

would provide an additional year. And, hopefully, with some prodding, and maybe a different Congress next year, we can get DOT's attention and get them to meaningfully consult with the sovereign nations, with the Tribes, to come up with a bill that is agreed to both by the Department of Transportation and the Tribes.

Mr. Speaker, this is quite simple. It has broad bipartisan support. I am not aware of any opposition. I urge my colleagues to vote "aye" on this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6414.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### SAVE OUR SEAS ACT OF 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 756) to reauthorize and amend the Marine Debris Act to promote international action to reduce marine debris, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 756

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

#### TITLE I—MARINE DEBRIS

##### SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "Save Our Seas Act of 2018".

##### SEC. 102. NOAA MARINE DEBRIS PROGRAM.

Section 3 of the Marine Debris Act (33 U.S.C. 1952) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (4), by striking "and" and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in paragraph (5)(C), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(6) work to develop outreach and education strategies with other Federal agencies to address sources of marine debris;

"(7) except for discharges of marine debris from vessels, in consultation with the Department of State and other Federal agencies, promote international action, as appropriate, to reduce the incidence of marine debris, including providing technical assistance to expand waste management systems internationally; and

"(8) in the case of an event determined to be a severe marine debris event under subsection (c)—

"(A) assist in the cleanup and response required by the severe marine debris event; or

"(B) conduct such other activity as the Administrator determines is appropriate in response to the severe marine debris event.";

(2) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d);

(3) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

"(c) DETERMINATION OF SEVERE MARINE DEBRIS EVENTS.—At the discretion of the Administrator or at the request of the Governor of an affected State, the Administrator shall determine whether there is a severe marine debris event.";

(4) in subsection (d), as so redesignated—

(A) in paragraph (2)(A), by striking "subparagraph (B)" and inserting "subparagraphs (B) and (C)";

(B) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking "may waive all or part of the matching requirement under subparagraph (A)" and inserting "may reduce the non-Federal share of project costs under subparagraph (A) by up to 50 percent"; and

(C) by adding at the end of paragraph (2) the following:

"(C) SEVERE MARINE DEBRIS EVENTS.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Federal share of the cost of an activity carried out under a determination made under subsection (c) shall be—

"(i) 100 percent of the cost of the activity, for an activity funded wholly by funds made available by a person, including the government of a foreign country, to the Federal Government for the purpose of responding to a severe marine debris event; or

"(ii) 75 percent of the cost of the activity, for any activity other than an activity funded as described in clause (i)."

##### SEC. 103. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT TO RESPOND TO MARINE DEBRIS.

It is the sense of Congress that the President should—

(1) support research and development on systems and materials that reduce—

(A) derelict fishing gear; and

(B) the amount of solid waste that is generated from land-based sources and the amount of such waste that enters the marine environment;

(2) work with representatives of foreign countries that discharge the largest amounts of solid waste from land-based sources into the marine environment, to develop mechanisms to reduce such discharges;

(3) carry out studies to determine—

(A) the primary means of discharges referred to in paragraph (2);

(B) the manner in which waste management infrastructure can be most effective in preventing such discharges; and

(C) the long-term impacts of marine debris on the national economies of the countries with which work is undertaken under paragraph (2) and on the global economy, including the impacts of reducing the discharge of such debris;

(4) work with representatives of the countries with which work is undertaken in paragraph (2) to conclude one or more new international agreements that include provisions—

(A) to mitigate the discharge of land-based solid waste into the marine environment; and

(B) to provide technical assistance and investment in waste management infrastructure to reduce such discharges, if the President determines such assistance or investment is appropriate; and

(5) encourage the United States Trade Representative to consider the impact of discharges of land-based solid waste from the countries with which work is conducted under paragraph (2) in relevant future trade agreements.

##### SEC. 104. MEMBERSHIP OF THE INTERAGENCY MARINE DEBRIS COORDINATING COMMITTEE.

Section 5(b) of the Marine Debris Act (33 U.S.C. 1954(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4), by striking "and" and inserting a semicolon;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (7); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following:

"(5) the Department of State;

"(6) the Department of the Interior; and".

##### SEC. 105. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 9 of the Marine Debris Act (33 U.S.C. 1958) is amended to read as follows:

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

"(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2018 through 2022 for carrying out sections 3, 5, and 6, of which not more than 5 percent is authorized for each fiscal year for administrative costs.

