

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 281

Designating September 24, 2011, as “National Estuaries Day”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 23, 2011

Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. KERRY, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. REED, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WEBB, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Designating September 24, 2011, as “National Estuaries Day”.

Whereas the estuary regions of the United States comprise a significant share of the national economy, with 43 percent of the population, 40 percent of the employment, and 49 percent of the economic output of the United States located in the estuary regions of the United States;

Whereas coasts and estuaries contribute more than \$800,000,000,000 annually in trade and commerce to the United States economy;

Whereas more than 43 percent of all adults in the United States visit a sea coast or estuary at least once a year

to participate in some form of recreation, generating \$8,000,000,000 to \$12,000,000,000 in revenue annually;

Whereas more than 28,000,000 jobs in the United States are supported by commercial and recreational fishing, boating, tourism, and other coastal industries that rely on healthy estuaries;

Whereas estuaries provide vital habitat for countless species of fish and wildlife, including many that are listed as threatened or endangered;

Whereas estuaries provide critical ecosystem services that protect human health and public safety, including water filtration, flood control, shoreline stabilization and erosion prevention, and the protection of coastal communities during extreme weather events;

Whereas the United States has lost more than 110,000,000 acres, or 50 percent, of the wetland of the United States since the first European settlers arrived;

Whereas bays once filled with fish and oysters have become dead zones filled with excess nutrients, chemical wastes, harmful algae, and marine debris;

Whereas changes in sea level can impact estuarine water quality and estuarine habitat;

Whereas the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq.) declares that it is the national policy to preserve, protect, develop, and if possible, to restore or enhance, the resources of the coastal zone of the United States, including estuaries, for current and future generations;

Whereas 24 coastal and Great Lake States and territories of the United States contain a National Estuary Program or a National Estuarine Research Reserve System;

Whereas scientific study leads to better understanding of the benefits of estuaries to human and ecological communities;

Whereas Federal, State, local, and tribal governments, national and community organizations, and individuals work together to effectively manage the estuaries of the United States;

Whereas estuary restoration efforts restore natural infrastructure in local communities in a cost effective manner, helping to create jobs and reestablish the natural functions of estuaries that yield countless benefits; and

Whereas September 24, 2011, has been designated as “National Estuaries Day” to increase awareness among all people of the United States, including Federal, State and local government officials, about the importance of healthy estuaries and the need to protect and restore estuaries: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) designates September 24, 2011, as “National Estuaries Day”;

3 (2) supports the goals and ideals of National Estuaries Day;

4 (3) acknowledges the importance of estuaries to sustaining employment and the economic well-being and prosperity of the United States;

5 (4) recognizes that persistent threats undermine the health of the estuaries of the United States;

1 (5) applauds the work of national and commu-
2 nity organizations and public partners that promote
3 public awareness, understanding, protection, and
4 restoration of estuaries;

5 (6) reaffirms the support of the Senate for es-
6 tuaries, including the scientific study, preservation,
7 protection, and restoration of estuaries; and

8 (7) expresses the intent of the Senate to con-
9 tinue working to understand, protect, and restore
10 the estuaries of the United States.

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