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Save Our Seas 2.0 Act

Congress: 116 (2019–2021, Ended)
Chamber: Senate
Policy Area: Environmental Protection
Introduced: Jun 26, 2019
Current Status: Became Public Law No: 116-224.
Latest Action: Became Public Law No: 116-224. (Dec 18, 2020)
Law: 116-224 (Enacted Dec 18, 2020)
Official Text: https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/1982

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Sullivan, Dan [R-AK]
Party: Republican • **State:** AK • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (19 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Booker, Cory A. [D-NJ]	D · NJ		Jun 26, 2019
Sen. Carper, Thomas R. [D-DE]	D · DE		Jun 26, 2019
Sen. Collins, Susan M. [R-ME]	R · ME		Jun 26, 2019
Sen. Menendez, Robert [D-NJ]	D · NJ		Jun 26, 2019
Sen. Murkowski, Lisa [R-AK]	R · AK		Jun 26, 2019
Sen. Murphy, Christopher [D-CT]	D · CT		Jun 26, 2019
Sen. Portman, Rob [R-OH]	R · OH		Jun 26, 2019
Sen. Whitehouse, Sheldon [D-RI]	D · RI		Jun 26, 2019
Sen. Graham, Lindsey [R-SC]	R · SC		Jun 28, 2019
Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT]	D · CT		Jul 25, 2019
Sen. Coons, Christopher A. [D-DE]	D · DE		Jul 25, 2019
Sen. Van Hollen, Chris [D-MD]	D · MD		Jul 25, 2019
Sen. Merkley, Jeff [D-OR]	D · OR		Aug 1, 2019
Sen. Schatz, Brian [D-HI]	D · HI		Sep 9, 2019
Sen. Cardin, Benjamin L. [D-MD]	D · MD		Sep 23, 2019
Sen. Perdue, David [R-GA]	R · GA		Oct 15, 2019
Sen. Hirono, Mazie K. [D-HI]	D · HI		Nov 13, 2019
Sen. King, Angus S., Jr. [I-ME]	I · ME		Nov 13, 2019
Sen. Wicker, Roger F. [R-MS]	R · MS		Nov 14, 2019

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Agriculture Committee	House	Referred to	Jan 22, 2020
Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee	Senate	Discharged From	Jan 9, 2020
Energy and Commerce Committee	House	Referred to	Jan 14, 2020
Foreign Affairs Committee	House	Referred To	Jan 13, 2020
Natural Resources Committee	House	Referred to	Jan 14, 2020
Science, Space, and Technology Committee	House	Referred To	Jan 13, 2020
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee	House	Referred to	Jan 14, 2020

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Environmental Protection

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
116 S 2372	Related bill	**Sep 26, 2019:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 239.
116 S 2260	Related bill	**Sep 25, 2019:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 224.
116 HR 3969	Related bill	**Aug 29, 2019:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry.
116 S 2364	Related bill	**Jul 31, 2019:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Summary (as of Dec 18, 2020)

Save Our Seas 2.0 Act

This bill establishes requirements and incentives to reduce, recycle, and prevent marine debris (e.g., plastic waste).

TITLE I--COMBATING MARINE DEBRIS

Subtitle A--Amendments to the Marine Debris Act

(Sec. 101) This section increases the authorization of appropriations for the Marine Debris Act through FY2022.

In addition, it requires relevant federal agencies to prioritize efforts to combat marine debris when carrying out existing innovation and entrepreneurship programs.

Subtitle B--Marine Debris Foundation

(Sec. 111) This section establishes the Marine Debris Foundation, a nonprofit organization, and outlines its purposes, rights, and obligations. The foundation must accept and administer gifts to benefit the Marine Debris Program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The foundation must also support federal actions to access, prevent, reduce, and remove marine debris and address the adverse impacts of marine debris on the U.S. economy, the marine environment, and navigation safety.

(Sec. 119) This section terminates the foundation 10 years after its establishment.

Subtitle C--Genius Prize for Save Our Seas Innovations

(Sec. 122) This section establishes the Genius Prize for Save Our Seas Innovations. The prize competition must (1) encourage technological innovation with the potential to reduce plastic waste, associated pollution, and potential pollution; and (2) award at least one prize every two years for projects that advance human understanding and innovation in removing and preventing plastic waste.

(Sec. 123) The Department of Commerce may enter into an agreement with the Marine Debris Foundation for the foundation to administer the prize competition. If the foundation administers the prize competition, it may request and accept federal and nonfederal funds for a cash prize or administration of the competition.

(Sec. 127) This section terminates the prize competition after the completion of five competition cycles.

Subtitle D--Studies, Pilot Projects, and Reports

(Sec. 131) The Interagency Marine Debris Coordinating Committee must report on microfiber pollution and innovative uses for plastic waste in consumer products.

(Sec. 133) NOAA must arrange with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to conduct a study on U.S. plastic pollution data and report on findings of the study.

(Sec. 134) The National Institute of Standards and Technology must study and report on the availability of methodologies that are or could be readily standardized to track and certify the amount of circular polymers (i.e., polymers that can be reused multiple times or converted into a new, higher-quality product) in finished goods.

(Sec. 135) NOAA must also report on the scale of fishing gear losses by domestic and foreign fisheries and the ecological, human health, and maritime safety impacts of derelict fishing gear. The study must include recommendations on management measures to prevent such losses and reduce such impacts.

