Public Law 94-461
94th Congress

An Act

To improve the national sea grant program and for other purposes.

Oct. 8, 1976
[H.R. 13035]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the "Sea Grant Program Improvement Act of 1976".

Sea Grant Program Improvement Act of 1976. 33 USC 1121 note.

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO THE NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE AND PROGRAM ACT OF 1966.

Title II of the Marine Resources and Engineering Development Act of 1966 (33 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.) is amended to read as follows:

National Sea Grant Program Act.

"TITLE II—NATIONAL SEA GRANT PROGRAM

"SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

33 USC 1121 note.

"This title may be cited as the 'National Sea Grant Program Act'.

"SEC. 202. DECLARATION OF POLICY.

33 USC 1121.

"(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds and declares the following:

"(1) The vitality of the Nation and the quality of life of its citizens depend increasingly on the understanding, assessment, development, utilization, and conservation of ocean and coastal resources. These resources supply food, energy, and minerals and contribute to human health, the quality of the environment, national security, and the enhancement of commerce.

"(2) The understanding, assessment, development, utilization, and conservation of such resources require a broad commitment and an intense involvement on the part of the Federal Government in continuing partnership with State and local governments, private industry, universities, organizations, and individuals concerned with or affected by ocean and coastal resources.

"(3) The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, through the national sea grant program, offers the most suitable locus and means for such commitment and involvement through the promotion of activities that will result in greater such understanding, assessment, development, utilization, and conservation. Continued and increased Federal support of the establishment, development, and operation of programs and projects by sea grant colleges, sea grant regional consortia, institutions of higher education, institutes, laboratories, and other appropriate public and private entities is the most cost-effective way to promote such activities.

"(b) OBJECTIVE.—The objective of this title is to increase the understanding, assessment, development, utilization, and conservation of the Nation's ocean and coastal resources by providing assistance to promote a strong educational base, responsive research and training activities, and broad and prompt dissemination of knowledge and techniques.

"(c) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of the Congress to achieve the objective of this title by extending and strengthening the national sea

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grant program, initially established in 1966, to promote research, education, training, and advisory service activities in fields related to ocean and coastal resources.

"SEC. 203. DEFINITIONS.

33 USC 1122.

"As used in this title—

"(1) The term 'Administration' means the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

"(2) The term 'Administrator' means the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

"(3) The term 'Director' means the Director of the national sea grant program, appointed pursuant to section 204(b).

"(4) The term 'field related to ocean and coastal resources' means any discipline or field (including marine science (and the physical, natural, and biological sciences, and engineering, included therein), marine technology, education, economics, sociology, communications, planning, law, international affairs, and public administration) which is concerned with or likely to improve the understanding, assessment, development, utilization, or conservation of ocean and coastal resources.

"(5) The term 'includes' and variants thereof should be read as if the phrase 'but is not limited to' were also set forth.

"(6) The term 'marine environment' means the coastal zone, as defined in section 304(1) of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1453(1)); the seabed, subsoil, and waters of the territorial sea of the United States; the waters of any zone over which the United States asserts exclusive fishery management authority; the waters of the high seas; and the seabed and subsoil of and beyond the outer Continental Shelf.

"(7) The term 'ocean and coastal resource' means any resource (whether living, nonliving, manmade, tangible, intangible, actual, or potential) which is located in, derived from, or traceable to, the marine environment. Such term includes the habitat of any such living resource, the coastal space, the ecosystems, the nutrient-rich areas, and the other components of the marine environment which contribute to or provide (or which are capable of contributing to or providing) recreational, scenic, esthetic, biological, habitational, commercial, economic, or conservation values. Living resources include natural and cultured plant life, fish, shellfish, marine mammals, and wildlife. Nonliving resources include energy sources, minerals, and chemical substances.

"(8) The term 'panel' means the sea grant review panel established under section 209.

"(9) The term 'person' means any individual; any public or private corporation, partnership, or other association or entity (including any sea grant college, sea grant regional consortium, institution of higher education, institute, or laboratory); or any State, political subdivision of a State, or agency or officer thereof.

"(10) The term 'sea grant college' means any public or private institution of higher education which is designated as such by the Secretary under section 207.

"(11) The term 'sea grant program' means any program which—

"(A) is administered by any sea grant college, sea grant regional consortium, institution of higher education, institute, laboratory, or State or local agency; and

"(B) includes two or more projects involving one or more of the following activities in fields related to ocean and coastal resources:

"(i) research,
"(ii) education,
"(iii) training, or
"(iv) advisory services.

"(12) The term 'sea grant regional consortium' means any association or other alliance which is designated as such by the Secretary under section 207.