"(b) AMOUNTS AUTHORIZED FOR COAST GUARD.—Of the amounts authorized for each fiscal year under section 2702(1) of title 14, United States Code, up to \$2,000,000 is authorized for the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating for use by the Commandant of the Coast Guard to carry out section 4 of this Act, of which not more than 5 percent is authorized for each fiscal year for administrative costs."

#### TITLE II—MARITIME SAFETY

##### SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "Maritime Safety Act of 2018".

##### SEC. 202. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) COMMANDANT.—The term "Commandant" means the Commandant of the Coast Guard.

(2) RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATION.—The term "recognized organization" has the meaning given that term in section 2.45-1 of title 46, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating.

##### SEC. 203. DOMESTIC VESSEL COMPLIANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which the President submits to the Congress a budget each year pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, the Commandant shall publish on a publicly accessible Website information documenting domestic vessel compliance with the requirements of subtitle II of title 46, United States Code.

(b) CONTENT.—The information required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) include flag-State detention rates for each type of inspected vessel; and

(2) identify any recognized organization that inspected or surveyed a vessel that was later subject to a Coast Guard-issued control action attributable to a major nonconformity that the recognized organization failed to identify in such inspection or survey.

##### SEC. 204. SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct an audit regarding the implementation and effectiveness of safety management plans required under chapter 32 of title 46, United States Code.

(b) SCOPE.—The audit conducted under subsection (a) shall include a representative sample of safety management plans, including such plans for—

(1) a range of vessel types and sizes; and

(2) vessels that operate in a cross-section of regional operating areas.

(c) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and

Transportation of the Senate a report detailing the results of the audit and providing recommendations related to such results, including ways to streamline and focus such plans on ship safety.

(2) **MARINE SAFETY ALERT.**—Not later than 60 days after the date the report is submitted under paragraph (1), the Commandant shall publish a Marine Safety Alert providing notification of the completion of the report and including a link to the report on a publicly accessible website.

#### **SEC. 205. EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS.**

(a) **REGULATIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 3306 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(1)(1) The Secretary shall require that a freight vessel inspected under this chapter be outfitted with distress signaling and location technology for the higher of—

“(A) the minimum complement of officers and crew specified on the certificate of inspection for such vessel; or

“(B) the number of persons onboard the vessel; and

“(2) the requirement described in paragraph (1) shall not apply to vessels operating within the baseline from which the territorial sea of the United States is measured.

“(m)(1) The Secretary shall promulgate regulations requiring companies to maintain records of all incremental weight changes made to freight vessels inspected under this chapter, and to track weight changes over time to facilitate rapid determination of the aggregate total.

“(2) Records maintained under paragraph (1) shall be stored, in paper or electronic form, onboard such vessels for not less than 3 years and shoreside for the life of the vessel.”.

(2) **DEADLINES.**—The Secretary shall—

(A) begin implementing the requirement under section 3306(l) of title 46, United States Code, as amended by this subsection, by not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(B) promulgate the regulations required under section 3306(m) of title 46, United States Code, as amended by this subsection, by not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) **ENGAGEMENT.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall seek to enter into negotiations through the International Maritime Organization to amend regulation 25 of chapter II-1 of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea to require a high-water alarm sensor in each cargo hold of a freight vessel (as that term is defined in section 2101(13) of title 46, United States Code), that connects with audible and visual alarms on the navigation bridge of the vessel.

#### **SEC. 206. VOYAGE DATA RECORDER; ACCESS.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 63 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

##### **“§ 6309. Voyage data recorder access**

“Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Coast Guard shall have full and timely access to and ability to use voyage data recorder data and audio held by any Federal agency in all marine casualty investigations, regardless of which agency is the investigative lead.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The analysis for such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following:

“6309. Voyage data recorder access.”.

#### **SEC. 207. VOYAGE DATA RECORDER; REQUIREMENTS.**

(a) **FLOAT-FREE AND BEACON REQUIREMENTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall seek to enter into negotiations through the International Maritime Organization to amend regulation 20 of chapter V of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea to require that all voyage data recorders are installed in a float-free arrangement and contain an integrated emergency position indicating radio beacon.

(2) **PROGRESS UPDATE.**—Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate an update on the progress of the engagement required under paragraph (1).

(b) **COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a cost-benefit analysis of requiring that voyage data recorders installed on commercial vessels documented under chapter 121 of title 46, United States Code, capture communications on the internal telephone systems of such vessels, including requiring the capture of both sides of all communications with the bridge onboard such vessels.

