

clear for a community that might be battered, but whose people are safe. Therefore, we should ensure its continued use by supporting its reliability and efforts to bring the system into the 21st century. I am proud to have introduced this legislation that does exactly that and will protect the lives of Oklahomans, as well as communities across the Nation.

I thank the Environment Subcommittee Chairwoman SHERRILL for leading this bill with me and for her efforts to work across the aisle for its passage. I also thank Representatives KILMER, LATURNER, BONAMICI, and ELLZEY for cosponsoring it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I will take a moment to reflect. The Congresswoman from Oklahoma mentioned something that I believe is important to reiterate, which is that the technology adoptions occurred before the iPhone. Last June, in Oakland County, Michigan, the city of Farmington and Farmington Hills experienced an extreme weather event otherwise known as a supercell. This is rapid winds at a high level, multiple—hundreds of feet, sometimes up in the air, ripping large trees from their roots. It was very destructive. There was no warning. It terrified residents of my district.

We also reflect that in Mason City, Iowa, just last month, there was a major tornado that blew through, again, without warning. So this is very real and palpable to the American people.

I again recognize the leadership of the Congresswoman from New Jersey (Ms. SHERRILL), who is the subcommittee chair of the Environment Subcommittee, for her leadership, along with the Congresswoman from Oklahoma (Mrs. BICE) for bringing us this very critical bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BICE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS), who is the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology and dean of the Oklahoma delegation.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Oklahoma for yielding and for introducing this legislation.

H.R. 5324, the NOAA Weather Radio Modernization Act of 2021, is a straightforward, lifesaving bill introduced by my esteemed colleague from Oklahoma, Representative STEPHANIE BICE, who is the ranking member of the Environment Subcommittee.

Last week, nearly the entire State of Oklahoma experienced an outbreak in severe weather and a number of confirmed tornadoes. That is not uncommon for this time of year, and our citizens were well prepared.

While there was significant damage and widespread power outages, there

have been no confirmed deaths at this point. That is because of the lifesaving efforts of NOAA, the National Weather Service, and warning capabilities like the NOAA Weather Radio, also known as NWR.

Day or night, power or no power, in a rural area or in the heart of the city, an NWR device loudly alerts you and your family to severe weather nearby. Most Oklahomans have grown up listening to these announcements, and we know to act when we hear them. That saves lives. But since NWR was designated as the sole government provider of direct warnings to private homes in 1975, the system has gone through few upgrades other than broadly expanding access across the country.

The NWR's aging infrastructure has led to increased maintenance costs and more frequent outages. The copper wiring that connects broadcast transmitters to Weather Service stations has become obsolete and expensive. More powerful storms require backup options and stronger signals in case of extensive damage to mission critical facilities.

The NWR Modernization Act addresses these challenges and gives NOAA the authority and resources to ensure the NWR is as useful in the 21st century as it has been for the last four decades. This legislation continues to expand access to NWR, but does so while ensuring the system does not become obsolete with out-of-date technology.

□ 1445

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the leadership of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology's Environment Subcommittee, Ranking Member BICE and Chairwoman SHERRILL, for leading on this critical issue, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I would simply note that we pass lots of pieces of legislation in this body every session. But every so often, we address a piece of legislation that makes a real difference in the lives of people, a piece of legislation that deserves to move as swiftly as possible through the process to enable its implementation.

Mr. Speaker, again, I thank all of my colleagues, and I urge a yes vote.

Mrs. BICE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, the NWR Modernization Act of 2021 will ensure the continued safety of all Americans when experiencing severe weather and other emergency events. We have seen examples as recent as the past month of the NOAA Weather Radio saving lives in Oklahoma, Iowa, and Colorado.

Although the National Weather Radio coverage is currently available to 95 percent of the U.S. population, I see no reason why we shouldn't strive for 100 percent. Every citizen, no matter how remote or isolated their location, deserves equal access to this lifesaving service.

Additionally, because we have seen just how effective NWR is, we need to

support its modernization and continued use for decades to come. Many services across different industries have used technology to adapt to a more modern age, and our country's emergency alert system should be no different. This bill allows NOAA to achieve both of those goals.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, NOAA Weather Radio is absolutely essential. We have a bill to modernize it. The American people need it now.