"(13) The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of Commerce.

"(14) The term 'State' means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Mariana Islands, or any other territory or possession of the United States.

"SEC. 204. NATIONAL SEA GRANT PROGRAM.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall maintain, within the Administration, a program to be known as the national sea grant program. The national sea grant program shall consist of the financial assistance and other activities provided for in this title. The Secretary shall establish long-range planning guidelines and priorities for, and adequately evaluate, this program.

33 USC 1123.

Planning guidelines and priorities.

"(b) DIRECTOR.—(1) The Secretary shall appoint a Director of the national sea grant program who shall be a qualified individual who has—

"(A) knowledge or expertise in fields related to ocean and coastal resources; and

"(B) appropriate administrative experience.

"(2) The Director shall be appointed and compensated, without regard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service, at a rate not in excess of the maximum rate for GS-18 of the General Schedule under section 5332 of such title.

5 USC 3301 *et seq.*

5 USC 5332 note.

"(c) DUTIES.—The Director shall administer the national sea grant program subject to the supervision of the Secretary and the Administrator. In addition to any other duty prescribed by law or assigned by the Secretary, the Director shall—

"(1) apply the long-range planning guidelines and the priorities established by the Secretary under subsection (a);

"(2) advise the Administrator with respect to the expertise and capabilities which are available within or through the national sea grant program, and provide (as directed by the Administrator) those which are or could be of use to other offices and activities within the Administration;

"(3) evaluate activities conducted under grants and contracts awarded pursuant to sections 205 and 206 to assure that the objective set forth in section 202(b) is implemented;

"(4) encourage other Federal departments, agencies, and instrumentalities to use and take advantage of the expertise and capabilities which are available through the national sea grant program, on a cooperative or other basis;

"(5) advise the Secretary on the designation of sea grant colleges and sea grant regional consortia and, in appropriate cases, if any, on the termination or suspension of any such designation; and

"(6) encourage the formation and growth of sea grant programs.

"(d) POWERS.—To carry out the provisions of this title, the Secretary may—

"(1) appoint, assign the duties, transfer, and fix the compensation of such personnel as may be necessary, in accordance with the civil service laws; except that five positions may be established without regard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service, but the pay rates for such positions may not exceed the maximum rate for GS-18 of the General Schedule under section 5332 of such title;

5 USC 3301 *et seq.*

5 USC 5332 note.

"(2) make appointments with respect to temporary and intermittent services to the same extent as is authorized by section 3109 of title 5, United States Code;

Publication.

"(3) publish or arrange for the publication of, and otherwise disseminate, in cooperation with other services, offices, and programs in the Administration, any information of research, educational, training, and other value in fields related to ocean and coastal resources and with respect to ocean and coastal resources, without regard to section 501 of title 44, United States Code;

"(4) enter into contracts, cooperative agreements, and other transactions without regard to section 3709 of the Revised Statutes of the United States (41 U.S.C. 5);

"(5) accept donations and voluntary and uncompensated services, notwithstanding section 3679 of the Revised Statutes of the United States (31 U.S.C. 665(b)); and

Rules and regulations.

"(6) issue such rules and regulations as may be necessary and appropriate.

"SEC. 205. CONTRACTS AND GRANTS.

33 USC 1124.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make grants and enter into contracts under this subsection to assist any sea grant program or project if the Secretary finds that such program or project will—

"(1) implement the objective set forth in section 202(b); and

"(2) be responsive to the needs or problems of individual States or regions.

The total amount paid pursuant to any such grant or contract may equal 66⅔ percent, or any lesser percent, of the total cost of the sea grant program or project involved.

"(b) SPECIAL GRANTS.—The Secretary may make special grants under this subsection to implement the objective set forth in section 202(b). The amount of any such grant may equal 100 percent, or any lesser percent, of the total cost of the project involved. No grant may be made under this subsection unless the Secretary finds that—

"(1) no reasonable means is available through which the applicant can meet the matching requirement for a grant under subsection (a);

"(2) the probable benefit of such project outweighs the public interest in such matching requirement; and

"(3) the same or equivalent benefit cannot be obtained through the award of a contract or grant under subsection (a) or section 206.

The total amount which may be provided for grants under this subsection during any fiscal year shall not exceed an amount equal to 1 percent of the total funds appropriated for such year pursuant to section 212.

Application.

"(c) ELIGIBILITY AND PROCEDURE.—Any person may apply to the Secretary for a grant or contract under this section. Application shall be made in such form and manner, and with such content and other submissions, as the Secretary shall by regulation prescribe. The Secretary shall act upon each such application within 6 months after the date on which all required information is received.

