

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas 95 percent of the deep ocean is unexplored and unknown, and the ocean is truly the last frontier on Earth for science and civilization;

Whereas the ocean comprises nearly three quarters of the Earth's surface and sustains 80 percent of all life on Earth, including a large part of the Earth's biodiversity;

Whereas the oceans play a critical role in the global water cycle, carbon cycle and in regulating climate; and over 90 percent of the oxygen in the Earth's atmosphere, essential to life on Earth, comes from the world's oceans and rivers;

Whereas the oceans are an important source of food, provide a wealth of other natural products, and the oceans and sea floor contain vast energy and mineral resources that are critical to the economy of the United States and the world;

Whereas the United States has more than 95,000 miles of coastline and more than 50 percent of the population of the United States lives within 50 miles of the ocean or the Great Lakes;

Whereas coastal areas are regions of remarkably high biological productivity, are of considerable importance for a va-

riety of recreational and commercial activities, and provide a vital means of transportation;

Whereas ocean resources are limited and susceptible to change as a direct and indirect result of human activities, and such changes can impact the ability of the ocean to provide the benefits upon which the Nation depends;

Whereas the rich biodiversity of marine organisms provides society with an essential biomedical resource, a promising source of novel compounds with therapeutic potential, and a potentially important contribution to the national economy;

Whereas there exists significant promise for the development of new ocean technologies for stewardship of ocean resources that will contribute to the economy through business and manufacturing innovations and the creation of new jobs;

Whereas the President's Panel on Ocean Exploration recommended to the White House and to the Congress in its Year 2000 final report, "Discovering Earth's Final Frontier: A U.S. Strategy for Ocean Exploration," a 10-year program to launch the first national plan for ocean exploration;

Whereas the Oceans Act of 2000 passed by the United States Congress authorized the establishment of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and directed it to conduct a comprehensive review of present and future ocean programs and activities and provide comprehensive ocean policy recommendations to the Congress and the President by 2003; and

Whereas our oceans are vital to our national security and our national economy, and with America's greatest era of

ocean exploration and discovery still ahead: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives*
 2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of the Congress that—

3 (1) the ocean is of paramount importance to
 4 the economic future, environmental quality, and na-
 5 tional security of the United States;

6 (2) the United States has a responsibility to ex-
 7 ercise and promote comprehensive stewardship and
 8 understanding of the ocean and the living marine re-
 9 sources it contains; and

10 (3) the week of June 9, 2003, be designated as
 11 National Oceans Week and urges the President to
 12 issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the
 13 United States to observe this week with appropriate
 14 recognition, programs, ceremonies, and activities to
 15 further ocean literacy, education, and exploration.

Passed the Senate June 9, 2003.

Attest:

Secretary.

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. CON. RES. 49

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Designating the week of June 9, 2003, as National Oceans Week and urging the President to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate recognition, programs, ceremonies, and activities to further ocean literacy, education, and exploration.