

Roosevelt on June 29, 1906, as the first National Park set aside to preserve the works of humankind;

Whereas the more than 5,000 archeological sites, including over 600 cliff dwellings, protected within the 52,000-acre boundary of Mesa Verde National Park represent some of the most spectacular and best-preserved prehistoric architecture in the world;

Whereas in 1928, Congress declared the natural resources of Mesa Verde National Park to be of such caliber as to be worthy of the same level of protection as the cultural resources therein;

Whereas 8,500 acres within Mesa Verde National Park were designated as wilderness by Congress on October 20, 1976;

Whereas on September 8, 1978, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization ("UNESCO") declared Mesa Verde National Park to be 1 of 8 original World Cultural Heritage Sites;

Whereas Mesa Verde National Park is part of our American heritage that is universally recognized and shared with the world;

Whereas Mesa Verde National Park is the primary driving force behind the economy of southwestern Colorado and the Four Corners Region;

Whereas the communities of Cortez, Dolores, Mancos, and Durango, Colorado, have come together to plan a year-long celebration worthy of this magnificent icon of the National Park System; and

Whereas 24 American Indian tribes recognize Mesa Verde as their ancestral home and contribute a rich cultural heritage to the experience of visitors to the region: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the 100th anniversary of Mesa Verde National Park; and

(2) urges all citizens of the United States to join in the Centennial Celebration of Mesa Verde National Park by participating in the many activities planned throughout the year in 2006.

#### UNITED STATES PAROLE COMMISSION EXTENSION AND SENTENCING COMMISSION AUTHORITY ACT OF 2005

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 1368, introduced earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1368) to extend the existence of the Parole Commission, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 1368) was read the third time and passed, as follows:

S. 1368

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "United States Parole Commission Extension and

Sentencing Commission Authority Act of 2005".

#### SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF EXISTENCE OF THE PAROLE COMMISSION.

For purposes of section 235(b) of the Sentencing Reform Act of 1984 (98 Stat. 2032) as such section relates to chapter 311 of title 18, United States Code, and the United States Parole Commission, each reference in such section to "eighteen years" or "eighteen-year period" shall be deemed a reference to "21 years" or "21-year period", respectively.

#### SEC. 3. PROVISION OF EMERGENCY AMENDMENT AUTHORITY FOR SENTENCING COMMISSION.

In accordance with the procedure set forth in section 21(a) of the Sentencing Act of 1987 (Public Law 10009182), as though the authority under that Act had not expired, the United States Sentencing Commission shall—

(1) not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, amend the Federal sentencing guidelines, commentary, and policy statements to implement section 6703 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (Public Law 10809458); and

(2) not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, amend the Federal sentencing guidelines, commentary, and policy statements to implement section 3 of the Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 2004 (Public Law 10809358).

#### ALICE R. BRUNSICH POST OFFICE BUILDING

#### DOROTHY AND CONNIE HIBBS POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be discharged from further consideration and that the Senate proceed to immediate consideration of the following postal naming bills, en bloc: S. 1275 and S. 1323.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the Senate will proceed en bloc.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bills be read a third time and passed, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, en bloc, and that any statements relating to the bills be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bills (S. 1275 and S. 1323) were read the third time and passed, as follows:

S. 1275

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. ALICE R. BRUNSICH POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7172 North Tongass Highway, in Ward Cove, Alaska, shall be known and designated as the "Alice R. Brunsch Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Alice R. Brunsch Post Office Building".

S. 1323

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. CONNIE HIBBS OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located on Lindbald Avenue, in Girdwood, Alaska, shall be known and designated as the "Dorothy and Connie Hibbs Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Dorothy and Connie Hibbs Post Office Building".

#### THE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of the following items en bloc: Calendar No. 70, S. 362; Calendar No. 71, S. 39; Calendar No. 75, S. 50; and Calendar No. 76, S. 361.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the Senate will proceed to consideration of the measures en bloc.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent the committee amendments, where applicable, be agreed to and considered as original text; the amendments at the desk be agreed to; the bills, as amended, be read a third time and passed; the motions to reconsider be laid on the table, en bloc; and any statements relating to the bills be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MARINE DEBRIS RESEARCH PREVENTION AND REDUCTION ACT

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill (S. 362) to establish a program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the United States Coast Guard to help identify, determine sources of, assess, reduce, and prevent marine debris and its adverse impacts on the marine environment and navigation safety, in coordination with non-Federal entities, and for other purposes, which had been reported from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment.

