

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3515

To establish 4 regional institutes as centers of excellence for research, planning, and related efforts to assess and prepare for the impacts of climate change on ocean and coastal areas.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 18 (legislative day, SEPTEMBER 17), 2008

Mr. WHITEHOUSE introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To establish 4 regional institutes as centers of excellence for research, planning, and related efforts to assess and prepare for the impacts of climate change on ocean and coastal areas.

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. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress makes the following findings:

5 (1) Oceans are a major carbon sink and have
6 absorbed at least 50 percent of all fossil carbon re-
7 leased to the atmosphere since the beginning of the
8 Industrial Revolution.

1 (2) The increased absorption of carbon by the
2 oceans due to climate change has—

3 (A) increased ocean acidification, which
4 impacts the health of marine and coastal eco-
5 systems; and

6 (B) influenced the important role oceans
7 play in the global cycling of carbon.

8 (3) Climate change has contributed to sea levels
9 rising 7 inches during the 20th century and nearly
10 1.5 inches between 1993 and 2003.

11 (4) Climate change will greatly amplify risks to
12 coastal populations, economies, and ecosystems
13 from—

14 (A) saltwater inundation of low-lying
15 coastal regions;

16 (B) more frequent flooding due to storm
17 surges; and

18 (C) worsening beach erosion.

19 (5) Research into the effects of climate change
20 on coastal environments, and into the ways in which
21 coastal communities must adapt to the challenges
22 brought by climate change, is an essential compo-
23 nent to the overall response to climate change.

1 **SEC. 2. INSTITUTES FOR OCEAN AND COASTAL ADAPTA-**
2 **TION TO CLIMATE CHANGE.**

3 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator of the Na-
4 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the
5 Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency
6 shall jointly establish 4 regional institutes, to be known
7 as “Institutes for Ocean and Coastal Adaptation to Cli-
8 mate Change”, at institutions of higher education in the
9 United States for research, planning, and related efforts
10 to assess and prepare for the impacts of climate change
11 on ocean and coastal areas, including the Great Lakes.

12 (b) LOCATION.—The Administrators shall designate
13 the location of 1 of the regional institutes established
14 under subsection (a) at an institution of higher education
15 in each of the following regions:

16 (1) The Northeast Region, which shall include
17 Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachu-
18 setts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York,
19 Rhode Island, and Vermont.

20 (2) The Southeast and Gulf Coast Region,
21 which shall include Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Lou-
22 isiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico,
23 South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and the Virgin Is-
24 lands.

25 (3) The Western/Pacific Region, which shall in-
26 clude Alaska, American Samoa, California, Guam,

1 Hawaii, the Northern Mariana Islands, Oregon, and
 2 Washington.

3 (4) The Great Lakes Region, which shall in-
 4 clude Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio,
 5 and Wisconsin.

6 (c) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrators shall
 8 award grants to 4 institutions of higher education to
 9 carry out the purposes of this section.

10 (2) APPLICATION.—An institution of higher
 11 education seeking to operate an institute under this
 12 section shall submit an application to the Adminis-
 13 trators at such time, in such manner, and containing
 14 such information as the Administrators may reason-
 15 ably require.

16 (d) SCHEDULE.—The Administrators shall—

17 (1) accept applications for grants under this
 18 section beginning not later than 9 months after the
 19 date of the enactment of this Act; and

20 (2) award all of the grants authorized under
 21 this section not later than 90 days after the first day
 22 on which applications are accepted.

23 (e) OBJECTIVES.—The Institutes for Ocean and
 24 Coastal Adaptation shall be centers of excellence that—

1 (1) document and predict coastal and ocean ef-
2 fects of climate change; and

3 (2) serve as a principle national and inter-
4 national resource for providing technical expertise on
5 adaptation strategies for ocean and coastal area to
6 respond to climate change.

7 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
8 are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be
9 necessary to carry out this section.

○