

Suspend the Rules and Pass the Bill, H.R. 2860, With an Amendment

(The amendment strikes all after the enacting clause and inserts a new text)

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2860

To reauthorize the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative Act to promote the protection of the resources of the Northwest Straits, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 10, 2025

Mr. LARSEN of Washington (for himself and Ms. RANDALL) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To reauthorize the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative Act to promote the protection of the resources of the Northwest Straits, and for other purposes.

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

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

1 **SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF NORTHWEST STRAITS MA-**
2 **RINE CONSERVATION INITIATIVE ACT.**

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

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

9 (2) by striking sections 403, 404, and 405; and

10 (3) by inserting after section 402 the following:

11 **“SEC. 403. DEFINITIONS.**

12 “In this title:

13 “(1) COMMISSION.—The term ‘Commission’
14 means the Northwest Straits Advisory Commission
15 established by section 402.

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

20 “(3) NORTHWEST STRAITS REGION.—The term
21 ‘Northwest Straits region’ means the marine waters
22 of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and of Puget Sound
23 from the Canadian border to the south end of Sno-
24 homish County.

25 “(4) TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term ‘Tribal
26 government’ means the recognized governing body of

1 any Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation,
2 pueblo, village, community, component band, or com-
3 ponent reservation individually identified (including
4 parenthetically) in the list published most recently as
5 of the date of enactment of the Northwest Straits
6 Marine Conservation Initiative Reauthorization Act
7 of 2025 pursuant to section 104 of the Federally
8 Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 (25
9 U.S.C. 5131).

10 “(5) UNDER SECRETARY.—The term ‘Under
11 Secretary’ means the Under Secretary of Commerce
12 for Oceans and Atmosphere.

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

14 “(a) COMPOSITION.—

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

16 “(H) Two members appointed by the Sec-
17 retary of the Interior, in coordination with the
18 Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission and in
19 consultation with the Tribal governments af-
20 fected by this title, to represent the interests of
21 such Tribal governments.

22 “(I) One member appointed by the Gov-
23 ernor of the State of Washington to represent
24 the interests of the Puget Sound Partnership.

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

3 “(i) are residents of the State of
4 Washington; and

5 “(ii) are not employed by a Federal,
6 State, or local government, excluding an
7 institution of higher education.

8 “(2) ADDITIONAL MEMBERS.—The Commission
9 may, as determined necessary to improve the ability
10 of the Commission to perform the duties of the
11 Commission under section 405(b), appoint members
12 in addition to those appointed under paragraph (1).
13 Any such additional member shall be appointed by
14 a consensus of the members of a marine resources
15 committee that is not described in such paragraph.

16 “(b) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Commission
17 shall be filled in the manner in which the original appoint-
18 ment was made.

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

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

24 “(e) LIAISON.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary, in
2 consultation with the Commission, shall appoint an
3 employee of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric
4 Administration—

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

7 “(B) to coordinate programs of the Na-
8 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
9 with activities related to the goal of the Com-
10 mission described in section 405(a); and

11 “(C) to perform additional liaison func-
12 tions benefitting the Commission and the Na-
13 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,
14 which may include, as agreed to by the Com-
15 mission and the National Oceanic and Atmos-
16 pheric Administration, attending meetings and
17 other events of the Commission as a nonvoting
18 participant.

19 “(2) LIMITATION.—Service as a member of the
20 Commission by the employee appointed under para-
21 graph (1)—

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

1 “(B) does not obligate the employee to per-
2 form any duty of the Commission under section
3 405(b).

4 “(f) ADMINISTRATION.—The Commission may enter
5 into cooperative agreements with the State of Washington
6 for staffing and administrative services for the purposes
7 of supporting the duties of the Commission under section
8 405(b).

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

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

14 “(1) designing and recommending projects that
15 are driven by the best available science, local prior-
16 ities, community-based decisions, and the ability to
17 measure results;

18 “(2) building awareness and stewardship and
19 making recommendations to improve the health of
20 the marine resources of the Northwest Straits re-
21 gion;

22 “(3) maintaining and expanding diverse mem-
23 bership and collaboration with partner organizations,
24 such as the Puget Sound Partnership;

1 “(4) expanding partnerships with Tribal gov-
2 ernments and continuing to support Tribal treaties,
3 cultures, and subsistence and Tribal treaty rights;
4 and

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

8 “(b) DUTIES.—The duties of the Commission are the
9 following:

10 “(1) To provide resources and technical support
11 for marine resources committees.

12 “(2) To work with such marine resources com-
13 mittees and appropriate entities of Federal, State,
14 and local governments and Tribal governments to
15 provide advice in developing regional programs to
16 monitor the overall health of the marine ecosystem
17 of the Northwest Straits region.

18 “(3) To collect marine resources data and iden-
19 tify factors adversely affecting or preventing the res-
20 toration of the health of the marine ecosystem and
21 coastal economies of the Northwest Straits region to
22 inform decisionmakers.

23 “(4) To develop scientifically sound restoration
24 and protection recommendations, informed by local
25 priorities, that address such factors.

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

6 “(6) To inform appropriate authorities and
7 local communities about the marine ecosystem of the
8 Northwest Straits region and about issues relating
9 to the marine ecosystem of the Northwest Straits re-
10 gion.

11 “(7) To consult with all affected Tribal govern-
12 ments in the Northwest Straits region to ensure that
13 the work of the Commission does not violate Tribal
14 treaty rights.

15 “(c) COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION.—The
16 Commission—

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

21 “(A) providing technical support and as-
22 sistance to any Tribal government seeking rep-
23 resentation and participation on the Commis-
24 sion; and

1 “(B) supporting the work and duties of the
2 liaison to the Commission under section 404(e);
3 and

4 “(2) may enter into cooperative agreements
5 with nonprofit entities, such as the Northwest
6 Straits Foundation, to provide assistance, including
7 financial assistance, in carrying out the duties de-
8 scribed in subsection (b).

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

12 “(e) ANNUAL REPORT.—

13 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each year, the Commission
14 shall prepare, submit to the Committee on Com-
15 merce, Science, and Transportation and the Com-
16 mittee on Appropriations of the Senate, the Com-
17 mittee on Natural Resources and the Committee on
18 Appropriations of the House of Representatives, and
19 the Under Secretary, and make available to the pub-
20 lic a report describing—

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

23 “(B) the progress in achieving the bench-
24 marks described in paragraph (2).

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

3 “(A) Protection and restoration of marine,
4 coastal, and nearshore habitats within the
5 Northwest Straits region.

6 “(B) Protection and restoration of marine
7 resources populations to healthy, sustainable
8 levels.

9 “(C) Improvement of the water quality of
10 the Northwest Straits region.

11 “(D) Collection of high-quality data and
12 promotion of the use and dissemination of such
13 data for the purposes of ecosystem monitoring.

14 “(E) Promotion of stewardship and under-
15 standing of marine resources of the Northwest
16 Straits region through education and outreach,
17 including by targeted outreach to
18 underresourced communities.

19 **“SEC. 406. SUNSET.**

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