

109<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
1<sup>ST</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 3835

To establish a coordinated national ocean exploration program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 20, 2005

Mr. SAXTON (for himself, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. FARR, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. SIMMONS, Mr. WICKER, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, and Mr. FOLEY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, and in addition to the Committee on 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 establish a coordinated national ocean exploration program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **TITLE I—NATIONAL OCEAN**  
4 **EXPLORATION PROGRAM**

5 **SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.**

6 This title may be cited as the “National Ocean Explo-  
7 ration Program Act”.

1 **SEC. 102. ESTABLISHMENT.**

2 The Secretary of Commerce, through the Adminis-  
3 trator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Adminis-  
4 tration, shall, in consultation with the National Science  
5 Foundation and other appropriate Federal agencies, es-  
6 tablish a coordinated national ocean exploration program  
7 within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administra-  
8 tion that promotes collaboration with existing programs  
9 of the Administration, including those authorized in title  
10 II.

11 **SEC. 103. AUTHORITIES.**

12 In carrying out the program established under section  
13 102, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and At-  
14 mospheric Administration shall—

15 (1) conduct interdisciplinary exploration voy-  
16 ages or other scientific activities in conjunction with  
17 other Federal agencies or academic or educational  
18 institutions, to survey little known areas of the ma-  
19 rine environment, inventory, observe, and assess liv-  
20 ing and nonliving marine resources, and report such  
21 findings;

22 (2) give priority attention to deep ocean re-  
23 gions, with a focus on surveying deep water marine  
24 systems that hold potential for important scientific  
25 discoveries, such as hydrothermal vent communities  
26 and seamounts;

1           (3) conduct scientific voyages to locate, define,  
2           and document historic shipwrecks, submerged sites,  
3           and other ocean exploration activities that combine  
4           archaeology and oceanographic sciences;

5           (4) develop, in consultation with the National  
6           Science Foundation, a transparent process for re-  
7           viewing and approving proposals for activities to be  
8           conducted under this program;

9           (5) enhance the technical capability of the  
10          United States marine science community by pro-  
11          moting the development of improved oceanographic  
12          research, communication, navigation, and data col-  
13          lection systems, as well as underwater platforms and  
14          sensors;

15          (6) accept donations of property, data, and  
16          equipment to be applied for the purpose of exploring  
17          the oceans or increasing knowledge of the oceans;  
18          and

19          (7) establish an ocean exploration forum to en-  
20          courage partnerships and promote communication  
21          among experts and other stakeholders in order to  
22          enhance the scientific and technical expertise and  
23          relevance of the national program.

1 **SEC. 104. OCEAN EXPLORATION TECHNOLOGY AND INFRA-**  
2 **STRUCTURE TASK FORCE.**

3 The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administra-  
4 tion, in coordination with the National Aeronautics and  
5 Space Administration, the United States Geological Sur-  
6 vey, Office of Naval Research, and relevant governmental,  
7 non-governmental, academic, and other experts, shall con-  
8 vene an ocean exploration technology and infrastructure  
9 task force to develop and implement a strategy—

10 (1) to facilitate transfer of new exploration  
11 technology to the program established under section  
12 102;

13 (2) to improve availability of communications  
14 infrastructure, including satellite capabilities, to the  
15 program;

16 (3) to develop an integrated, workable, and  
17 comprehensive data management information proc-  
18 essing system that will make information on unique  
19 and significant features obtained by the program  
20 available for research and management purposes;

21 (4) to conduct public outreach activities that  
22 improve the public understanding of ocean science,  
23 resources, and processes, in conjunction with rel-  
24 evant programs of the National Oceanic and Atmos-  
25 pheric Administration, the National Science Founda-  
26 tion, and other agencies; and

1           (5) to encourage cost-sharing partnerships with  
2           governmental and non-governmental entities that  
3           will assist in transferring exploration technology and  
4           technical expertise to the program.

5 **SEC. 105. INTERAGENCY FINANCING.**

6           The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administra-  
7           tion, the National Science Foundation, and other Federal  
8           agencies involved in the program established under section  
9           102, are authorized to participate in interagency financing  
10          and share, transfer, receive, and spend funds appropriated  
11          to any Federal participant in the program for the purposes  
12          of carrying out any administrative or programmatic  
13          project or activity under the program. Funds may be  
14          transferred among such departments and agencies  
15          through an appropriate instrument that specifies the  
16          goods, services, or space being acquired from another Fed-  
17          eral participant and the costs of the same.

18 **SEC. 106. APPLICATION WITH OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF**

19                                   **LANDS ACT.**

20          Nothing in this title or title II supersedes, or limits  
21          the authority of the Secretary of the Interior under, the  
22          Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et  
23          seq.).

1 **SEC. 107. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2       There are authorized to be appropriated to the Na-  
3 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to carry  
4 out this title—

5           (1) \$30,500,000 for fiscal year 2006;

6           (2) \$33,550,000 for fiscal year 2007;

7           (3) \$36,905,000 for fiscal year 2008;

8           (4) \$40,596,000 for fiscal year 2009;

9           (5) \$44,655,000 for fiscal year 2010;

10          (6) \$49,121,000 for fiscal year 2011;

11          (7) \$54,033,000 for fiscal year 2012;

12          (8) \$59,436,000 for fiscal year 2013;

13          (9) \$65,379,000 for fiscal year 2014; and

14          (10) \$71,917,000 for fiscal year 2015.

15 **TITLE II—UNDERSEA RESEARCH**  
16 **PROGRAM**

17 **SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.**

18       This title may be cited as the “NOAA Undersea Re-  
19 search Program Act of 2005”.

20 **SEC. 202. ESTABLISHMENT.**

21       The Administrator of the National Oceanic and At-  
22 mospheric Administration shall establish and maintain an  
23 undersea research program and shall designate a Director  
24 of that program.