#### **SEC. 208. SURVIVAL AND LOCATING EQUIPMENT.**

Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall, subject to the availability of appropriations, identify and procure equipment that will provide search-and-rescue units the ability to attach a radio or Automated Identification System strobe or beacon to an object that is not immediately retrievable.

#### **SEC. 209. TRAINING OF COAST GUARD PERSONNEL.**

(a) **PROSPECTIVE SECTOR COMMANDER TRAINING.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall implement an Officer in Charge, Marine Inspections segment to the sector commander indoctrination course for prospective sector commanders without a Coast Guard prevention ashore officer specialty code.

(b) **STEAMSHIP INSPECTIONS.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall implement steam plant inspection training for Coast Guard marine inspectors and, subject to availability, recognized organizations to which authority is delegated under section 3316 of title 46, United States Code.

(c) **ADVANCED JOURNEYMAN INSPECTOR TRAINING.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall establish advanced training to provide instruction on the oversight of recognized organizations to which authority is delegated under section 3316 of title 46, United States Code, auditing responsibilities, and the inspection of unique vessel types.

(2) **RECIPIENTS.**—The Commandant shall—

(A) require that such training be completed by senior Coast Guard marine inspectors; and

(B) subject to availability of training capacity, make such training available to recognized organization surveyors authorized by the Coast Guard to conduct inspections.

(d) **COAST GUARD INSPECTIONS STAFF; BRIEFING.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee

on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a briefing detailing—

(1) the estimated time and funding necessary to triple the current size of the Coast Guard's traveling inspector staff; and

(2) other options available to the Coast Guard to enhance and maintain marine safety knowledge, including discussion of increased reliance on—

(A) civilian marine inspectors;

(B) experienced licensed mariners;

(C) retired members of the Coast Guard;

(D) arranging for Coast Guard inspectors to ride onboard commercial oceangoing vessels documented under chapter 121 of title 46, United States Code, to gain experience and insight; and

(E) extending tour-lengths for Coast Guard marine safety officers assigned to inspection billets.

(e) **AUDITS; COAST GUARD ATTENDANCE AND PERFORMANCE.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall—

(1) update Coast Guard policy to utilize risk analysis to target the attendance of Coast Guard personnel during external safety management certificate and document of compliance audits; and

(2) perform a quality assurance audit of recognized organization representation and performance regarding United States-flagged vessels.

#### **SEC. 210. MAJOR MARINE CASUALTY PROPERTY DAMAGE THRESHOLD.**

Section 6101(i)(3) of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking “\$500,000” and inserting “\$2,000,000”.

#### **SEC. 211. REVIEWS, BRIEFINGS, AND REPORTS.**

(a) **MAJOR CONVERSION DETERMINATIONS.**—

(1) **REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.**—The Commandant shall conduct a review of policies and procedures for making and documenting major conversion determinations, including an examination of the deference given to precedent.

(2) **BRIEFING.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a briefing on the findings of the review required by paragraph (1).

(b) **VENTILATORS, OPENINGS AND STABILITY STANDARDS.**—

(1) **REVIEW.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall complete a review of the effectiveness of United States regulations, international conventions, recognized organizations' class rules, and Coast Guard technical policy regarding—

(A) ventilators and other hull openings;

(B) fire dampers and other closures protecting openings normally open during operations; and

(C) intact and damage stability standards under subchapter S of chapter I of title 46, Code of Federal Regulations.

(2) **BRIEFING.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a briefing on the effectiveness of the regulations, international conventions, recognized organizations' class rules, and Coast Guard technical policy reviewed under paragraph (1).

(c) **SELF-LOCATING DATUM MARKER BUOYS.**—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee

on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a briefing on the reliability of self-locating datum marker buoys and other similar technology used during Coast Guard search-and-rescue operations. The briefing shall include a description of reasonable steps the Commandant could take to increase the reliability of such buoys, including the potential to leverage technology used by the Navy, and how protocols could be developed to conduct testing of such buoys before using them for operations.

(d) OVERSIGHT PROGRAM; EFFECTIVENESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall commission an assessment of the effectiveness of the Coast Guard's oversight of recognized organizations and its impact on compliance by and safety of vessels inspected by such organizations.

(2) EXPERIENCE.—The assessment commissioned under paragraph (1) shall be conducted by a research organization with significant experience in maritime operations and marine safety.

(3) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days after the date that the assessment required under paragraph (1) is completed, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate the results of such assessment.

