

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3833

To amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to provide for the selection of a fiscal agent for the Patrick Leahy Lake Champlain Basin Program, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 11, 2026

Mr. WELCH (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SANDERS, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

A BILL

To amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to provide for the selection of a fiscal agent for the Patrick Leahy Lake Champlain Basin 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 “Patrick Leahy Lake
5 Champlain Basin Program Enhancements Act of 2026”
6 or the “LCBP Enhancements Act of 2026”.

1 **SEC. 2. PATRICK LEAHY LAKE CHAMPLAIN BASIN PRO-**
2 **GRAM.**

3 Section 120 of the Federal Water Pollution Control
4 Act (33 U.S.C. 1270) is amended—

5 (1) in subsection (a)—

6 (A) in paragraph (2)(A), by striking “New
7 England Interstate Water Pollution Control
8 Commission” and inserting “fiscal agent”; and

9 (B) by adding at the end the following:

10 “(3) FISCAL AGENT.—

11 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Steering Com-
12 mittee and the Administrator shall jointly select
13 a qualified entity to serve as the fiscal agent for
14 the Patrick Leahy Lake Champlain Basin Pro-
15 gram.

16 “(B) ASSESSMENT.—

17 “(i) IN GENERAL.—Beginning as soon
18 as practicable after the date of enactment
19 of the LCBP Enhancements Act of 2026,
20 and as necessary but not less frequently
21 than once every 5 years thereafter, the
22 Steering Committee and the Administrator
23 shall jointly assess the effectiveness of the
24 fiscal agent and, if appropriate, select a
25 new qualified entity to serve as the fiscal
26 agent through a competitive process.

1 “(ii) STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT.—

2 In carrying out the assessments required
3 under clause (i), the Steering Committee
4 and the Administrator shall consult with,
5 and incorporate feedback from, impacted
6 stakeholders.

7 “(iii) NO COMPETITIVE PROCESS
8 AFTER SELECTION.—On selection of a fis-
9 cal agent, the Administrator shall award
10 funding to the fiscal agent without com-
11 petition until such time as a new fiscal
12 agent is selected.

13 “(iv) NEW FISCAL AGENT SELEC-
14 TION.—If the Steering Committee and the
15 Administrator jointly select a new fiscal
16 agent pursuant to clause (i)—

17 “(I) the Administrator may de-
18 obligate unobligated or unexpended
19 funds from prior awards under clause
20 (iii) and re-obligate those funds to the
21 new fiscal agent;

22 “(II) the Steering Committee and
23 the Administrator shall, to the max-
24 imum extent practicable, ensure the
25 continuity of the staff, programming,

1 funding awards, and other activities
2 and administrative functions of the
3 Patrick Leahy Lake Champlain Basin
4 Program, as determined necessary by
5 the Steering Committee and the Ad-
6 ministrator; and

7 “(III) the Steering Committee
8 and the Administrator shall, to the
9 maximum extent practicable, ensure
10 that the new fiscal agent—

11 “(aa) is headquartered in
12 the Lake Champlain drainage
13 basin;

14 “(bb) only if a suitable enti-
15 ty described in item (aa) is not
16 identified, is headquartered in
17 the State of New York or
18 Vermont; or

19 “(cc) only if a suitable entity
20 described in item (bb) is not
21 identified, maintains a significant
22 staffing presence, including staff
23 that would have decisionmaking
24 authority with respect to the Pat-
25 rick Leahy Lake Champlain

1 Basin Program, within the Lake
2 Champlain drainage basin.

3 “(v) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not
4 later than 90 days after the date on which
5 an assessment under clause (i) is com-
6 pleted, the Administrator shall submit to
7 the Committee on Environment and Public
8 Works of the Senate and the Committee on
9 Transportation and Infrastructure of the
10 House of Representatives a report that de-
11 scribes the findings of that assessment, in-
12 cluding a description of the reasons for
13 maintaining the current fiscal agent or se-
14 lecting a new fiscal agent.

15 “(C) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The responsibil-
16 ities of the fiscal agent may include, as jointly
17 determined appropriate by the Steering Com-
18 mittee and the Administrator, executing payroll,
19 paying bills and fulfilling other obligations, de-
20 veloping and executing funding agreements, and
21 acting as a fiduciary for the Patrick Leahy
22 Lake Champlain Basin Program.”;

23 (2) by redesignating subsections (g) through (i)
24 as subsections (h) through (j), respectively;

1 (3) by inserting after subsection (f) the fol-
 2 lowing:

3 “(g) GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION.—

4 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The United States Section
 5 of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission may under-
 6 take, fund, and support work on Lake Champlain, in
 7 the Lake Champlain drainage basin, and in other
 8 areas within the Saint Lawrence River basin in
 9 Vermont and New York, including through—

10 “(A) fisheries and aquatic ecosystem re-
 11 search, monitoring, restoration, and manage-
 12 ment;

13 “(B) sea lamprey control;

14 “(C) aquatic invasive species prevention
 15 and mitigation;

16 “(D) public engagement and education;
 17 and

18 “(E) other work to implement the Plan.

19 “(2) AUTHORIZATION.—In carrying out para-
 20 graph (1), the United States Section of the Great
 21 Lakes Fishery Commission may work with the Pat-
 22 rick Leahy Lake Champlain Basin Program, Federal
 23 and State agencies, institutions of higher education,
 24 nonprofit organizations, units of local government,

and Canadian federal and Quebec provincial authorities.”;

(4) in subsection (h) (as so redesignated)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) as paragraphs (3), (2), and (4), respectively, and moving the paragraphs so as to appear in numerical order;

(B) by inserting before paragraph (2) (as so redesignated) the following:

“(1) FISCAL AGENT.—The term ‘fiscal agent’ means an organization, including a nonprofit organization, interstate commission, or other entity jointly determined appropriate by the Administrator and the Steering Committee, that provides fiscal and administrative management support for the Patrick Leahy Lake Champlain Basin Program under the direction of the Steering Committee and the Administrator.”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) STEERING COMMITTEE.—The term ‘Steering Committee’ means the Steering Committee established by the Lake Champlain Management Conference on October 9, 1996, to implement the Lake Champlain Management Plan and maintained under the most recent Memorandum of Understanding on

1 Environmental Cooperation on the Management of
2 Lake Champlain entered into between the State of
3 New York, the State of Vermont, and, if the Prov-
4 ince of Quebec elects to participate, the Province of
5 Quebec.”; and

6 (5) in subsection (j) (as so redesignated), by
7 striking “2027” and inserting “2032”.

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