

HR 4294

MAWS Act of 2026

Congress: 119 (2025–2027, Current)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Public Lands and Natural Resources

Introduced: Jul 7, 2025

Current Status: Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transp

Latest Action: Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. (Mar 18, 2026)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/4294>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Elfreth, Sarah [D-MD-3]

Party: Democratic • **State:** MD • **Chamber:** House

Cosponsors (10 total)

| Cosponsor | Party / State | Role | Date Joined |
|----------------------------------------|---------------|------|--------------|
| Rep. Hoyer, Steny H. [D-MD-5] | D · MD | | Jul 7, 2025 |
| Rep. Kiggans, Jennifer A. [R-VA-2] | R · VA | | Jul 7, 2025 |
| Rep. Wittman, Robert J. [R-VA-1] | R · VA | | Jul 7, 2025 |
| Rep. Ivey, Glenn [D-MD-4] | D · MD | | Jul 16, 2025 |
| Rep. McClain Delaney, April [D-MD-6] | D · MD | | Jul 16, 2025 |
| Rep. Olszewski, Johnny [D-MD-2] | D · MD | | Jul 17, 2025 |
| Rep. Mfume, Kweisi [D-MD-7] | D · MD | | Jul 22, 2025 |
| Rep. Scott, Robert C. "Bobby" [D-VA-3] | D · VA | | Aug 1, 2025 |
| Rep. Maloy, Celeste [R-UT-2] | R · UT | | Jan 15, 2026 |
| Rep. Gosar, Paul A. [R-AZ-9] | R · AZ | | Jan 16, 2026 |

Committee Activity

| Committee | Chamber | Activity | Date |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------|--------------|
| Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee | Senate | Referred To | Mar 18, 2026 |
| Natural Resources Committee | House | Hearings By (subcommittee) | Jul 22, 2025 |

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Public Lands and Natural Resources

Related Bills

No related bills are listed.

Mitigation Action and Watermen Support Act of 2026 or the MAWS Act of 2026

This bill requires the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to establish a pilot program to facilitate the purchase of blue catfish caught within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. (Blue catfish are considered an invasive species in the Chesapeake Bay.)

Under the program, NOAA must enter into cooperative agreements with manufacturers or processors of pet food, animal feed, or aquaculture feed for the purchase of blue catfish from watermen and seafood processors. NOAA must determine the minimum price per pound after considering market factors; feedback from watermen, seafood processors, and participants in the program; and differentiation of price points for fillet and byproduct.

The bill also requires NOAA to enter into a memorandum of understanding with nonfederal partners to develop abundance estimates of blue catfish in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. NOAA must make the first abundance estimate publicly available before beginning the pilot program.

- **Mar 17, 2026:** Considered as unfinished business. (consideration: CR H2545)
- **Mar 17, 2026:** Passed/agreed to in House: On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended Agreed to by the Yeas and Nays: (2/3 required): 320 - 66 (Roll no. 88).
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- **Mar 16, 2026:** DEBATE - The House proceeded with forty minutes of debate on H.R. 4294.
- **Mar 16, 2026:** At the conclusion of debate, the Yeas and Nays were demanded and ordered. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 8, rule XX, the Chair announced that further proceedings on the motion would be postponed.
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