[Strike the part shown in black brackets and insert the part shown in italic.]

S. 362

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Marine Debris Research Prevention and Reduction Act".

#### SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The oceans, which comprise nearly three quarters of the Earth's surface, are an important source of food and provide a wealth of other natural products that are important to the economy of the United States and the world.

(2) Ocean and coastal areas are regions of remarkably high biological productivity, are

of considerable importance for a variety of recreational and commercial activities, and provide a vital means of transportation.

(3) Ocean and coastal 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.

(4) Marine debris, including plastics, derelict fishing gear, and a wide variety of other objects, has a harmful and persistent effect on marine flora and fauna and can have adverse impacts on human health.

(5) Marine debris is also a hazard to navigation, putting mariners and rescuers, their vessels, and consequently the marine environment at risk, and can cause economic loss due to entanglement of vessel systems.

(6) Modern plastic materials persist for decades in the marine environment and therefore pose the greatest potential for long-term damage to the marine environment.

(7) Insufficient knowledge and data on the source, movement, and effects of plastics and other marine debris in marine ecosystems has hampered efforts to develop effective approaches for addressing marine debris.

(8) Lack of resources, inadequate attention to this issue, and poor coordination at the Federal level has undermined the development and implementation of a Federal program to address marine debris, both domestically and internationally.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to establish programs within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the United States Coast Guard to help identify, determine sources of, assess, reduce, and prevent marine debris and its adverse impacts on the marine environment and navigation safety, in coordination with other Federal and non-Federal entities;

(2) to re-establish the Inter-agency Marine Debris Coordinating Committee to ensure a coordinated government response across Federal agencies;

(3) to develop a Federal information clearinghouse to enable researchers to study the sources, scale and impact of marine debris more efficiently; and

(4) to take appropriate action in the international community to prevent marine debris and reduce concentrations of existing debris on a global scale.

### SEC. 3. NOAA MARINE DEBRIS PREVENTION AND REMOVAL PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.—There is established, within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a Marine Debris Prevention and Removal Program to reduce and prevent the occurrence and adverse impacts of marine debris on the marine environment and navigation safety.

(b) PROGRAM COMPONENTS.—Through the Marine Debris Prevention and Removal Program, the Administrator shall carry out the following activities:

(1) MAPPING, IDENTIFICATION, IMPACT ASSESSMENT, REMOVAL, AND PREVENTION.—The Administrator shall, in consultation with relevant Federal agencies, undertake marine debris mapping, identification, impact assessment, prevention, and removal efforts, with a focus on marine debris posing a threat to living marine resources (particularly endangered or protected species) and navigation safety, including—

(A) the establishment of a process, building on existing information sources maintained by Federal agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency and the Coast Guard, for cataloguing and maintaining an inventory of marine debris and its impacts found in the United States navigable waters and the United States exclusive economic

zone, including location, material, size, age, and origin, and impacts on habitat, living marine resources, human health, and navigation safety;

(B) measures to identify the origin, location, and projected movement of marine debris within the United States navigable waters, the United States exclusive economic zone, and the high seas, including the use of oceanographic, atmospheric, satellite, and remote sensing data; and

(C) development and implementation of strategies, methods, priorities, and a plan for preventing and removing marine debris from United States navigable waters and within the United States exclusive economic zone, including development of local or regional protocols for removal of derelict fishing gear.

(2) REDUCING AND PREVENTING LOSS OF GEAR.—The Administrator shall improve efforts and actively seek to prevent and reduce fishing gear losses, as well as to reduce adverse impacts of such gear on living marine resources and navigation safety, including—

(A) research and development of alternatives to gear posing threats to the marine environment, and methods for marking gear used in specific fisheries to enhance the tracking, recovery, and identification of lost and discarded gear; and

(B) development of voluntary or mandatory measures to reduce the loss and discard of fishing gear, and to aid its recovery, such as incentive programs, reporting loss and recovery of gear, observer programs, toll-free reporting hotlines, computer-based notification forms, and providing adequate and free disposal receptacles at ports.

