

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 551

Recognizing that sea levels are rising at accelerated rates due to human-caused climate change.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 17, 2025

Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. WELCH, and Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

RESOLUTION

Recognizing that sea levels are rising at accelerated rates due to human-caused climate change.

Whereas tide gauges along the coasts of the United States measure accelerating rates of sea-level rise;

Whereas the rate of sea-level rise per year has more than doubled in the past century;

Whereas thermal expansion, or the volume of the ocean that is expanding as seawater warms, is contributing to rising sea levels;

Whereas the thermal expansion of ocean water has caused approximately 56 percent of global sea-level rise since 2014;

Whereas the thermal expansion of seawater can cause greater sea-level variability and unpredictability, increasing the risks for coastal communities;

Whereas thermal expansion of our oceans will affect century-scale acceleration of sea-level rise on the global, regional, and local scales, increasing coastal risks for all people of the United States;

Whereas, depending on greenhouse gas emissions, average sea-level rise could range between 2 and 7.2 feet by 2100;

Whereas, if the Earth warms beyond tipping points or warming thresholds, the Greenland and West Antarctic ice sheets will be at risk of destabilization;

Whereas researchers believe that those tipping points could be triggered with as little as 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming;

Whereas the Earth has already warmed by at least 1.2 degrees Celsius, with Greenland warming 4 times faster than the average rate of warming across the globe;

Whereas sea levels are expected to raise by 20 to 25 feet with the melting of the Greenland ice sheet and by 10 to 17 feet with the melting of the West Antarctic ice sheet, and both could happen concurrently;

Whereas 30 percent of people in the United States live in coastal areas and are threatened by rising seas;

Whereas \$10,000,000,000,000 of goods and services are produced in coastal counties across the United States every year;

Whereas \$8,100,000,000 of the \$62,500,000,000 in damage from Hurricane Sandy was caused by increased sea levels;

Whereas 3,700,000 individuals in the contiguous United States live on land less than 3.3 feet above high tide, with most of those individuals residing in Florida, Louisiana, California, New York, and New Jersey;

Whereas high water levels that were once rare 1-in-100-year events are becoming 1-in-10-year events due to accelerated sea-level rise;

Whereas sea-level rise will shrink fresh drinking water sources in coastal areas;

Whereas sea-level rise will intensify the flooding effects of hurricanes and strong storms in the United States, costing lives and money, and such effects are already disrupting insurance, mortgage, and real estate markets;

Whereas up to 13,000,000 individuals in the United States could face displacement from rising seas by 2100; and

Whereas sea levels are rising due to fossil fuel emissions:
Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the Senate recognizes the reality of
- 2 anthropogenic climate change and the role it plays in dan-
- 3 gerously raising sea levels.

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