1 **SEC. 203. PURPOSE.**

2       The purpose of the program established under section  
3 202 is to increase scientific knowledge essential for the  
4 informed management, use and preservation of oceanic,  
5 coastal, and large lake resources through undersea re-  
6 search, exploration, education, and technology develop-  
7 ment. The program shall be part of National Oceanic and  
8 Atmospheric Administration's undersea research, edu-  
9 cation, and technology development efforts, and shall  
10 make available the infrastructure and expertise to service  
11 the undersea science needs of the academic community.

12 **SEC. 204. PROGRAM.**

13       The program established under section 202 shall be  
14 conducted through a national headquarters, a network of  
15 regional undersea research centers, and a national tech-  
16 nology institute. Overall direction of the program will be  
17 provided by the program director with advice from a Coun-  
18 cil of Center Directors comprised of the directors of the  
19 regional centers and the national technology institute.

20 **SEC. 205. REGIONAL CENTERS AND TECHNOLOGY INSTI-  
21 TUTE.**

22       The following research, exploration, education, and  
23 technology programs shall be conducted through the net-  
24 work of regional centers and the national technology insti-  
25 tute:

1           (1) Core research and exploration based on na-  
2           tional and regional undersea research priorities.

3           (2) Advanced undersea technology development  
4           to support the National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
5           Administration’s research mission and programs, in-  
6           cluding advanced undersea technology associated  
7           with seafloor observatories such as LEO–15 and the  
8           Aquarius habitat, remotely operated vehicles, auton-  
9           omous underwater vehicles, and new sampling and  
10          sensing technologies.

11          (3) Undersea science-based education and out-  
12          reach programs to enrich ocean science education  
13          and public awareness of the oceans and Great  
14          Lakes.

15          (4) Discovery, study, and development of nat-  
16          ural products from ocean and aquatic systems.

17 **SEC. 206. COMPETITIVENESS.**

18          Except for a small discretionary fund for rapid re-  
19          sponse activities, for which no more than 10 percent of  
20          the program budget shall be set aside, and for National  
21          Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration-related service  
22          projects, the external projects supported by the regional  
23          centers shall be managed using an open and competitive  
24          process to evaluate scientific merit, relevance to the Na-

1 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, regional  
2 and national research goals, and technical feasibility.

3 **SEC. 207. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

4 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Na-  
5 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—

6 (1) for fiscal year 2006—

7 (A) \$12,500,000 for the regional centers,  
8 of which 50 percent shall be for West Coast Re-  
9 gional Centers and 50 percent shall be for East  
10 Coast Regional Centers; and

11 (B) \$5,000,000 for the National Tech-  
12 nology Institute;

13 (2) for fiscal year 2007—

14 (A) \$13,750,000 for the regional centers,  
15 of which 50 percent shall be for West Coast Re-  
16 gional Centers and 50 percent shall be for East  
17 Coast Regional Centers; and

18 (B) \$5,500,000 for the National Tech-  
19 nology Institute;

20 (3) for fiscal year 2008—

21 (A) \$15,125,000 for the regional centers,  
22 of which 50 percent shall be for West Coast Re-  
23 gional Centers and 50 percent shall be for East  
24 Coast Regional Centers; and

1 (B) \$6,050,000 for the National Tech-  
2 nology Institute;

3 (4) for fiscal year 2009—

4 (A) \$16,638,000 for the regional centers,  
5 of which 50 percent shall be for West Coast Re-  
6 gional Centers and 50 percent shall be for East  
7 Coast Regional Centers; and

8 (B) \$6,655,000 for the National Tech-  
9 nology Institute;

10 (5) for fiscal year 2010—

11 (A) \$18,301,000 for the regional centers,  
12 of which 50 percent shall be for West Coast Re-  
13 gional Centers and 50 percent shall be for East  
14 Coast Regional Centers; and

15 (B) \$7,321,000 for the National Tech-  
16 nology Institute;

17 (6) for fiscal year 2011—

18 (A) \$20,131,000 for the regional centers,  
19 of which 50 percent shall be for West Coast Re-  
20 gional Centers and 50 percent shall be for East  
21 Coast Regional Centers; and

22 (B) \$8,053,000 for the National Tech-  
23 nology Institute;

24 (7) for fiscal year 2012—

1 (A) \$22,145,000 for the regional centers,  
2 of which 50 percent shall be for West Coast Re-  
3 gional Centers and 50 percent shall be for East  
4 Coast Regional Centers; and

5 (B) \$8,859,000 for the National Tech-  
6 nology Institute;

7 (8) for fiscal year 2013—

8 (A) \$24,359,000 for the regional centers,  
9 of which 50 percent shall be for West Coast Re-  
10 gional Centers and 50 percent shall be for East  
11 Coast Regional Centers; and

12 (B) \$9,744,000 for the National Tech-  
13 nology Institute;

14 (9) for fiscal year 2014—

15 (A) \$26,795,000 for the regional centers,  
16 of which 50 percent shall be for West Coast Re-  
17 gional Centers and 50 percent shall be for East  
18 Coast Regional Centers; and

19 (B) \$10,718,000 for the National Tech-  
20 nology Institute; and

21 (10) for fiscal year 2015—

22 (A) \$29,474,000 for the regional centers,  
23 of which 50 percent shall be for West Coast Re-  
24 gional Centers and 50 percent shall be for East  
25 Coast Regional Centers; and

1 (B) \$11,790,000 for the National Tech-  
2 nology Institute.

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