H.R. 5324, the NWR Modernization Act of 2021, has my full support. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. STEVENS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5324, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

SOUTH FLORIDA CLEAN COASTAL WATERS ACT OF 2021

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 66) to require the Inter-Agency Task Force on Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia to develop a plan for reducing, mitigating, and controlling harmful algal blooms and hypoxia in South Florida, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 66

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "South Florida Clean Coastal Waters Act of 2021".

SEC. 2. SOUTH FLORIDA HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS AND HYPOXIA ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-383; 33 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 605 through 609 as sections 606 through 610, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after section 604 the following:

"SEC. 605. SOUTH FLORIDA HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS AND HYPOXIA.

"(a) SOUTH FLORIDA.—In this section, the term 'South Florida' means—

"(1) all lands and waters within the administrative boundaries of the South Florida Water Management District;

"(2) regional coastal waters, including Biscayne Bay, the Caloosahatchee Estuary,

Florida Bay, Indian River Lagoon, and St. Lucie River Estuary; and

“(3) the Florida Reef Tract.

“(b) INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT.—

“(1) INTERIM INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 540 days after the date of enactment of the South Florida Clean Coastal Waters Act of 2021, the Task Force, in accordance with the authority under section 603, shall complete and submit to Congress and the President an interim integrated assessment.

“(2) FINALIZED INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of the South Florida Clean Coastal Waters Act of 2021, the Task Force shall finalize, and submit to Congress and the President, the interim integrated assessment required by paragraph (1).

“(3) CONTENTS OF INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT.—The integrated assessment required by paragraphs (1) and (2) shall examine the causes, consequences, and potential approaches to reduce harmful algal blooms and hypoxia in South Florida, and the status of, and gaps within, current harmful algal bloom and hypoxia research, monitoring, management, prevention, response, and control activities that directly affect the region by—

“(A) Federal agencies;

“(B) State agencies;

“(C) regional research consortia;

“(D) academia;

“(E) private industry;

“(F) nongovernmental organizations; and

“(G) Indian tribes (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304)).

“(c) ACTION PLAN.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years and 180 days after the date of the enactment of the South Florida Clean Coastal Waters Act of 2021, the Task Force shall develop and submit to Congress a plan, based on the integrated assessment under subsection (b), for reducing, mitigating, and controlling harmful algal blooms and hypoxia in South Florida.

“(2) CONTENTS.—The plan submitted under paragraph (1) shall—

“(A) address the monitoring needs identified in the integrated assessment under subsection (b);

“(B) develop a timeline and budgetary requirements for deployment of future assets;

“(C) identify requirements for the development and verification of South Florida harmful algal bloom and hypoxia models, including—

“(i) all assumptions built into the models; and

“(ii) data quality methods used to ensure the best available data are utilized; and

“(D) propose a plan to implement a remote monitoring network and early warning system for alerting local communities in the region to harmful algal bloom risks that may impact human health.

“(3) REQUIREMENTS.—In developing the action plan, the Task Force shall—

“(A) consult with the State of Florida, and affected local and tribal governments;

“(B) consult with representatives from regional academic, agricultural, industry, and other stakeholder groups;

“(C) ensure that the plan complements and does not duplicate activities conducted by other Federal or State agencies, including the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force;

“(D) identify critical research for reducing, mitigating, and controlling harmful algal bloom events and their effects;

“(E) evaluate cost-effective, incentive-based partnership approaches;

“(F) ensure that the plan is technically sound and cost-effective;

“(G) utilize existing research, assessments, reports, and program activities;

“(H) publish a summary of the proposed plan in the Federal Register at least 180 days prior to submitting the completed plan to Congress; and

“(I) after submitting the completed plan to Congress, provide biennial progress reports on the activities toward achieving the objectives of the plan.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT AND CORRECTION.—The table of contents in section 2 of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-383) is amended by striking the items relating to title VI and inserting the following new items:

“TITLE VI—HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS AND HYPOXIA

“Sec. 601. Short title.

“Sec. 602. Findings.

“Sec. 603. Assessments.

“Sec. 603A. National Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Program.

“Sec. 603B. Comprehensive research plan and action strategy.