(Sec. 136) NOAA and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) must jointly conduct a study to determine the feasibility of developing a nationwide derelict vessel recycling program. The agencies must use the pilot project in Rhode Island led by Rhode Island Sea Grant and its partners as a model.

(Sec. 137) In addition, NOAA must establish a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing incentives to fishermen based in the United States who incidentally capture marine debris while at sea to (1) track or keep the debris on board, and (2) dispose of the debris properly on land.

TITLE II--ENHANCED GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT TO COMBAT MARINE DEBRIS

(Sec. 202) The Department of State must implement the U.S. policy to cooperate with foreign governments and the private sector to combat marine debris, which includes support for (1) strengthening systems for processing and reusing plastic waste, (2) developing and using reusable alternatives to disposable plastic products, and (3) deploying technology for capturing value from postconsumer materials and municipal solid waste streams.

(Sec. 203) The President must direct U.S. representatives to various international bodies to support U.S. marine debris policies. The EPA is authorized to build partnerships in support of such policies.

(Sec. 205) The State Department must report on the potential for entering into new agreements or creating a new forum to reduce land-based sources of marine debris and derelict fishing gear.

TITLE III--IMPROVING DOMESTIC INFRASTRUCTURE TO PREVENT MARINE DEBRIS

(Sec. 301) The EPA must develop a strategy to improve postconsumer materials management and infrastructure for the purpose of reducing plastic waste and other postconsumer materials in waterways and oceans. The EPA must then publish it and distribute it to states.

(Sec. 302) Further, the EPA may provide grants to states to implement the strategy and to (1) support improvements to local postconsumer materials management, including municipal recycling programs; and (2) assist local waste management authorities in making improvements to local waste management systems.

The EPA may also provide grants to local governments, Indian tribes, and public water systems to support improvements in reducing and removing plastic waste and postconsumer materials from drinking water or sources of drinking water.

In addition, the EPA may provide grants to certain municipalities or Indian tribes that own and operate treatment works (systems that treat municipal sewage or industrial waste) for the construction of improvements to reduce and remove plastic waste and postconsumer materials.

Finally, the EPA may provide grants to local governments, Indian tribes, and nonprofit organizations for various efforts to reduce trash in water.

(Sec. 303) The Department of Transportation and the EPA must jointly enter into an arrangement with the National Academies to conduct a study concerning the uses of plastic waste in infrastructure.

(Sec. 304) Further, the EPA must also enter into an arrangement with the National Academies to conduct a study on

human health and environmental risk assessment on microplastics.

(Sec. 305) In addition, the EPA must recommend to Congress ways to eliminate barriers to increasing the collection, processing, and use of recyclable materials.

(Sec. 306) The EPA must also report on the most efficient and effective economic incentives to spur the development of additional new end-use markets for recycled plastics.

(Sec. 307) Additionally, the EPA must study and report on minimizing the creation of new plastic waste.

Actions Timeline

- **Dec 18, 2020:** Signed by President.
- **Dec 18, 2020:** Became Public Law No: 116-224.
- **Dec 8, 2020:** Presented to President.
- **Dec 2, 2020:** Message on Senate action sent to the House.
- **Dec 1, 2020:** Measure laid before Senate by unanimous consent.
- **Dec 1, 2020:** Resolving differences -- Senate actions: Senate agreed to the House amendment to S. 1982 by Unanimous Consent.(consideration: CR S7142)
- **Dec 1, 2020:** Senate agreed to the House amendment to S. 1982 by Unanimous Consent. (consideration: CR S7142)
- **Oct 19, 2020:** Message on House action received in Senate and at desk: House amendment to Senate bill.
- **Oct 1, 2020:** Mr. Carbajal moved to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.
- **Oct 1, 2020:** Considered under suspension of the rules. (consideration: CR H5192-5202)
- **Oct 1, 2020:** DEBATE - The House proceeded with forty minutes of debate on S. 1982.
- **Oct 1, 2020:** Passed/agreed to in House: On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended Agreed to by voice vote.
- **Oct 1, 2020:** On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended Agreed to by voice vote. (text: CR H5192-5199)
- **Oct 1, 2020:** Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection.
- **Jan 22, 2020:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry.
- **Jan 14, 2020:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation.
- **Jan 14, 2020:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change.
- **Jan 14, 2020:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife.
- **Jan 13, 2020:** Message on Senate action sent to the House.
- **Jan 13, 2020:** Received in the House.
- **Jan 13, 2020:** Referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committees on Natural Resources, Foreign Affairs, Energy and Commerce, Science, Space, and Technology, and Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.
- **Jan 9, 2020:** Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation discharged by Unanimous Consent.
- **Jan 9, 2020:** Measure laid before Senate by unanimous consent. (consideration: CR S148-149)
- **Jan 9, 2020:** Passed/agreed to in Senate: Passed Senate with an amendment by Voice Vote.
- **Jan 9, 2020:** Passed Senate with an amendment by Voice Vote.
- **Nov 13, 2019:** Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. Ordered to be reported with an amendment in the nature of a substitute favorably.
- **Jun 26, 2019:** Introduced in Senate
- **Jun 26, 2019:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

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