

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
TO H.R. 2860
OFFERED BY MR. WESTERMAN OF ARKANSAS

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

1 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

2 This Act may be cited as the “Northwest Straits Ma-
3 rine Conservation Initiative Reauthorization Act of 2025”.

4 SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF NORTHWEST STRAITS MA-
5 RINE CONSERVATION INITIATIVE ACT.

6 The Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative
7 Act (title IV of Public Law 105–384; 112 Stat. 3458) is
8 amended—

9 (1) in section 402, by striking “Commission (in
10 this title referred to as the ‘Commission’).” and in-
11 serting “Commission.”; and

12 (2) by striking sections 403, 404, and 405 and
13 inserting the following:

14 “SEC. 403. DEFINITIONS.

15 “In this title:

16 “(1) COMMISSION.—The term ‘Commission’
17 means the Northwest Straits Advisory Commission
18 established by section 402.

1 “(2) MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE.—The
2 term ‘marine resources committee’ means a county
3 government committee that assists in assessing ma-
4 rine resource and conservation needs.

5 “(3) NORTHWEST STRAITS REGION.—The term
6 ‘Northwest Straits region’ means the marine waters
7 of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and of Puget Sound
8 from the Canadian border to the south end of Sno-
9 homish County.

10 “(4) TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term ‘Tribal
11 government’ means the recognized governing body of
12 any Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation,
13 pueblo, village, community, component band, or com-
14 ponent reservation individually identified (including
15 parenthetically) in the list published most recently as
16 of the date of enactment of the Northwest Straits
17 Marine Conservation Initiative Reauthorization Act
18 of 2025 pursuant to section 104 of the Federally
19 Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 (25
20 U.S.C. 5131).

21 “(5) UNDER SECRETARY.—The term ‘Under
22 Secretary’ means the Under Secretary of Commerce
23 for Oceans and Atmosphere.

24 **“SEC. 404. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION.**

25 “(a) COMPOSITION.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall be
2 composed of 14 members, except as provided in
3 paragraph (2), who shall be appointed as follows:

4 “(A) One member appointed by a con-
5 sensus of the members of a marine resources
6 committee for San Juan County, Washington.

7 “(B) One member appointed by a con-
8 sensus of the members of a marine resources
9 committee for Island County, Washington.

10 “(C) One member appointed by a con-
11 sensus of the members of a marine resources
12 committee for Skagit County, Washington.

13 “(D) One member appointed by a con-
14 sensus of the members of a marine resources
15 committee for Whatcom County, Washington.

16 “(E) One member appointed by a con-
17 sensus of the members of a marine resources
18 committee for Snohomish County, Washington.

19 “(F) One member appointed by a con-
20 sensus of the members of a marine resources
21 committee for Clallam County, Washington.

22 “(G) One member appointed by a con-
23 sensus of the members of a marine resources
24 committee for Jefferson County, Washington.

1 “(H) Two members appointed by the Sec-
2 retary of the Interior, in coordination with the
3 Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission and in
4 consultation with the Tribal governments af-
5 fected by this title, to represent the interests of
6 such Tribal governments.

7 “(I) One member appointed by the Gov-
8 ernor of the State of Washington to represent
9 the interests of the Puget Sound Partnership.

10 “(J) Four members appointed by the Gov-
11 ernor of the State of Washington who—

12 “(i) are residents of the State of
13 Washington; and

14 “(ii) are not employed by a Federal,
15 State, or local government, excluding an
16 institution of higher education.

17 “(2) ADDITIONAL MEMBERS.—The Commission
18 may, as determined necessary to improve the ability
19 of the Commission to perform the duties of the
20 Commission under section 406(b), appoint members
21 in addition to those appointed under paragraph (1).
22 Any such additional member shall be appointed by
23 a consensus of the members of a marine resources
24 committee that is not described in such paragraph.

1 “(b) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Commission
2 shall be filled in the manner in which the original appoint-
3 ment was made.

4 “(c) CHAIRPERSON.—The Commission shall select a
5 Chairperson from among its members.

6 “(d) MEETING.—The Commission shall meet at the
7 call of the Chairperson, but not less frequently than quar-
8 terly.

9 “(e) LIAISON.—

10 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary, in
11 consultation with the Commission, shall appoint an
12 employee of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric
13 Administration—

14 “(A) to serve as a liaison between the
15 Commission and the Department of Commerce;

16 “(B) to coordinate programs of the Na-
17 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
18 with activities related to the goal of the Com-
19 mission described in section 406(a); and

20 “(C) to perform additional liaison func-
21 tions benefitting the Commission and the Na-
22 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,
23 which may include, as agreed to by the Com-
24 mission and the National Oceanic and Atmos-
25 pheric Administration, attending meetings and

1 other events of the Commission as a nonvoting
2 participant.

3 “(2) LIMITATION.—Service as a member of the
4 Commission by the employee appointed under para-
5 graph (1)—

6 “(A) is limited to the employee’s service as
7 a liaison; and

8 “(B) does not obligate the employee to per-
9 form any duty of the Commission under section
10 406(b).