(3) OUTREACH.—The Administrator shall undertake outreach and education of the public and other stakeholders, such as the fishing industry, fishing gear manufacturers, and other marine-dependent industries, on sources of marine debris, threats associated with marine debris and approaches to identify, determine sources of, assess, reduce, and prevent marine debris and its adverse impacts on the marine environment and navigational safety. Including outreach and education activities through public-private initiatives. The Administrator shall coordinate outreach and education activities under this paragraph with any outreach programs conducted under section 2204 of the Marine Plastic Pollution Research and Control Act of 1987 (33 U.S.C. 1915).

(c) GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall provide financial assistance, in the form of grants, through the Marine Debris Prevention and Removal Program for projects to accomplish the purposes of this Act.

(2) 50 PERCENT MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), Federal funds for any project under this section may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of such project. For purposes of this subparagraph, the non-Federal share of project costs may be provided by in-kind contributions and other non-cash support.

(B) WAIVER.—The Administrator may waive all or part of the matching requirement under subparagraph (A) if the Administrator determines that no reasonable means are available through which applicants can meet the matching requirement and the probable benefit of such project outweighs the public interest in such matching requirement.

(3) AMOUNTS PAID AND SERVICES RENDERED UNDER CONSENT.—

(A) CONSENT DECREES AND ORDERS.—The non-Federal share of the cost of a project carried out under this Act may include money paid pursuant to, or the value of any in-kind service performed under, an adminis-

trative order on consent or judicial consent decree that will remove or prevent marine debris.

(B) OTHER DECREES AND ORDERS.—The non-Federal share of the cost of a project carried out under this Act may not include any money paid pursuant to, or the value of any in-kind service performed under, any other administrative order or court order.

(4) ELIGIBILITY.—Any natural resource management authority of a State, Federal or other government authority whose activities directly or indirectly affect research or regulation of marine debris, and any educational or nongovernmental institutions with demonstrated expertise in a field related to marine debris, are eligible to submit to the Administrator a marine debris proposal under the grant program.

(5) GRANT CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES.—Within 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall promulgate necessary guidelines for implementation of the grant program, including development of criteria and priorities for grants. Such priorities may include proposals that would reduce new sources of marine debris and provide additional benefits to the public, such as recycling of marine debris or use of biodegradable materials. In developing those guidelines, the Administrator shall consult with—

(A) the Interagency Marine Debris Committee;

(B) regional fishery management councils established under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.);

(C) State, regional, and local governmental entities with marine debris experience;

(D) marine-dependent industries; and

(E) non-governmental organizations involved in marine debris research, prevention, or removal activities.

(6) PROJECT REVIEW AND APPROVAL.—The Administrator shall review each marine debris project proposal to determine if it meets the grant criteria and supports the goals of the Act. Not later than 120 days after receiving a project proposal under this section, the Administrator shall—

(A) provide for external merit-based peer review of the proposal;

(B) after considering any written comments and recommendations based on the review, approve or disapprove the proposal; and

(C) provide written notification of that approval or disapproval to the person who submitted the proposal.

(7) PROJECT REPORTING.—Each grantee under this section shall provide periodic reports as required by the Administrator. Each report shall include all information required by the Administrator for evaluating the progress and success in meeting its stated goals, and impact on the marine debris problem.

### SEC. 4. COAST GUARD PROGRAM.

The Commandant of the Coast Guard shall, in cooperation with the Administrator, undertake measures to reduce violations of MARPOL Annex V and the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (33 U.S.C. 1901 et seq.) with respect to the discard of plastics and other garbage from vessels. The measures shall include—

(1) the development of a strategy to improve monitoring and enforcement of current laws, as well as recommendations for statutory or regulatory changes to improve compliance and for the development of any appropriate amendments to MARPOL;

(2) regulations to address implementation gaps with respect to the requirement of MARPOL Annex V and section 6 of the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (33 U.S.C.

