

S 2549

Environmental Justice Renewal Act

Congress: 110 (2007–2009, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Environmental Protection

Introduced: Jan 23, 2008

Current Status: Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 1076.

Latest Action: Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 1076. (Sep 24, 2008)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/110th-congress/senate-bill/2549>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Clinton, Hillary Rodham [D-NY]

Party: Democratic • **State:** NY • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (4 total)

| Cosponsor | Party / State | Role | Date Joined |
|----------------------------------|---------------|------|--------------|
| Sen. Cardin, Benjamin L. [D-MD] | D · MD | | Feb 6, 2008 |
| Sen. Boxer, Barbara [D-CA] | D · CA | | Feb 8, 2008 |
| Sen. Lautenberg, Frank R. [D-NJ] | D · NJ | | Mar 13, 2008 |
| Sen. Schumer, Charles E. [D-NY] | D · NY | | Jul 14, 2008 |

Committee Activity

| Committee | Chamber | Activity | Date |
|--|---------|-------------|--------------|
| Environment and Public Works Committee | Senate | Reported By | Sep 25, 2008 |

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Environmental Protection

Related Bills

| Bill | Relationship | Last Action |
|-------------|----------------|---|
| 110 HR 5132 | Identical bill | Jan 23, 2008: Referred to the Subcommittee on Environment and Hazardous Materials. |

(This measure has not been amended since it was introduced. The summary has been expanded because action occurred on the measure.)

Environmental Justice Renewal Act - (Sec. 2) Defines: (1) "environmental justice" as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all individuals regardless of race, color, national origin, educational level, or income in the process of developing environmental laws and regulations; and (2) "environmental justice community" as a community with a significant representation of racial, ethnic, or low-income populations vulnerable to environmental or human health risks.

(Sec. 3) Directs the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish the Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice to provide guidance to federal agencies in identifying disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations and to assist such agencies in developing environmental justice strategies.

Requires the Working Group to: (1) develop and promulgate a coordinated interagency federal environmental justice strategy; and (2) submit to the President, through the Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality and the Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, a report that contains a description of the implementation of the strategy and a copy of the finalized strategy of each agency.

(Sec. 4) Requires each agency to conduct each program, policy, and activity that adversely affects or has the potential to affect human health or the environment in a manner that ensures that it does not exclude any individual from participation, deny any individual benefits, or subject any individuals to discrimination or disparate impact because of race, color, national origin, or income level.

Directs each agency that participates in the Working Group to develop an agency-wide environmental justice strategy that identifies and addresses any disproportionately high or adverse human health or environmental effects of each agency program, policy, or activity on minority and low-income populations.

Sets forth requirements regarding annual and periodic reports, periodic revision of the strategy, petitions for exemptions from Act requirements, and appeals.

(Sec. 5) Requires the Administrator to: (1) establish in EPA the position of Environmental Justice Ombudsman to receive, review, and process complaints and allegations relating to environmental justice programs; (2) provide training in environmental justice to EPA employees; and (3) establish grant programs to address local environmental justice concerns.

Directs the Administrator to establish a program of grants to enable states to: (1) establish culturally and linguistically appropriate protocols, activities, and mechanisms for addressing issues relating to environmental justice; and (2) carry out culturally and linguistically appropriate activities to reduce or eliminate disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on environmental justice communities.

Directs the Administrator to establish a program to provide up to 25 multiyear grants to eligible entities to carry out community-based participatory research to: (1) address issues relating to environmental justice; and (2) improve the environment and health outcomes of residents of environmental justice communities.

Authorizes appropriations.

(Sec. 8) Directs the Administrator to: (1) establish a basic training program to assist residents of environmental justice communities in identifying disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental risks; (2) establish a National Environmental Justice Advisory Council to provide independent advice and recommendations to the Administrator on environmental justice issues; and (3) establish an Environmental Justice Clearinghouse to provide information on EPA activities relating to environmental justice. Authorizes appropriations.

(Sec. 11) Directs the Administrator to hold biennial public meetings on environmental justice issues at each regional office of EPA to gather public input regarding the planning of future activities. Mandates the attendance of certain employees.

(Sec. 12) Requires the Administrator to ensure that all supplemental environmental projects developed as part of a settlement relating to violations in an environmental justice community: (1) are developed through consultation with, and with the meaningful participation of, individuals from the affected community; and (2) result in a quantifiable improvement to the health or well-being of individuals in the affected community.

(Sec. 13) Requires the Comptroller General to report to Congress on the effectiveness of this Act.

Actions Timeline

- **Sep 24, 2008:** Committee on Environment and Public Works. Reported by Senator Boxer without amendment. With written report No. 110-498. Minority views filed.
- **Sep 24, 2008:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 1076.
- **Jul 31, 2008:** Committee on Environment and Public Works. Ordered to be reported without amendment favorably.
- **Jan 23, 2008:** Introduced in Senate
- **Jan 23, 2008:** Sponsor introductory remarks on measure. (CR S209)
- **Jan 23, 2008:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.