

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 5359

To amend the National Marine Sanctuary Act to prohibit requiring an authorization for the installation, operation, maintenance, repair, or recovery of undersea fiber optic cables in a national marine sanctuary if such activities have previously been authorized by a Federal or State agency.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 20, 2024

Mrs. BLACKBURN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To amend the National Marine Sanctuary Act to prohibit requiring an authorization for the installation, operation, maintenance, repair, or recovery of undersea fiber optic cables in a national marine sanctuary if such activities have previously been authorized by a Federal or State agency.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. PROHIBITION ON REQUIRING AUTHORIZA-**
2 **TIONS FOR UNDERSEA FIBER OPTIC CABLES**
3 **PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED BY FEDERAL OR**
4 **STATE AGENCIES.**

5 The National Marine Sanctuary Act (16 U.S.C. 1431
6 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 310 the fol-
7 lowing:

8 **“SEC. 310A. PROHIBITION ON REQUIRING AUTHORIZA-**
9 **TIONS FOR UNDERSEA FIBER OPTIC CABLES**
10 **PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED BY FEDERAL OR**
11 **STATE AGENCIES.**

12 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other pro-
13 vision of this Act, the Secretary may not prohibit or re-
14 quire any authorization for the installation, continued
15 presence, operation, maintenance, repair, or recovery of
16 undersea fiber optic cables in a national marine sanctuary
17 if a license, lease, or permit issued by a Federal or State
18 agency authorizing such installation, continued presence,
19 operation, maintenance, repair, or recovery is in effect.

20 “(b) INTERAGENCY COOPERATION.—The Secretary
21 may direct the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin-
22 istration to engage in interagency cooperation under sec-
23 tion 304(d) in any Federal agency action described in that
24 section and involving the installation, continued presence,

- 1 operation, maintenance, repair, or recovery of undersea
- 2 fiber optic cables in a national marine sanctuary.”.