**SEC. 212. FLAG-STATE GUIDANCE AND SUPPLEMENTS.**

(a) FREIGHT VESSELS; DAMAGE CONTROL INFORMATION.—Within 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue flag-State guidance for all freight vessels documented under chapter 121 of title 46, United States Code, built before January 1, 1992, regarding the inclusion of comprehensive damage control information in safety management plans required under chapter 32 of title 46, United States Code.

(b) RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS; UNITED STATES SUPPLEMENT.—The Commandant shall—

(1) work with recognized organizations to create a single United States Supplement to rules of such organizations for classification of vessels; and

(2) by not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a briefing on whether it is necessary to revise part 8 of title 46, Code of Federal Regulations, to authorize only one United States Supplement to such rules.

**SEC. 213. MARINE SAFETY STRATEGY.**

Section 2116 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “each year of an annual” and inserting “of a triennial”; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by striking “ANNUAL” and inserting “TRIENNIAL”; and

(B) by striking “annual” each place it appears and inserting “triennial”;

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking “fiscal year 2011 and each fiscal year” and inserting “fiscal year 2020 and triennially”; and

(B) by striking “annual plan” and inserting “triennial plan”; and

(4) in subsection (d)(2), by striking “annually” and inserting “triennially”.

**SEC. 214. RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS; OVERSIGHT.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3316 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by redesignating subsection (g) as subsection (h), and

by inserting after subsection (f) the following:

“(g)(1) There shall be within the Coast Guard an office that conducts comprehensive and targeted oversight of all recognized organizations that act on behalf of the Coast Guard.

“(2) The staff of the office shall include subject matter experts, including inspectors, investigators, and auditors, who possess the capability and authority to audit all aspects of such recognized organizations.

“(3) In this subsection the term ‘recognized organization’ has the meaning given that term in section 2.45-1 of title 46, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of the enactment of the Maritime Safety Act of 2018.”.

(b) DEADLINE FOR ESTABLISHMENT.—The Commandant of the Coast Guard shall establish the office required by the amendment made by subsection (a) by not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 215. TIMELY WEATHER FORECASTS.**

Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall seek to enter into negotiations through the International Maritime Organization to amend the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea to require that vessels subject to the requirements of such Convention receive timely synoptic and graphical chart weather forecasts.

**SEC. 216. MARINE SAFETY IMPLEMENTATION STATUS.**

Not later than December 19 of 2018, and of each of the 2 subsequent years thereafter, the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a briefing on the status of implementation of each action outlined in the Commandant's final action memo dated December 19, 2017, regarding the sinking and loss of the vessel *El Faro*.

**SEC. 217. DELEGATED AUTHORITIES.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall review the authorities that have been delegated to recognized organizations for the alternative compliance program as described in subpart D of part 8 of title 46, Code of Federal Regulations, and, if necessary, revise or establish policies and procedures to ensure those delegated authorities are being conducted in a manner to ensure safe maritime transportation.

(b) BRIEFING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a briefing on the implementation of subsection (a).

**TITLE III—CENTER OF EXPERTISE**

**SEC. 301. SHORT TITLE.**

This title may be cited as the “Coast Guard Blue Technology Center of Expertise Act”.

**SEC. 302. COAST GUARD BLUE TECHNOLOGY CENTER OF EXPERTISE.**

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and subject to the availability of appropriations, the Commandant shall establish under section 58 of title 14, United States Code, a Blue Technology center of expertise.

(b) MISSIONS.—In addition to the missions listed in section 58(b) of title 14, United States Code, the Center—

(1) shall—

(A) promote awareness within the Coast Guard of the range and diversity of Blue

Technologies and their potential to enhance Coast Guard mission readiness, operational performance, and regulation of such technologies;

(B) function as an interactive conduit to enable the sharing and dissemination of Blue Technology information between the Coast Guard and representatives from the private sector, academia, nonprofit organizations, and other Federal agencies;

(C) increase awareness among Blue Technology manufacturers, entrepreneurs, and vendors of Coast Guard acquisition policies, procedures, and business practices; and

(D) provide technical support, coordination, and assistance to Coast Guard districts and the Coast Guard Research and Development Center, as appropriate; and

(2) subject to the requirements of the Coast Guard Academy, may coordinate with the Academy to develop appropriate curricula regarding Blue Technology to be offered in professional courses of study to give Coast Guard cadets and officer candidates a greater background and understanding of Blue Technologies.

