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S. 39

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 11, 2005

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

AN ACT

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,*

1 **TITLE I—NATIONAL OCEAN**
2 **EXPLORATION PROGRAM**

3 **SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.**

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

6 **SEC. 102. ESTABLISHMENT.**

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

15 **SEC. 103. AUTHORITIES.**

16 In carrying out the program the Administrator of the
17 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall—

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

1 (2) give priority attention to deep ocean re-
2 regions, with a focus on surveying deep water marine
3 systems that hold potential for important scientific
4 discoveries, such as hydrothermal vent communities
5 and seamounts;

6 (3) conduct scientific voyages to locate, define,
7 and document historic shipwrecks, submerged sites,
8 and other ocean exploration activities that combine
9 archaeology and oceanographic sciences;

10 (4) develop, in consultation with the National
11 Science Foundation, a transparent process for re-
12 viewing and approving proposals for activities to be
13 conducted under this program;

14 (5) enhance the technical capability of the
15 United States marine science community by pro-
16 moting the development of improved oceanographic
17 research, communication, navigation, and data col-
18 lection systems, as well as underwater platforms and
19 sensors;

20 (6) accept donations of property, data, and
21 equipment to be applied for the purpose of exploring
22 the oceans or increasing knowledge of the oceans;

23 (7) establish an ocean exploration forum to en-
24 courage partnerships and promote communication
25 among experts and other stakeholders in order to

1 enhance the scientific and technical expertise and
2 relevance of the national program; and

3 (8) avoid directing the programs towards activi-
4 ties relating to global temperature trends and in-
5 stead focus on underwater regions of particular sci-
6 entific interest.

7 **SEC. 104. EXPLORATION TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUC-**
8 **TURE TASK FORCE.**

9 The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administra-
10 tion, in coordination with the National Aeronautics and
11 Space Administration, the U.S. Geological Survey, Office
12 of Naval Research, and relevant governmental, non-gov-
13 ernmental, academic, and other experts, shall convene an
14 ocean technology and infrastructure task force to develop
15 and implement a strategy—

16 (1) to facilitate transfer of new exploration
17 technology to the program;

18 (2) to improve availability of communications
19 infrastructure, including satellite capabilities, to the
20 program;

21 (3) to develop an integrated, workable and com-
22 prehensive data management information processing
23 system that will make information on unique and
24 significant features obtained by the program avail-
25 able for research and management purposes;

1 (4) to conduct public outreach activities that
2 improve the public understanding of ocean science,
3 resources, and processes, in conjunction with rel-
4 evant programs of the National Oceanic and Atmos-
5 pheric Administration, the National Science Founda-
6 tion, and other agencies; and

7 (5) to encourage cost-sharing partnerships with
8 governmental and non-governmental entities that
9 will assist in transferring exploration technology and
10 technical expertise to the program.

11 **SEC. 105. INTERAGENCY FINANCING.**

12 The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administra-
13 tion, the National Science Foundation, and other Federal
14 agencies involved in the program, are authorized to par-
15 ticipate in interagency financing and share, transfer, re-
16 ceive and spend funds appropriated to any Federal partici-
17 pant in the program for the purposes of carrying out any
18 administrative or programmatic project or activity under
19 this section. Funds may be transferred among such de-
20 partments and agencies through an appropriate instru-
21 ment that specifies the goods, services, or space being ac-
22 quired from another Federal participant and the costs of
23 the same.

1 **SEC. 106. APPLICATION WITH OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF**
 2 **LANDS ACT.**

3 Nothing in this title or title II supersedes, or limits
 4 the authority of the Secretary of the Interior under, the
 5 Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et
 6 seq.).

7 **SEC. 107. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

8 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Na-
 9 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to carry
 10 out the program—

- 11 (1) \$30,500,000 for fiscal year 2006;
- 12 (2) \$33,550,000 for fiscal year 2007;
- 13 (3) \$36,905,000 for fiscal year 2008;
- 14 (4) \$40,596,000 for fiscal year 2009;
- 15 (5) \$44,655,000 for fiscal year 2010;
- 16 (6) \$49,121,000 for fiscal year 2011;
- 17 (7) \$54,033,000 for fiscal year 2012;
- 18 (8) \$59,436,000 for fiscal year 2013;
- 19 (9) \$65,379,000 for fiscal year 2014; and
- 20 (10) \$71,917,000 for fiscal year 2015.

21 **TITLE II—UNDERSEA RESEARCH**
 22 **PROGRAM**

23 **SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.**

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

1 **SEC. 202. ESTABLISHMENT.**

2 The Administrator of the National Oceanic and At-
3 mospheric Administration shall establish and maintain an
4 undersea research program and shall designate a Director
5 of that program.

6 **SEC. 203. PURPOSE.**

7 The purpose of the program is to increase scientific
8 knowledge essential for the informed management, use
9 and preservation of oceanic, coastal and large lake re-
10 sources through undersea research, exploration, education
11 and technology development. The program shall be part
12 of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's
13 undersea research, education, and technology development
14 efforts, and also make available the infrastructure and ex-
15 pertise to service the undersea science needs of the aca-
16 demic community.

17 **SEC. 204. PROGRAM.**

18 The program shall be conducted through a national
19 headquarters, a network of regional undersea research
20 centers, and a national technology institute. Overall direc-
21 tion of the program will be provided by the program direc-
22 tor with advice from the Council of Center directors com-
23 prised of the directors of the regional centers and the na-
24 tional technology institute.

1 **SEC. 205. REGIONAL CENTERS and TECHNOLOGY INSTI-**
2 **TUTE.**

3 The following research, exploration, education, and
4 technology programs shall be conducted through the net-
5 work of regional centers and the national technology insti-
6 tute:

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

9 (2) Advanced undersea technology to support
10 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administra-
11 tion's research mission and programs.

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

16 (4) Development of advanced undersea tech-
17 nology associated with seafloor observatories, re-
18 motely operated vehicles, autonomous underwater ve-
19 hicles, and new sampling and sensing technologies.

20 (5) Discovery, study, and development of nat-
21 ural products from ocean and aquatic systems.

22 **SEC. 206. COMPETITIVENESS.**

23 Except for a small discretionary fund for rapid re-
24 sponse activities and for the National Oceanic and Atmos-
25 pheric Administration-related service projects, for which
26 no more than 10 percent of the program budget shall be

1 set aside, the external projects supported by the regional
2 centers shall be managed using an open and competitive
3 process to evaluate scientific merit, relevance to the Na-
4 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, regional
5 and national research goals, and technical feasibility.

6 **SEC. 207. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

7 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Na-
8 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—

9 (1) for fiscal year 2006—

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

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

16 (2) for fiscal year 2007—

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

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

23 (3) for fiscal year 2008—

24 (A) \$15,125,000 for the regional centers,
25 of which 50 percent shall be for West Coast Re-

1 regional Centers and 50 percent shall be for East
2 Coast Regional Centers; and

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

5 (4) for fiscal year 2009—

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

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

12 (5) for fiscal year 2010—

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

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

19 (6) for fiscal year 2011—

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

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

1 (7) for fiscal year 2012—

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

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

8 (8) for fiscal year 2013—

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

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

15 (9) for fiscal year 2014—

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

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

22 (10) for fiscal year 2015—

23 (A) \$29,474,000 for the regional centers,
24 of which 50 percent shall be for West Coast Re-