1905) that all United States ports and terminals maintain receptacles for disposing of plastics and other garbage, which may include measures to ensure that a sufficient quantity of such facilities exist at all such ports and terminals, requirements for logging the waste received, and for Coast Guard comparison of vessel and port log books to determine compliance;

(3) regulations to close record keeping gaps, which may include requiring fishing vessels under 400 gross tons entering United States ports to maintain records subject to Coast Guard inspection on the disposal of plastics and other garbage, that, at a minimum, include the time, date, type of garbage, quantity, and location of discharge by latitude and longitude or, if discharged on land, the name of the port where such material is offloaded for [disposal:] disposal, taking into account potential economic impacts and technical feasibility;

(4) regulations to improve ship-board waste management, which may include expanding to smaller vessels existing requirements to maintain ship-board receptacles and maintain a ship-board waste management plan, taking into account potential economic impacts and technical feasibility;

(5) the development, through outreach to commercial vessel operators and recreational boaters, of a voluntary reporting program, along with the establishment of a central reporting location, for incidents of damage to vessels caused by marine debris, as well as observed violations of existing laws and regulations relating to disposal of plastics and other marine debris; and

(6) a voluntary program encouraging United States flag vessels to inform the Coast Guard of any ports in other countries that lack adequate port reception facilities for garbage.

#### SEC. 5. INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.

(a) INTERAGENCY MARINE DEBRIS COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED.—There is established an Interagency Committee on Marine Debris to coordinate a comprehensive program of marine debris research and activities among Federal agencies, in cooperation and coordination with non-governmental organizations, industry, universities, and research institutions, State governments, Indian tribes, and other nations, as appropriate, and to foster cost-effective mechanisms to identify, determine sources of, assess, reduce, and prevent marine debris, and its adverse impact on the marine environment and navigational safety, including the joint funding of research and mitigation and prevention strategies.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—The Committee shall include a senior official from—

- (1) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, who shall serve as the chairperson of the Committee;
- (2) the United States Coast Guard;
- (3) the Environmental Protection Agency;
- (4) the United States Navy;
- (5) the Maritime Administration of the Department of Transportation;
- (6) the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;
- (7) the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- (8) the Department of State;
- (9) the Marine Mammal Commission; and
- (10) such other Federal agencies that have an interest in ocean issues or water pollution prevention and control as the Administrator determines appropriate.

(c) MEETINGS.—The Committee shall meet at least twice a year to provide a public, interagency forum to ensure the coordination of national and international research, monitoring, education, and regulatory actions addressing the persistent marine debris problem.

(d) DEFINITION.—The Committee shall develop and promulgate through regulation a definition of the term “marine debris”.

(e) REPORTING.—

(1) INTERAGENCY REPORT ON MARINE DEBRIS IMPACTS AND STRATEGIES.—Not later than 12 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Committee, through the chairperson, and in cooperation with the coastal States, Indian tribes, local governments, and non-governmental organizations, shall complete and submit to the Congress a report identifying the source of marine debris, examining the ecological and economic impact of marine debris, alternatives for reducing, mitigating, preventing, and controlling the harmful affects of marine debris, the social and economic costs and benefits of such alternatives, and recommendations regarding both domestic and international marine debris issues.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall provide recommendations on—

(A) establishing priority areas for action to address leading problems relating to marine debris;

(B) developing an effective strategy and approaches to preventing, reducing, removing, and disposing of marine debris, including through private-public partnerships;

(C) providing appropriate infrastructure for effective implementation and enforcement of measures to prevent and remove marine debris, especially the discard and loss of fishing gear;

(D) establishing effective and coordinated education and outreach activities; and

(E) ensuring Federal cooperation with, and assistance to, the coastal States (as defined in section 304(4) of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1453(4))), Indian tribes, and local governments in the identification, determination of sources, prevention, reduction, management, mitigation, and control of marine debris and its adverse impacts.

(3) ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every year thereafter, the Committee, through the chairperson, shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives a report that evaluates United States and international progress in meeting the purposes of this Act. The report shall include—

(A) the status of implementation of the recommendations of the Committee and analysis of their effectiveness;

(B) a summary of the marine debris inventory to be maintained by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

(C) a review of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration program authorized by section 3 of this Act, including projects funded and accomplishments relating to reduction and prevention of marine debris;

(D) a review of United States Coast Guard programs and accomplishments relating to marine debris removal, including enforcement and compliance with MARPOL requirements; and

(E) estimated Federal and non-Federal funding provided for marine debris and recommendations for priority funding needs.

(f) MONITORING.—The Administrator, in cooperation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, shall utilize the marine debris data derived under this Act and title V of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972 (33 U.S.C. 2801 et seq.) to assist—

(1) the Committee in ensuring coordination of research, monitoring, education, and regulatory actions; and

(2) the United States Coast Guard in assessing the effectiveness of this Act and the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (33 U.S.C. 1901 et seq.) in ensuring compliance under section 2201 of the Marine Plastic Pollution Research and Control Act of 1987 (33 U.S.C. 1913).