“Sec. 604. Northern Gulf of Mexico hypoxia.

“Sec. 605. South Florida harmful algal blooms and hypoxia.

“Sec. 606. Great Lakes hypoxia and harmful algal blooms.

“Sec. 607. Protection of States’ rights.

“Sec. 608. Effect on other Federal authority.

“Sec. 609. Definitions.

“Sec. 610. Authorization of appropriations.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. STEVENS) and the gentlewoman from Oklahoma (Mrs. BICE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 66, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 66, the South Florida Clean Coastal Waters Act of 2021.

The South Florida region suffers from blooms of harmful algae in both its fresh and marine bodies of water. The impacts of marine red tide and freshwater blue-green algae in this region are felt in marine life, across the local economy, and on public health.

When these algae blooms die and sink to the bottom of water bodies, they can cause hypoxia or low oxygen events, which further impact marine and freshwater ecosystems.

This bill authorizes a scientific assessment and action plan to address the negative impacts of harmful algal blooms, HABs, and hypoxia in South Florida.

We know that many Michiganders enjoy the splendors of South Florida in the winter season. We have had this reported from colleagues from Florida. We are supporting this bill because this work can serve as a template for other communities suffering from HABs and

hypoxia and help address these disruptive events.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, April 29, 2022.

Hon. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON,

Chair, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIR JOHNSON: In recognition of the goal of expediting consideration of S.66, the “South Florida Clean Coastal Waters Act of 2021,” the Committee on Natural Resources agrees to waive formal consideration of the bill as to provisions that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Natural Resources.

The Committee on Natural Resources takes this action with the mutual understanding that, in doing so, we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that the Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues within our jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation.

I also ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with you as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

RAÚL M. GRIJALVA,
Chair, House Natural Resources Committee.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 29, 2022.

Chairman RAÚL M. GRIJALVA,
Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRIJALVA, I am writing to you concerning S. 66, the “South Florida Clean Coastal Waters Act of 2021,” which was passed by the Senate on March 8, 2022.

I appreciate your willingness to work cooperatively on this bill. I recognize that the bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Natural Resources. I acknowledge that your committee will waive further consideration of S. 66 and that this action is not a waiver of future jurisdictional claims by the Committee on Natural Resources over this subject matter.

I will make sure to include our exchange of letters in the Congressional Record and will support the appointment of the Committee on Natural Resource conferees during any House-Senate conference. Thank you for your cooperation on this legislation.

Sincerely,

EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON,
Chairwoman.

Mrs. BICE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, we are now considering a Senate bill, S. 66, the South Florida Clean Coastal Waters Act of 2021. I support this bill, and I would like to note that I especially appreciate that we are going through the normal legislative process here.

Last Congress, the House passed H.R. 335, a bill introduced by Representative MAST, to address harmful algal blooms, HABs, in South Florida. This Congress, Representative MAST reintroduced the

same language as H.R. 565 with Science, Space, and Technology Committee cosponsors Representatives POSEY, WALTZ, and GIMENEZ.

H.R. 335, H.R. 565, and the bill we are considering now, S. 66, are all one and the same. It is simple language that is critically important to my colleagues in Florida and their communities, which are dependent on clean, healthy waters.

The legislation requires the Inter-Agency Task Force on Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia to produce an assessment of the causes, consequences, and potential mitigation options to reduce HABs and hypoxia in South Florida.

The legislation also calls for the task force to assess our current work and identify gaps in research, monitoring, and management efforts. The task force will also develop an action plan for reducing, mitigating, and controlling HABs and hypoxia.

This will build on the great work to reduce those in other parts of the country; namely, the Great Lakes region and the northern Gulf of Mexico.

It is solid legislation, and I look forward to seeing its results in Florida.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. STEVENS. Madam Speaker, for those watching at home, a friendly reminder that S. 66 passed the House last session of Congress, the 116th Congress. We are now in the 117th Congress. We will pass this bill again. That is our intention, to send it over to the Senate yet again to get it passed and signed into law.

As a friendly reminder, the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee oversees and has jurisdiction over the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act, which is why we are passing it through not only our committee but, obviously, here on the House floor.