(c) BLUE TECHNOLOGY EXPOSITION; BRIEFING.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a briefing on the costs and benefits of hosting a biennial Coast Guard Blue Technology exposition to further interactions between representatives from the private sector, academia, and nonprofit organizations, and the Coast Guard and examine emerging technologies and Coast Guard mission demands.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CENTER.—The term “Center” means the Blue Technology center of expertise established under this section.

(2) COMMANDANT.—The term “Commandant” means the Commandant of the Coast Guard.

(3) BLUE TECHNOLOGY.—The term “Blue Technology” means any technology, system, or platform that—

(A) is designed for use or application above, on, or below the sea surface or that is otherwise applicable to Coast Guard operational needs, including such a technology, system, or platform that provides continuous or persistent coverage; and

(B) supports or facilitates—

(i) maritime domain awareness, including—

(I) surveillance and monitoring;

(II) observation, measurement, and modeling; or

(III) information technology and communications;

(ii) search and rescue;

(iii) emergency response;

(iv) maritime law enforcement;

(v) marine inspections and investigations; or

(vi) protection and conservation of the marine environment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alaska.

**GENERAL LEAVE**

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 756.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Alaska?

There was no objection.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), and I ask unanimous consent that he may control that time to manage the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Alaska?

There was no objection.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, S. 756, the Save Our Seas Act, promotes continued national and international efforts to address the growing amount of marine debris entering the ocean environment.

The dean of the House, the gentleman who yielded to me, Mr. DON YOUNG, our esteemed colleague from Alaska, sponsored the House companion bill. I thank our longstanding colleague for all of his efforts to move this legislation through committee and to the House floor.

Marine debris is pervasive and persistent, remaining in the ocean for years and negatively impacting the ocean environment.

S. 756 urges the administration to support research and development on systems and materials that would reduce the amount of waste that enters the ocean and work with nations that discharge large amounts of solid waste into the ocean by sharing technologies and infrastructure to prevent, reduce, or mitigate those land-based sources from entering the marine environment.

The bill also allows the Administrator of NOAA to designate, respond to, and assist in the cleanup of severe marine debris events.

Title II of the bill is the Maritime Safety Act. The text came from H.R. 6175, a bill ordered reported from the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. I sponsored this bill with the ranking member of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Committee, Mr. GARAMENDI, my esteemed colleague from California, as a cosponsor.

The bill addresses maritime safety issues that were raised in the Commandant of the Coast Guard's final action memo in response to the tragic sinking of the *El Faro*. A few of the required actions include: timely weather forecasts, not too complicated; emergency safety gear with locator beacons, so we can find the crew after the vessel has sunk; and float-free voyage data recorders with integrated emergency position indicating beacons.

The measures included in this title should promote safer vessel transit and, if needed, would assist the Coast Guard in its rescue operations.

Sadly, we were reminded again last week, by the events in Missouri, the dangers of going out in the open water, even in a relatively protected environment. Our thoughts and prayers go out

to the families of the loved ones who lost their lives in the tragic incident.

Tragedies like this and, sadly, others in recent history remind us that we must remain vigilant and committed to improving maritime safety to protect those who go out on the water for their livelihood or for recreation.

Title III of the bill allows the Coast Guard to establish a Blue Technology center of expertise. This title is the text of H.R. 6206, as reported by the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Mr. GARAMENDI sponsored the legislation, and I am an original cosponsor of the bill.

The ranking member and I have a strong interest in Blue Technology and how it can assist the Coast Guard in performing its multitude of missions better and more cost effectively. The center created by this legislation will provide a venue for the Coast Guard to interface with industry on existing and up-and-coming technologies that could be used by the service in conducting its missions. It is an important component in bringing the Coast Guard into the modern technological world.

I thank the chairman of the committee, Mr. SHUSTER, for this leadership, and Mr. DEFazio and, especially, Mr. GARAMENDI for their leadership and cooperation in getting these bills out of committee and to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first, let me thank Chairman HUNTER for his work on this bill and on the other work we have been able to do with the Coast Guard and the legislation. It has been a great pleasure to work with him.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 756, the Save Our Seas Act of 2018, as amended, to include other important bills addressing maritime safety and ocean technologies.

As explained by the majority's manager of the bill, marine debris, especially plastics, is a persistent and growing threat to the global marine environment. Many countries, including the United States, contribute to the plastic pollution, and it does add up.

For example, in 2010 alone, according to a University of Georgia study, a total of 8 million metric tons of plastic entered the world's oceans. Worse yet, the study predicts that number will grow 10 times—tenfold—as large by 2025.