11 “(f) ADMINISTRATION.—The Commission may enter
12 into cooperative agreements with the State of Washington
13 for staffing and administrative services for the purposes
14 of supporting the duties of the Commission under section
15 406(b).

16 **“SEC. 405. GOAL AND DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION.**

17 “(a) GOAL.—The goal of the Commission is to pro-
18 tect and restore the marine waters, habitats, and species
19 of the Northwest Straits region to achieve ecosystem
20 health and sustainable resource use by—

21 “(1) designing and recommending projects that
22 are driven by the best available science, local prior-
23 ities, community-based decisions, and the ability to
24 measure results;

1 “(2) building awareness and stewardship and
2 making recommendations to improve the health of
3 the marine resources of the Northwest Straits re-
4 gion;

5 “(3) maintaining and expanding diverse mem-
6 bership and collaboration with partner organizations,
7 such as the Puget Sound Partnership;

8 “(4) expanding partnerships with Tribal gov-
9 ernments and continuing to support Tribal treaties,
10 cultures, and subsistence and Tribal treaty rights;
11 and

12 “(5) recognizing the importance of economic
13 and social benefits that are dependent on marine en-
14 vironments and sustainable marine resources.

15 “(b) DUTIES.—The duties of the Commission are the
16 following:

17 “(1) To provide resources and technical support
18 for marine resources committees.

19 “(2) To work with such marine resources com-
20 mittees and appropriate entities of Federal, State,
21 and local governments and Tribal governments to
22 provide advice in developing regional programs to
23 monitor the overall health of the marine ecosystem
24 of the Northwest Straits region.

1 “(3) To collect marine resources data and iden-
2 tify factors adversely affecting or preventing the res-
3 toration of the health of the marine ecosystem and
4 coastal economies of the Northwest Straits region to
5 inform decisionmakers.

6 “(4) To develop scientifically sound restoration
7 and protection recommendations, informed by local
8 priorities, that address such factors.

9 “(5) To serve as a public forum for the infor-
10 mal discussion of policies and actions, with respect
11 to the marine ecosystem of the Northwest Straits re-
12 gion, of Federal, State, or local governments, Tribal
13 governments, or the Government of Canada.

14 “(6) To inform appropriate authorities and
15 local communities about the marine ecosystem of the
16 Northwest Straits region and about issues relating
17 to the marine ecosystem of the Northwest Straits re-
18 gion.

19 “(7) To consult with all affected Tribal govern-
20 ments in the Northwest Straits region to ensure that
21 the work of the Commission does not violate Tribal
22 treaty rights.

23 “(c) COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION.—The
24 Commission—

1 “(1) shall carry out the duties described in sub-
2 section (b) in coordination and collaboration, as ap-
3 propriate, with Federal, State, and local govern-
4 ments and Tribal governments, including by—

5 “(A) providing technical support and as-
6 sistance to any Tribal government seeking rep-
7 resentation and participation on the Commis-
8 sion; and

9 “(B) supporting the work and duties of the
10 liaison to the Commission under section 405(e);
11 and

12 “(2) may enter into cooperative agreements
13 with nonprofit entities, such as the Northwest
14 Straits Foundation, to provide assistance, including
15 financial assistance, in carrying out the duties de-
16 scribed in subsection (b).

17 “(d) LIMITATIONS.—Nothing in this title provides
18 the Commission with authority to issue regulations or im-
19 plement any Federal law or regulation.

20 “(e) ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS.—For purposes of
21 carrying out this section, the Commission may solicit, ac-
22 cept, receive, hold, administer, and use gifts, devises, and
23 bequests without any further approval or administrative
24 action.

25 “(f) ANNUAL REPORT.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each year, the Commission
2 shall prepare, submit to the Committee on Com-
3 merce, Science, and Transportation and the Com-
4 mittee on Appropriations of the Senate, the Com-
5 mittee on Natural Resources and the Committee on
6 Appropriations of the House of Representatives, and
7 the Under Secretary, and make available to the pub-
8 lic a report describing—

9 “(A) the activities carried out by the Com-
10 mission during the preceding year; and

11 “(B) the progress in achieving the bench-
12 marks described in paragraph (2).

13 “(2) BENCHMARKS.—The benchmarks de-
14 scribed in this paragraph are the following:

15 “(A) Protection and restoration of marine,
16 coastal, and nearshore habitats within the
17 Northwest Straits region.

18 “(B) Protection and restoration of marine
19 resources populations to healthy, sustainable
20 levels.

21 “(C) Improvement of the water quality of
22 the Northwest Straits region.

23 “(D) Collection of high-quality data and
24 promotion of the use and dissemination of such
25 data for the purposes of ecosystem monitoring.

1 “(E) Promotion of stewardship and under-
2 standing of marine resources of the Northwest
3 Straits region through education and outreach,
4 including by targeted outreach to
5 underresourced communities.

6 **“SEC. 406. SUNSET.**

7 “The authority to carry out this title shall terminate
8 on the date that is 7 years after the date of the enactment
9 of the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative
10 Reauthorization Act of 2025.”.

