

119TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 2880

To establish the Great Lakes Mass Marking Program, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 18 (legislative day, SEPTEMBER 16), 2025

Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. HUSTED) introduced the following bill;  
which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and  
Public Works

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## A BILL

To establish the Great Lakes Mass Marking Program, 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 “Great Lakes Mass  
5       Marking Program Act of 2025”.

6       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7       Congress finds that—

8               (1) the Great Lakes have experienced rapid  
9       changes in recent years due to—

1 (A) the introduction of multiple aquatic  
 2 invasive species;

3 (B) alterations in the food web; and

4 (C) decreases in the abundance of prey  
 5 species;

6 (2) due to rapid biological change in the Great  
 7 Lakes, the Great Lakes need a collaborative, science-  
 8 based program to assist in making management ac-  
 9 tions relating to fish stocking rates, the rehabilita-  
 10 tion of important fish species, and habitat restora-  
 11 tion;

12 (3) the States of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan,  
 13 Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, and Wis-  
 14 consin and Indian Tribes in those States, working  
 15 through the Council of Lake Committees of the  
 16 Great Lakes Fishery Commission, have identified  
 17 that mass marking is—

18 (A) a precise tool to keep hatchery-pro-  
 19 duced fish in balance with wild fish; and

20 (B) essential to achieving fishery manage-  
 21 ment and research objectives through producing  
 22 a better understanding of—

23 (i) the quantity of hatchery-produced  
 24 fish compared to wild fish in the Great  
 25 Lakes;

1 (ii) the effectiveness of hatchery oper-  
2 ations; and

3 (iii) the effectiveness of fishery man-  
4 agement actions;

5 (4) the mass marking program of the United  
6 States Fish and Wildlife Service in the Great  
7 Lakes—

8 (A) was initiated in 2010 on a limited  
9 scale;

10 (B) annually tags approximately 9,000,000  
11 to 11,000,000 of the hatchery-produced fish  
12 stocked in the Great Lakes;

13 (C) is a basinwide cooperative effort  
14 among the United States Fish and Wildlife  
15 Service, Indian Tribes, and State management  
16 agencies; and

17 (D) produces data used by State and Trib-  
18 al fish management agencies to make manage-  
19 ment decisions regarding Great Lakes fisheries;

20 (5) annually, Federal, State, and Tribal agen-  
21 cies stock approximately 21,000,000 hatchery-pro-  
22 duced fish in the Great Lakes to support—

23 (A) native species recovery; and

24 (B) recreational and commercial fishing;

1           (6) mass marking of hatchery-produced fish,  
 2           using automated technology, is an efficient method  
 3           of implementing a collaborative, science-based fish-  
 4           ery program; and

5           (7) the Great Lakes are an important and val-  
 6           ued resource that—

7                   (A) supports a robust regional economy  
 8                   valued at more than \$7,000,000,000; and

9                   (B) provides stability to the economy of  
 10           the United States.

### 11 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

12       In this Act:

13           (1) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means  
 14           the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife  
 15           Service.

16           (2) PROGRAM.—The term “Program” means  
 17           the Great Lakes Mass Marking Program established  
 18           by section 4(a).

### 19 **SEC. 4. GREAT LAKES MASS MARKING PROGRAM.**

20       (a) IN GENERAL.—To assist in determining the effec-  
 21       tiveness of hatchery operations and fisheries management  
 22       actions and to support Great Lakes fisheries, there is es-  
 23       tablished within the United States Fish and Wildlife Serv-  
 24       ice a program for the mass marking of hatchery-produced

1 fish in the Great Lakes basin, to be known as the “Great  
2 Lakes Mass Marking Program”.

3 (b) AUTHORIZED ACTIONS.—In carrying out the Pro-  
4 gram, the Director may—

5 (1) purchase capital and expendable equipment,  
6 fish tags, and other items necessary to support and  
7 carry out tagging and tag recovery operations, in-  
8 cluding data processing and data dissemination re-  
9 lating to those operations; and

10 (2) hire additional personnel, as necessary.

11 (c) REQUIRED COLLABORATION.—In carrying out  
12 the Program, the Director shall collaborate with applicable  
13 Federal, State, and Tribal fish management agencies, the  
14 Council of Lake Committees of the Great Lakes Fishery  
15 Commission, and signatories to the Joint Strategic Plan  
16 for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries.

17 (d) AVAILABILITY OF DATA.—The Director shall  
18 make the data collected under the Program available to  
19 applicable Federal, State, and Tribal fish management  
20 agencies—

21 (1) to increase the understanding of the out-  
22 comes of management action;

23 (2) to assist in meeting the restoration objec-  
24 tives of the Great Lakes, including the fish commu-  
25 nity objectives and fish management plans described

1 in the Joint Strategic Plan for Management of  
2 Great Lakes Fisheries;

3 (3) to assist in balancing predators and prey;

4 (4) to support and improve the economic status  
5 of Tribal, recreational, and commercial fisheries; and

6 (5) to assist in evaluating the effectiveness of  
7 habitat restoration efforts in the Great Lakes.

8 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

9 There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out  
10 the Program \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026  
11 through 2030.

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