To amend the Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act to establish an expedited award process for grants to address marine debris emergencies, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 1, 2012

Ms. Bonamici (for herself, Ms. Herrera Beutler, Mr. Schrader, Mr. McDermott, Mr. DeFazio, Mr. Larsen of Washington, Mr. Honda, Mr. Blumenauer, Mr. Thompson of California, Ms. Chu, Ms. Speier, Mr. Smith of Washington, Mr. Dicks, Ms. Woolsey, Mr. George Miller of California, Ms. Hahn, Mr. Walden, and Mr. Stark) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Natural 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.

A BILL

To amend the Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act to establish an expedited award process for grants to address marine debris emergencies, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Marine Debris Emergency Act of 2012”.

SEC. 2. MARINE DEBRIS EMERGENCIES.

Section 3 of the Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act (33 U.S.C. 1952) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) MARINE DEBRIS EMERGENCY.—

“(1) DECLARATION OF A MARINE DEBRIS EMERGENCY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may declare a marine debris emergency if the Administrator determines that marine debris—

“(i) is an immediate threat to the United States with respect to—

“(I) living marine resources;

“(II) the marine environment;

“(III) navigation safety; or

“(IV) public health; and

“(ii) requires Federal resources to supplement the State and local resources available to alleviate such threat.

“(B) REQUEST FOR A DECLARATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Governor of a State may request that the Administrator
declare a marine debris emergency in such
State or a region that includes such State.

“(ii) Administrator may request
information.—In response to a Gov-
ernor’s request under clause (i), the Ad-
ministrator may request that the Governor
provide information on—

“(I) the nature and immediacy of
the threat; and

“(II) the nature and amount of
State and local resources that have
been or will be committed to alle-
viating the threat.

“(C) Response to governor’s re-
quest.—Within 30 days after a Governor sub-
mits a request under subparagraph (B)(i), the
Administrator shall either—

“(i) grant that Governor’s request; or

“(ii) submit a response to that Gov-
ernor, explaining why the Administrator
has not granted the Governor’s request.

“(2) Preference for marine debris emer-
gencies in marine debris grants.—

“(A) In general.—In evaluating applica-
tions for grants under section 3(c), the Admin-

istrator shall give preference to projects to address marine debris emergencies, including projects to address marine debris that has introduced or is likely to introduce marine invasive species into the United States.

“(B) EXPEDITED GRANT AWARD PROCESS.—Not later than 60 days after receipt of an application under subparagraph (A), the Administrator shall, to the extent feasible—

“(i) approve or disapprove such application; and

“(ii) if such application is approved, disperse the approved funds to the grantee.

“(3) MARINE INVASIVE SPECIES.—In this section, the term ‘marine invasive species’ means a marine nonindigenous species (as defined in section 4702 of the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 (16 U.S.C. 4702)) the introduction of which to the United States will, or is likely to, cause economic or environmental harm, threaten the diversity or abundance of native species or the ecological stability of infested waters, or disrupt commercial, agricultural, aquacultural, or recreational activities dependent on such waters.”.
SEC. 3. GUIDANCE FOR GRANT RECIPIENTS ENGAGED IN MARINE DEBRIS RESPONSE EFFORTS.

Section 3 of the Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act (33 U.S.C. 1952) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e) GUIDANCE FOR GRANT RECIPIENTS ENGAGED IN MARINE DEBRIS RESPONSE EFFORTS.—The Administrator shall take appropriate steps to encourage grant recipients under this section to—

“(1) educate staff and volunteers who are engaged in marine debris response efforts on the potential threats that marine debris and marine invasive species (as defined in subsection (d)(3)) may pose to the United States with respect to living marine resources, the marine environment, navigation, and public health; and

“(2) coordinate their marine debris response efforts with relevant Federal, State, local, and non-governmental entities.”.

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