data collection activities conducted for other purposes and under other authorities;

(2) focus on filling data needs and gaps for coastal management issues, including with respect to areas that, as of the date of the enactment of this Act, were underserved by coastal data and the areas of the Arctic that are under the jurisdiction of the United States;

(3) pursuant to the Ocean and Coastal Mapping Integration Act (33 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.), support continue improvement in existing efforts to coordinate the acquisition and integration of key data sets needed for coastal management and other purposes, including—

(A) coastal elevation data;

(B) land use and land cover data;

(C) socioeconomic and human use data;

(D) critical infrastructure data, *including data related to underground infrastructure and subsurface utilities*;

(E) structures data;

(F) living resources and habitat data;

(G) cadastral data; and

(H) aerial imagery; and

(4) integrate the priority supporting data set forth under paragraph (3) with other available data for the benefit of the broadest measure of coastal resource management constituents and applications.

(e) FINANCIAL AGREEMENTS AND CONTRACTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the program, the Secretary—

(A) may enter into financial agreements to carry out the program, including—

(i) support to non-Federal entities that participate in implementing the program; and

(ii) grants, cooperative agreements, interagency agreements, contracts, or any other agreement on a reimbursable or non-reimbursable basis, with other Federal, tribal, State, and local governmental and non-governmental entities; and

(B) may, to the maximum extent practicable, enter into such contracts with private sector entities for such products and services as the Secretary determines may be necessary to collect, process, and provide remote sensing and other geospatial data and products for purposes of the program.

(2) FEES.—

(A) ASSESSMENT AND COLLECTION.—The Secretary may, to the extent provided in advance in appropriations Acts, assess and collect fees for the conduct of any training, workshop, or conference that advances the purposes of the program.

(B) AMOUNTS.—The amount of a fee under this paragraph may not exceed the sum of costs incurred, or expected to be incurred, by the Secretary as a direct result of the conduct of the training, workshop, or conference, including for subsistence expenses incidental to the training, workshop, or conference, as applicable.

(C) USE OF FEES.—Amounts collected by the Secretary in the form of fees under this paragraph shall be available to the extent and in such amounts as are provided in advance in appropriations Acts for—

(i) the costs incurred for conducting an activity described in subparagraph (A); or

(ii) the expenses described in subparagraph (B).

(3) SURVEY AND MAPPING.—Contracts entered into under paragraph (1)(B) shall be considered “surveying and mapping” services as such term is used in and as such contracts are awarded by the Secretary in accordance with the selection procedures in chapter 11 of title 40, United States Code.

(f) OCEAN ECONOMY.—The Secretary may establish publically available tools that track ocean and Great Lakes economy data for each coastal State.

(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary \$4,000,000 for each fiscal year 2021 through [2025] 2030 to carry out the program.