

Calendar No. 467

105TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. 1418

[Report No. 105-248]

To promote the research, identification, assessment, exploration, and development of methane hydrate resources, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 7, 1997

Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Mr. CRAIG, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. Nickles, and Mr. LOTT) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

JULY 13, 1998

Reported by Mr. MURKOWSKI, with amendments

[Omit the part struck through and insert the part printed in *italie*]

A BILL

To promote the research, identification, assessment, exploration, and development of methane hydrate resources, and for other purposes.

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Methane Hydrate Re-
5 search and Development Act of 1997”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) CONTRACT.—The term “contract” means a
4 procurement contract within the meaning of 6303 of
5 title 31, United States Code.

6 (2) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.—The term “co-
7 operative agreement” means a cooperative agree-
8 ment within the meaning of section 6305 of title 31,
9 United States Code.

10 (3) GRANT.—The term “grant” means a grant
11 agreement within the meaning of section 6304 of
12 title 31, United States Code.

13 (4) METHANE HYDRATE.—The term “methane
14 hydrate” means a methane clathrate that—

15 (A) is in the form of a methane-water ice-
16 like crystalline material; and

17 (B) is stable and occurs naturally in deep-
18 ocean and permafrost areas.

19 (5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
20 the Secretary of Energy.

21 (6) SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.—The term “Sec-
22 retary of Defense” means the Secretary of Defense,
23 acting through the Secretary of the Navy.

24 (7) SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.—The term
25 “Secretary of the Interior” means the Secretary of

1 the Interior, acting through the Director of the
2 United States Geological Survey.

3 (8) *DIRECTOR.*—*The term “Director” means the*
4 *Director of the National Science Foundation.*

5 **SEC. 3. METHANE HYDRATE RESEARCH AND DEVELOP-**
6 **MENT PROGRAM.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—

8 (1) ~~COMMENCEMENT OF PROGRAM.~~—~~Not later~~
9 ~~than 180 days after the date of enactment of this~~
10 ~~Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the Sec-~~
11 ~~retary of Defense and the Secretary of the Interior,~~
12 ~~shall commence a program of methane hydrate re-~~
13 ~~search and development.~~

14 (2) ~~DESIGNATIONS.~~—~~The Secretary, Secretary~~
15 ~~of Defense, and Secretary of the Interior shall des-~~
16 ~~ignate individuals to implement this Act.~~

17 (1) *COMMENCEMENT OF PROGRAM.*—*Not later*
18 *than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act,*
19 *the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of*
20 *Defense, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Direc-*
21 *tor, shall commence a program of methane hydrate re-*
22 *search and development.*

23 (2) *DESIGNATIONS.*—*The Secretary, the Sec-*
24 *retary of Defense, the Secretary of the Interior, and*

1 *the Director shall designate individuals to implement*
2 *this Act.*

3 (3) MEETINGS.—The individuals designated
4 under paragraph (2) shall meet not less frequently
5 than every 120 days to review the progress of the
6 program under paragraph (1) and make rec-
7 ommendations on future activities.

8 (b) GRANTS, CONTRACTS, AND COOPERATIVE
9 AGREEMENTS.—

10 (1) ASSISTANCE AND COORDINATION.—The
11 Secretary may award grants or contracts to, or enter
12 into cooperative agreements with, universities and
13 industrial enterprises to—

14 (A) conduct basic and applied research to
15 identify, explore, assess, and develop methane
16 hydrate as a source of energy;

17 (B) assist in developing technologies re-
18 quired for efficient and environmentally sound
19 development of methane hydrate resources;

20 (C) undertake research programs to pro-
21 vide safe means of transport and storage of
22 methane produced from methane hydrates;

23 (D) promote education and training in
24 methane hydrate resources research and re-
25 source development;

1 (E) conduct basic and applied research to
2 assess and mitigate the environmental impacts
3 of hydrate degassing, both natural and that as-
4 sociated with commercial development; and

5 (F) develop technologies to reduce the
6 risks of drilling through methane hydrates.

7 (2) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary may estab-
8 lish an advisory panel consisting of experts from in-
9 dustry, academia, and Federal agencies to advise the
10 Secretary on potential applications of methane hy-
11 drate and assist in developing recommendations and
12 priorities for the methane hydrate research and de-
13 velopment program carried out under this section.

14 (c) LIMITATIONS.—

15 (1) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Not more
16 than 5 percent of the amount made available to
17 carry out this section for a fiscal year may be used
18 by the Secretary for expenses associated with the ad-
19 ministration of the program *under* subsection (a)(1).

20 (2) CONSTRUCTION COSTS.—None of the funds
21 made available to carry out this section may be used
22 for the construction of a new building or the acqui-
23 sition, expansion, remodeling, or alteration of an exist-
24 ing building (including site grading and improve-
25 ment and architect fees).

1 (d) RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SECRETARY.—In car-
2 rying out subsection (b)(1), the Secretary shall—

3 (1) facilitate and develop partnerships among
4 government, industry, and academia to research,
5 identify, assess, and explore methane hydrate re-
6 sources;

7 (2) undertake programs to develop basic infor-
8 mation necessary for promoting long-term interest in
9 methane hydrate resources as an energy source;

10 (3) ensure that the data and information devel-
11 oped through the program are accessible and widely
12 disseminated as needed and appropriate;

13 (4) promote cooperation among agencies that
14 are developing technologies that may hold promise
15 for methane hydrate resource development; and

16 (5) report annually to Congress on accomplish-
17 ments under this Act.

18 **SEC. 4. AMENDMENT TO THE MINING AND MINERALS POL-**

19 **ICY ACT OF 1970.**

20 *Section 201 of the Mining and Minerals Policy Act*
21 *of 1970 (30 U.S.C. 1901) is amended—*

22 (1) *by redesignating paragraphs (6) and (7) as*
23 *paragraphs (7) and (8), respectively;*

24 (2) *by inserting after paragraph (5) the follow-*
25 *ing:*

1 “(6) the term ‘methane hydrate’ means a meth-
2 ane clathrate that—

3 “(A) is in the form of a methane-water ice-
4 like crystalline material; and

5 “(B) is stable and occurs naturally in deep-
6 ocean and permafrost areas.”; and

7 (3) in paragraph (7) (as redesignated by para-
8 graph (1))—

9 (A) in subparagraph (F), by striking
10 “and”;

11 (B) by redesignating subparagraph (G) as
12 subparagraph (H); and

13 (C) by inserting after subparagraph (F) the
14 following:

15 “(G) methane hydrate; and”.

16 **SEC. 4. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

17 There are authorized to be appropriated such sums
18 as are necessary to carry out this Act.

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