

**AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
TO H.R. 2560
OFFERED BY MRS. LUNA OF FLORIDA**

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

1 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

2 This Act may be cited as the “Sea Turtle Rescue As-
3 sistance and Rehabilitation Act of 2023”.

**4 SEC. 2. SEA TURTLE RESCUE ASSISTANCE AND REHABILI-
5 TATION GRANT PROGRAM.**

6 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish
7 a grant program, to be known as the “Sea Turtle Rescue
8 Assistance and Rehabilitation Grant Program”, to encour-
9 age and facilitate coordinated rapid response and rescue
10 by awarding grants for the purposes described in sub-
11 section (c).

12 (b) DESIGNATION OF STRANDING AND REHABILITA-
13 TION REGIONS.—The Secretary shall designate geographic
14 regions of the United States as stranding and rehabilita-
15 tion regions for the purposes of carrying out this section.

16 (c) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Program are to
17 provide for—

1 (1) the recovery, short- or long-term care,
2 transportation, and treatment of stranded marine
3 turtles;

4 (2) the release of rescued and recovered marine
5 turtles;

6 (3) the collection of data and samples from
7 stranded marine turtles for scientific research re-
8 lated to marine turtle health; and

9 (4) facility operation costs that are directly re-
10 lated to activities described in paragraphs (1), (2),
11 and (3).

12 (d) **EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.**—The
13 Secretary shall ensure, to the extent practicable, that
14 funds awarded under this section are distributed equitably
15 among stranding and rehabilitation regions, taking into
16 account—

17 (1) the number of stranding and rehabilitation
18 events that occurred in each stranding and rehabili-
19 tation region in the preceding 5 years; and

20 (2) the conservation priorities and recovery
21 needs of species of marine turtles that are threat-
22 ened or endangered under the Endangered Species
23 Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

1 (e) APPLICATION.—An applicant for a grant under
2 this section shall submit an application in such form and
3 manner as the Secretary shall prescribe.

4 (f) GRANT CRITERIA.—

5 (1) DEVELOPMENT OF CRITERIA.—The Sec-
6 retary shall, in consultation with the Director of the
7 United States Fish and Wildlife Service, establish by
8 regulation appropriate criteria for awarding grants
9 under this section.

10 (2) STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT.—As part of
11 the process for developing and finalizing criteria
12 under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall, in con-
13 sultation with the Director of the United States Fish
14 and Wildlife Service, provide opportunities for en-
15 gagement with representatives from stranding and
16 rehabilitation regions and representatives of State
17 governments and public and private organizations
18 with an established record in coordination, rescue,
19 rehabilitation, and release, as well as related sci-
20 entific research, marine conservation, and forensic
21 science, with respect to stranded marine turtles.

22 (3) REQUIRED CRITERIA.—The criteria devel-
23 oped under paragraph (1) shall prioritize applicants
24 with an established record of coordination, rescuing,
25 rehabilitation, scientific research, and forensic

1 science with respect to stranded and rehabilitated
2 marine turtles or conducting scientific research and
3 forensic science on stranded and rehabilitated ma-
4 rine turtles.

5 (g) LIMITATIONS.—

6 (1) MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF GRANT.—No grant
7 awarded under this section may exceed \$150,000 in
8 any 12-month period.

9 (2) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—The non-Fed-
10 eral share of the costs of an activity conducted with
11 a grant awarded under the Program shall be not less
12 than 50 percent of such costs, including in-kind
13 services and the use of property.

14 (h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

15 (1) MARINE TURTLE.—The term “marine tur-
16 tle” means any member of the family Cheloniidae or
17 Dermochelyidae.

18 (2) PROGRAM.—The term “Program” means
19 the Sea Turtle Rescue Assistance and Rehabilitation
20 Grant Program established under subsection (a).

21 (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
22 the Secretary of Commerce.

23 (4) STRANDING.—The term “stranding” means
24 an event in which—

25 (A) a marine turtle is dead and is—

1 (i) on a beach or shore of the United
2 States; or

3 (ii) in waters under the jurisdiction of
4 the United States (including any navigable
5 waters); or

6 (B) a marine turtle is alive and is—

7 (i) on a beach or shore of the United
8 States and unable to return to the water;

9 (ii) on a beach or shore of the United
10 States and in need of medical attention; or

11 (iii) in waters under the jurisdiction
12 of the United States (including any navi-
13 gable waters), and in need of medical at-
14 tention or other necessary intervention to
15 aid its likelihood of survival.

16 (5) STRANDING AND REHABILITATION RE-
17 GION.—The term “stranding and rehabilitation re-
18 gion” means a geographic region designated by the
19 Secretary under subsection (b).