(g) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 2203 of the Marine Plastic Pollution Research and Control Act of 1987 (33 U.S.C. 1914) is repealed.

#### SEC. 6. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION.

The Interagency Marine Debris Committee shall develop a strategy and pursue in the International Maritime Organization and other appropriate international and regional forums, international action to reduce the incidence of marine debris, including—

(1) the inclusion of effective and enforceable marine debris prevention and removal measures in international and regional agreements, including fisheries agreements and maritime agreements;

(2) measures to strengthen and to improve compliance with MARPOL Annex V;

(3) national reporting and information requirements that will assist in improving information collection, identification and monitoring of marine debris;

(4) the establishment of an international database, consistent with the information clearinghouse established under section 7, that will provide current information on location, source, prevention, and removal of marine debris;

(5) the establishment of public-private partnerships and funding sources for pilot programs that will assist in implementation and compliance with marine debris requirements in international agreements and guidelines;

(6) the identification of possible amendments to and provisions in the International Maritime Organization Guidelines for the Implementation of Annex V of MARPOL for potential inclusion in Annex V; and

(7) when appropriate assist the responsible Federal agency in bilateral negotiations to effectively enforce marine debris prevention.

#### SEC. 7. FEDERAL INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE.

The Administrator, in coordination with the Committee, shall maintain a Federal information clearinghouse on marine debris that will be available to researchers and other interested parties to improve source identification, data sharing, and monitoring efforts through collaborative research and open sharing of data. The clearinghouse shall include—

(1) standardized protocols to map locations of commercial fishing and aquaculture activities using Geographic Information System techniques;

(2) a world-wide database which describes fishing gear and equipment, and fishing practices, including information on gear types and specifications;

(3) guidance on the identification of types of fishing gear fragments and their sources developed in consultation with persons of relevant expertise; and

(4) the data on mapping and identification of marine debris to be developed pursuant to section 3(b)(1) of this Act.

#### SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(2) COMMITTEE.—The term “Committee” means the Interagency Marine Debris Committee established by section 5 of this Act.

(3) UNITED STATES EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE.—The term “United States exclusive economic zone” means the zone established

by Presidential Proclamation Numbered 5030, dated March 10, 1983, including the ocean waters of the areas referred to as "eastern special areas" in article 3(1) of the Agreement between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Maritime Boundary, signed June 1, 1990.

(4) MARPOL; ANNEX V; CONVENTION.—The terms "MARPOL", "Annex 5", and "Convention" have the meaning given those terms in paragraphs (3) and (4) of section 2(a) of the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (33 U.S.C. 1901(a)).

#### SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated for each fiscal year 2006 through 2010—

(1) to the Administrator for the purpose of carrying out sections 3 and 7 of this Act, \$10,000,000, of which no more than 10 percent may be for administrative costs; and

(2) to the Secretary of the Department in which the Coast Guard is operating, for the use of the Commandant of the Coast Guard in carrying out sections 4 and 6 of this Act, \$5,000,000, of which no more than 10 percent may be used for administrative costs.

Mr. INOUE. I rise today in support of S. 362, the Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act, legislation I introduced with Senator STEVENS, with the cosponsorship of Senators CANTWELL, SNOWE, LAUTENBERG, KERRY, SARBANES, AKAKA, and MURRAY.

This bill, which I am proud to say passed the Senate unanimously in the 108th Congress, focuses on one particular impact that goes unnoticed by many and has been largely ignored by the global community: marine debris. This problem is so important, and so pervasive, that it merited an entire chapter of the 2004 Report of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy.

While marine debris includes conventional "trash," it also includes a vast array of additional materials that may find their way to sea, such as discarded or lost fishing gear, cargo washed overboard, and abandoned equipment from our commercial fleets. Marine debris is not only unsightly and dangerous to navigation, but it is also deadly to sea creatures, which may die entangled in a discarded fishing net or after ingesting plastic items such as lighters and toys.

While the problem is vast, it is also reversible when given sufficient emphasis, coordination, and funding. The bill being considered by the full Senate today aims to meet this challenge by adopting the measures recommended by both the Ocean Commission and the 2000 International Marine Debris Conference to help remove manmade marine debris from the list of ocean threats. The bill has strong support from the Bush administration, environmental groups, and others with an interest in the marine debris problem, including the Ocean Conservancy and the Northwest Straits Commission.