Madam Speaker, yet again, I join my colleagues in urging the passage of this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BICE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, the South Florida Clean Coastal Waters Act will help Floridians enjoy clean, safe, and healthy waters. That helps families and our economy.

We have already seen how efforts like this can succeed in reducing harmful algal blooms in other parts of the country. This legislation will ensure southern Florida enjoys the same success.

This is a great example of solid policymaking through regular order, and I appreciate all the work that went into it. I thank Senators RUBIO and SCOTT for their work on the bill across the Hill; Representative MAST for his willingness to collaborate with our Senate colleagues; and Representatives POSEY, WALTZ, and GIMENEZ for leading this effort for the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. STEVENS. Madam Speaker, I note that, with this bill, the task force to develop an action plan based on an integrated assessment that details methods for reducing, mitigating, and controlling HABs and hypoxia in South Florida is obviously essential.

This is an interagency effort involving the State, local and Tribal governments, as well as non-Federal stakeholder groups. I urge the passage of S. 66.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of S. 66, the South Florida Clean Coastal Waters Act of 2021.

South Florida suffers from blooms of harmful algae in both its marine and freshwater systems that have led to worsening ecologic and economic impacts. This region is impacted by toxic red tide and massive freshwater blue-green algae blooms which can choke waterways and coastlines. Red tide and other types of HABs also pose health risks to humans from direct exposure and from eating infected seafood. When these algae die and sink to the bottom of water bodies and decay, it creates low oxygen conditions known as hypoxia.

This bill is largely similar to what we passed out of the House last Congress on a bipartisan basis. It would authorize a scientific assessment and action plan to help address the problem of HABs and hypoxia in South Florida. This assessment and action plan will help identify research gaps, and detail methods for mitigating and controlling HABs and hypoxia in South Florida.

This bill takes an important step in helping address the HABs and hypoxia issue in South Florida, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. GARCIA of Texas). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. STEVENS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 66.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

EMPOWERING THE U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATION ACT

Ms. STEVENS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7077) to require the United States Fire Administration to conduct on-site investigations of major fires, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7077

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ‘‘Empowering the U.S. Fire Administration Act’’.

SEC. 2. FIRE INVESTIGATIONS.

The Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2201 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

‘‘SEC. 38. INVESTIGATION AUTHORITIES.

‘‘(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any major fire, the Administrator may send incident investigators, which may include safety specialists, fire protection engineers, codes and standards experts, researchers, and fire training specialists, to the site of the fire to conduct an investigation as described in subsection (b).

‘‘(b) INVESTIGATION REQUIRED.—A fire investigation conducted under this section—

‘‘(1) shall be conducted in coordination and cooperation with appropriate Federal, State, and local authorities, including Federal agencies that are authorized to investigate a major fire or an incident of which the major fire is a part; and

‘‘(2) shall examine the determined cause and origin of the fire and assess broader systematic matters to include use of codes and standards, demographics, structural characteristics, smoke and fire dynamics (movement) during the event, and costs of associated injuries and deaths.

‘‘(c) REPORT.—Upon concluding any fire investigation under this section, the Administrator shall issue a public report to local, State, and Federal authorities on the findings of such investigation, or collaborate with another investigating Federal agency on that agency’s report, including recommendations on—

‘‘(1) any other buildings with similar characteristics that may bear similar fire risks;

‘‘(2) improving tactical response to similar fires;

‘‘(3) improving civilian safety practices;

‘‘(4) assessing the costs and benefits to the community of adding fire safety features; and

‘‘(5) how to mitigate the causes of such fire.

‘‘(d) DISCRETIONARY AUTHORITY.—In addition to investigations conducted pursuant to subsection (a), the Administrator may send fire investigators to conduct investigations at the site of any fire with unusual or remarkable context that results in losses less severe than those occurring as a result of a major fire, in coordination with appropriate Federal, State, and local authorities, including Federal agencies that are authorized to investigate a major fire or an incident of which the major fire is a part.

‘‘(e) MAJOR FIRE DEFINED.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘major fire’ shall have the meaning given such term under regulations to be issued by the Administrator.’’.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. STEVENS) and the gentlewoman from Oklahoma (Mrs. BICE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. STEVENS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 7077, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Ms. STEVENS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.