Not only are floating plastic bags, straws, Styrofoam cups, and plastic bottles harmful to the health and welfare of marine life, but marine debris also threatens the food supply of millions of people around the world who rely on seafood as their primary source of protein.

The impacts affect people everywhere, and the problem is not going to go away and won't be solved by itself. The legislation we put forth today is

an important step in the right direction.

Title I would authorize existing funding levels in the Marine Debris Act to enable the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the United States Coast Guard to identify and remove sources of marine debris and to coordinate response activities on the national and regional levels to assess and reduce the volume of the debris entering our oceans.

The title also contains important amendments, including new authority to allow the Federal Government to provide assistance to mitigate severe marine debris events, such as the recurrence of the flood of debris that drifted from Japan across the Pacific Ocean in the aftermath of the 2011 Fukushima earthquake and tsunami.

I also want to express my strong support for two other bills recently passed and reported by the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee that were added as separate titles to S. 756: First, H.R. 6175, the Maritime Safety Act of 2018, as title II; and my legislation, H.R. 6206, the Coast Guard Blue Technology Center of Expertise Act, as title III.

The 2015 sinking of the U.S.-flagged commercial vessel, *El Faro*, and the tragic loss of all 33 crew members was the worst U.S. maritime disaster in 35 years. The subsequent Marine Board of Investigation, convened by the Coast Guard and joined by the National Transportation Safety Board, found numerous faults in the ship's safety management system, bridge management, and safety apparatus, as well as other critical oversights or failures.

Title II enacts several important recommendations contained in the action memo released by then-Commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral Paul Zukunft.

I want to particularly note the chairman's work in bringing together a couple of hearings on this, both formal and informal, that led to these investigations and recommendations.

Together, these provisions that are in this bill will improve ship communication and safety management. They will also improve our ability to identify and recover voyage data recorders and locate and retrieve seafarers who may be adrift at sea.

Additionally, the investigation revealed gaps or insufficient oversight in the inspection regime, and the bill deals with those.

Title II also includes several new requirements to shore up the oversight and investigation of third-party inspectors, who should be reviewing the safety of these ships.

I also strongly support title III, which contains my legislation—I know you are surprised with that support, but nonetheless—H.R. 6026, to authorize the Coast Guard to establish a Blue Technology center of expertise.

Unlike the Navy, ocean industry sectors, and ocean science community, the Coast Guard has not embraced the



adoption and use of a wide assortment of advanced ocean technologies, systems, sensors, and platforms. This is unfortunate because I suspect that several such technologies have the potential to dramatically improve the Coast Guard's operational capability.

Therefore, title III simply draws upon the existing authority to direct the Coast Guard to establish a Blue Technology center of expertise. The overarching goal is to improve from within the Coast Guard's awareness of blue technologies that apply or align with Coast Guard mission needs.

In addition, this new Blue Technology center will facilitate a dialogue and sharing of information between the Coast Guard and the growing number of Blue Tech stakeholders in the private sector, academia, and ocean research community.

A 2015 study by NOAA identified over 400 Blue Technology firms across the United States who generate some \$7 billion in annual revenue. These firms, along with our academic and research institutions, stand ready to put their innovations to work in the service of the American people, using the Coast Guard as a mechanism to accomplish that.

I am confident that this Blue Technology center will open doors of opportunity for the Coast Guard to better protect and patrol the vast oceans and complex waterways.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides to join with me in support of this noncontroversial maritime legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1445

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), dean of the House, a gentleman that has been working maritime issues because he represents all of Alaska. Whether it is fisheries, energy exploration, to pollution, Mr. DON YOUNG from Alaska knows what he is talking about probably more than anybody in this body.

(Mr. YOUNG of Alaska asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman HUNTER and Ranking Member GARAMENDI and, of course, PETER DEFAZIO.

This is a good piece of legislation. I had a House bill similar in fact, too. This came over from the Senate side, but I am not really interested in whose bill it is but, more likely, getting things done. So this is a good bill.

And debris is what I am interested in as one of our biggest issues; it has been well explained by both speakers prior to me. It is getting bigger, like I say. What is it? Tenfold more. And the tonnage is already there.

We have to look at preventing the debris, but also what do we do once it is in the ocean. I have some ideas. And, hopefully, later on, we can explore those ideas, how we will recover and

utilize that debris, because it does harm our maritime lives, and it makes the ocean really a garbage dump, and we don't want that.