Specifically, our legislation would establish a Marine Debris Prevention and Removal Program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, direct the U.S. Coast Guard to improve enforcement of laws designed to prevent ship-based pollu-

tion from plastics and other garbage, reinvigorate an interagency committee on marine debris, and improve our research and information on marine debris sources, threats, and prevention. The bill would authorize \$10 million in funding for the NOAA program, and \$5 million in funding for the Coast Guard program. I am pleased to say that congressional action last year provided \$5 million in appropriated funding to NOAA specifically toward this problem, and the Senate Appropriations Committee has recommended increasing this amount to \$6.4 million in fiscal year 2006. We challenge the administration to likewise increase funding for this initiative in coming years.

In Hawaii, the impacts of marine debris are more visible because of the convergence caused by the North Pacific Tropical High. Atmospheric forces cause ocean surface currents to converge on Hawaii, bringing with them the vast amount of debris floating throughout the Pacific. Since 1996, a total of 484 tons of debris have been removed from coral reefs in the northwestern Hawaiian Islands, which is also home to many endangered marine species. In 2004 alone, the program removed over 125 tons of debris. However, because more debris arrives daily, the job is far from done.

I am pleased that the coordinated approach taken to address the threats posed by marine debris in the northwestern Hawaiian Islands has provided a model for the nation. We have learned that our best path to success lies in partnering with one another to share resources, and it is my hope that others may adapt our project to their own shores through the partnership and funding opportunities set forth in this bill.

We must also bear in mind that no matter how zealously we reform our practices, the ultimate solution lies in international cooperation. The oceans connect the coastal nations of the world, and we must work together to reduce this increasing threat to our seas and shores. The Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act will provide the United States with the tools to develop effective marine debris prevention and removal programs on a worldwide basis, including reporting and information requirements that will assist in the creation of an international marine debris database.

Mr. President, I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting enactment of the Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act. This bill will provide the United States with the programs and resources necessary to protect our most valuable resources, our oceans.

The committee amendment was agreed to.

The amendment (No. 1099) was agreed to, as follows:

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

The bill (S. 362), as amended, was read the third time, and passed.

#### NATIONAL OCEAN EXPLORATION PROGRAM ACT

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill (S. 39) to establish a coordinated national ocean exploration program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

AMENDMENT NO. 1100

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

The amendment (No. 1100) was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

The bill (S. 39), as amended, was read the third time, and passed.

Mr. INOUE. I rise today in support of S. 39, the National Ocean Exploration Program Act. As a cosponsor of S. 39, I join my good friend Chairman, STEVENS in supporting an enhanced national effort to explore our oceans, as was strongly recommended by the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy. The oceans cover nearly three-quarters of the Earth's surface and contain a diversity of life which greatly exceeds that found in terrestrial systems, and yet our oceans remain poorly understood. I therefore commend my friend, Chairman STEVENS, for his initiative in this area and thank Senators SNOWE, DODD, KERRY, LAUTENBERG, CANTWELL, and REED for their support in cosponsoring this legislation.

Despite the importance of the oceans in human history, in regulating climate change, guaranteeing food security, providing energy resources, and enabling worldwide commerce, the U.S. spends only 3.5 percent of its research budget on ocean science, and far less on ocean exploration. Approximately 95 percent of the ocean floor remains unexplored. It is hard to understand our inattention to this exciting area of research given the opportunity ocean exploration provides for discovering new habitats, species, artifacts, and resources. Ocean exploration expeditions can provide images of ancient human artifacts, rare or previously undiscovered species, and exciting new ecosystems. These images ignite the imagination of the general public and engage them in marine science and conservation.

This bill is a reflection of Senator STEVENS' and my long history of working together to increase the funding for ocean exploration, as well as to secure a dedicated vessel to conduct these activities in U.S. waters and worldwide. To accomplish these goals our bill would establish a national ocean exploration program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that, in coordination with the National Science Foundation, would conduct interdisciplinary ocean exploration voyages and give priority attention to deep ocean regions.

To facilitate the aims of the exploration program, the bill would also establish a Federal exploration technology and infrastructure task force. This task force would be charged with strengthening interagency coordination for the purposes of developing and