So this is a good piece of legislation. I thank each person that has been involved in it, and I urge my colleagues to vote "yes."

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) has 13½ minutes remaining.

Mr. GARAMENDI. That should be enough for Mr. DEFAZIO, the ranking member of the committee, to share his views on this legislation.

I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, both for his leadership on these issues, and for the time. And I also would congratulate Chairman YOUNG and others, particularly SUZANNE BONAMICI, from my State, who has taken a real leadership role on the issue of marine debris.

We are choking the oceans to death. The lifeblood of our planet, the lungs of our planet, it is becoming a giant garbage dump. The Pacific Gyre can be seen from space. It is a massive gyre in the middle of the Pacific Ocean and we have to begin to deal seriously with these issues.

It was just this week in the New York Times, photographs of the Dominican Republic, known for its pristine beaches, which had giant bulldozers on the beach trying to eat through about an 8-foot tall pile of plastic debris on the beaches. So this threatens the marine environment and all that which is dependent upon it, the creatures that live there, and those of us who harvest from that. And it is threatening tourism and recreation. Obviously, this has to be dealt with.

I will say, this is good legislation, but it is a pathetic amount of money. The amount of money that Congress is putting out to deal with something that is threatening the very oceans that surround us probably isn't adequate to clean up the little—I live on a boat down there inside Hains Point—probably that little section of water inside Hains Point down by Fort McNair. I don't even think \$10 million could clean that up, let alone the oceans. So we need to get a little more serious about this and really put up additional funds.

So that is very important legislation. Title II is something about which I am very passionate. The worst maritime disaster since 1983, and obviously, there is a lot of blame to go around on that disaster. But one of the factors was that ship was not fit. It had been certified by an independent party which is called, under the law, a recognized organization, as fit to go to sea.

Now, why would that happen? Well, because the recognized organizations get paid by the shipping companies.

Now, I am not going to hire you if you tell me my ship isn't fit to go to sea, which is what they should have been telling TOTE. They didn't tell them because, hey, we want more of your business. We will go out and certify some more of your unfit ships and kill more people. This has got to end.

The Coast Guard is also at fault. They were not providing enough oversight to these recognized organizations, and had let their own marine safety division, under this privatization scheme, deteriorate to the point where they couldn't even keep up with the paperwork.

So this bill is going to begin to rectify those issues and revitalize the Coast Guard maritime safety organization, and also, bring new scrutiny on these recognized organizations so they don't kill any more people and send unfit ships to sea.

Finally, the legislation, the third part of this is, I think, a tremendous accomplishment by the Ranking Member, JOHN GARAMENDI, which is his Blue Tech center and Blue Oceans. The Coast Guard has, unfortunately—again, we have underfunded the Coast Guard, so Congress is at fault for many of these things; maritime safety and the lack of initiative of the Coast Guard in terms of adopting new 21st century technologies to better perform their mission and make the sea-lane safer and better understand what is going on in the oceans around us.

So, maybe we will get, someday, to name the Blue Tech Center after Mr. GARAMENDI, but not until he is long gone, so he is not in a hurry for that.

So anyway, I want to congratulate him, and congratulate others who have been involved, and thank Chairman SHUSTER for moving this legislation.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the honorable gentlewoman from the State of Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI).

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from California for yielding time, and also for his commitment to this important issue.

I am honored to co-chair the Oceans Caucus with Representative YOUNG, and I thank him for his leadership on this important issue.

I also thank my Oregon colleague, Mr. DEFAZIO, for his commitment and for his passion about the importance of marine debris and addressing it.

I rise in support of the Save our Seas Act, a bill to clean up and reduce marine debris. This bill would reauthorize the NOAA Marine Debris Program through fiscal year 2022 and provide resources to help States respond to severe marine debris events. The health of our oceans reflects the health of our planet, and we must do more to keep garbage out the ocean and off of our shores.

Every minute, the equivalent of a garbage truck full of plastic is dumped into our oceans. According to the

United Nations, that is more than 8 million tons a year. Plastic bottles, straws, grocery bags, cigarette butts, fishing gear, and abandoned vessels litter the ocean.

Currents and atmospheric winds carry floatable marine debris. These movements trap items in debris accumulation zones, also known as garbage patches. A study published in the journal, *Scientific Reports*, estimated that the Pacific garbage patch is comprised of about 1.8 trillion pieces of debris.

We still don't know how long it takes for plastic to biodegrade. Estimates range from 450 years to never.

Marine debris harms our coastal economies, endangers marine life, destroys important marine habitats, propagates invasive species, and creates hazardous conditions for the maritime industry. Tiny pieces of plastic, fiber, fragments, and microbeads also make their way into marine life, blocking digestive tracts, altering growth and, in some cases, killing animals and marine organisms.

Healthy beaches and waterways are critical to the marine ecosystems that thousands of people rely on to earn a living in Oregon and other coastal communities. After the tsunami hit the coast of Japan in 2011, large materials like docks and boats that carried invasive species ended up on the shores of the Pacific Northwest.

But it is not just tsunami debris that is a problem. According to NOAA, a majority of the debris that covers our beaches come from storm drains and sewers, demonstrating that this is not just a problem resulting from those along our Nation's shorelines.

Marine debris is entirely preventable, but we must support responsible disposal practices and provide coastal communities with the resources they need. The NOAA Marine Debris Program has partnered with Oregon Sea Grant, Oregon State University, Oregon Coast Aquarium, and Lincoln County School District to create a curriculum to teach middle and high school students about the effects of marine debris and to promote stewardship activities.

There has been growing momentum on this issue, as many companies and cities and jurisdictions across this country stop the use of plastic straws and bags.

The ocean is resilient and we can help it heal, but we cannot afford to wait. I urge my colleagues to support this bill to strengthen the Federal response to marine debris.

I want to close, again, by thanking all of the bipartisan sponsors and cosponsors of this legislation, but also, especially, the co-chair of the Oceans Caucus, again, Representative DON YOUNG, for his leadership.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close. I will take my few seconds that remain then and simply say this is a good piece of legislation. I want to thank the chair of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation

Subcommittee for his work on this, and for working across the aisle to solve problems, some very real, serious problems in this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

First off, thanks to Mr. GARAMENDI. If there are two more folks in this Congress from opposite sides of the aisle that disagree on some things sometimes, but agree as much as possible and as much as we do on the things that we are working on, I would be surprised. And I would like to just thank him so much for his work and for coming up with great legislation, great ideas, and pushing this forward.

There is an old military saying that if you control the ocean, you control the world. And just as serious of a sense, if you destroy the ocean, you destroy the world. I think that is one reason this bill is so important.

S. 756 promotes action to address the marine debris, catastrophic issues that we face now that will only get worse. It increases maritime vessel safety so you will not have another tragic incident like you had with the *El Faro*. And it establishes a Blue Technology center of expertise so we can help the Coast Guard work smarter and not harder with their limited funds. I urge all Members to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 756, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE THAT THE LACK OF TIMELY AND PREDICTABLE FUNDING UNNECESSARILY UNDERMINES MISSION OF THE UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1009) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the lack of timely and predictable funding unnecessarily undermines the mission of the United States Special Operations Command and jeopardizes the security of the United States.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1009

Whereas the ability of the United States Special Operations Command to successfully conduct operations relies on adequate resourcing;

Whereas Special Operations Forces must prepare for a wide array of missions to support and defend the United States in various capacities around the world;

Whereas the training and development of Special Operations Forces takes multiple years and cannot be created overnight;

Whereas the success of the United States Special Operations Command requires close coordination between each branch of the Armed Forces;

Whereas training shortfalls have been identified as posing an unnecessary risk to Special Forces soldiers;

Whereas the lack of full, on-time funding undermines the ability of the United States Special Operations Command to work by, with, and through our partner nations;

Whereas the smaller operating footprint of Special Operations Forces poses unique operational needs not found in conventional forces;

Whereas the deployment cycle of Special Operations Forces requires additional attention and resources be provided for family and support programs before, during, and after deployments; and

Whereas the United States Special Operations Command must maintain a constant level of readiness that is significantly undermined by budget uncertainty: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) finds that not providing the Department of Defense with stable, predictable, and on-time funding unnecessarily jeopardizes the safety and security of the United States;

(2) expresses a sense of gratitude for the incredible sacrifices made by both Special Operators and their families; and

(3) commits to meeting the needs of the United States Special Operations Command as part of its efforts to restore military readiness.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HUDSON) to discuss his resolution.

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my resolution, H. Res. 1009, which expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that lack of timely and predictable funding unnecessarily undermines the mission of the United States Special Operations Command and jeopardizes the security of the United States.

□ 1500

Mr. Speaker, one of the greatest honors of my life is representing Fort Bragg, the epicenter of the universe and home of the Airborne and Special Operations Forces. The units stationed here represent the best of the best and have a vast footprint.