"(d) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—(1) Any grant made, or contract entered into, under this section shall be subject to the limitations and provisions set forth in paragraphs (2), (3), and (4) and to such other terms, conditions, and requirements as the Secretary deems necessary or appropriate.

"(2) No payment under any grant or contract under this section may be applied to—

"(A) the purchase or rental of any land; or

"(B) the purchase, rental, construction, preservation, or repair of any building, dock, or vessel;

except that payment under any such grant or contract may, if approved by the Secretary, be applied to the purchase, rental, construction, preservation, or repair of non-self-propelled habitats, buoys, platforms, and other similar devices or structures, or to the rental of any research vessel which is used in direct support of activities under any sea grant program or project.

"(3) The total amount which may be obligated for payment pursuant to grants made to, and contracts entered into with, persons under this section within any one State in any fiscal year shall not exceed an amount equal to 15 percent of the total funds appropriated for such year pursuant to section 212.

"(4) Any person who receives or utilizes any proceeds of any grant or contract under this section shall keep such records as the Secretary shall by regulation prescribe as being necessary and appropriate to facilitate effective audit and evaluation, including records which fully disclose the amount and disposition by such recipient of such proceeds, the total cost of the program or project in connection with which such proceeds were used, and the amount, if any, of such cost which was provided through other sources. Such records shall be maintained for 3 years after the completion of such a program or project. The Secretary and the Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their duly authorized representatives, shall have access, for the purpose of audit and evaluation, to any books, documents, papers, and records of receipts which, in the opinion of the Secretary or of the Comptroller General, may be related or pertinent to such grants and contracts.

Record retention. Regulation.

Audit.

"SEC. 206. NATIONAL PROJECTS.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall identify specific national needs and problems with respect to ocean and coastal resources. The Secretary may make grants or enter into contracts under this section with respect to such needs or problems. The amount of any such grant or contract may equal 100 percent, or any lesser percent, of the total cost of the project involved.

33 USC 1125. Grants and contracts.

"(b) ELIGIBILITY AND PROCEDURE.—Any person may apply to the Secretary for a grant or contract under this section. In addition, the Secretary may invite applications with respect to specific national needs or problems identified under subsection (a). Application shall be made in such form and manner, and with such content and other submissions, as the Secretary shall by regulation prescribe. The Secretary shall act upon each such application within 6 months after the date on which all required information is received. Any grant made, or contract entered into, under this section shall be subject to the limitations and provisions set forth in section 205(d) (2) and (4) and to such other terms, conditions, and requirements as the Secretary deems necessary or appropriate.

Application.

"(c) AUTHORIZATION FOR APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated for purposes of carrying out this section not to exceed $5,000,000 for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1977. Such sums as may be appropriated pursuant to this subsection shall remain available

until expended. The amounts obligated to be expended for the purposes set forth in subsection (a) shall not, in any fiscal year, exceed an amount equal to 10 percent of the sums appropriated for such year pursuant to section 212.

"SEC. 207. SEA GRANT COLLEGES AND SEA GRANT REGIONAL CONSORTIA.

33 USC 1126.

"(a) DESIGNATION.—(1) The Secretary may designate—

"(A) any institution of higher education as a sea grant college; and

"(B) any association or other alliance of two or more persons (other than individuals) as a sea grant regional consortium.

"(2) No institution of higher education may be designated as a sea grant college unless the Secretary finds that such institution—

"(A) is maintaining a balanced program of research, education, training, and advisory services in fields related to ocean and coastal resources and has received financial assistance under section 205 of this title or under section 204(c) of the National Sea Grant College and Program Act of 1966;

33 USC 1124, 1123.

"(B) will act in accordance with such guidelines as are prescribed under subsection (b)(2); and

"(C) meets such other qualifications as the Secretary deems necessary or appropriate.

33 USC 1121 note.

The designation of any institution as a sea grant college under the authority of such Act of 1966 shall, if such designation is in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of the Sea Grant Program Improvement Act of 1976, be considered to be a designation made under paragraph (1) so long as such institution complies with subparagraphs (B) and (C).

Ante, p. 1961.

"(3) No association or other alliance of two or more persons may be designated as a sea grant regional consortium unless the Secretary finds that such association or alliance—

"(A) is established for the purpose of sharing expertise, research, educational facilities, or training facilities, and other capabilities in order to facilitate research, education, training, and advisory services, in any field related to ocean and coastal resources;

"(B) will encourage and follow a regional approach to solving problems or meeting needs relating to ocean and coastal resources, in cooperation with appropriate sea grant colleges, sea grant programs, and other persons in the region;

"(C) will act in accordance with such guidelines as are prescribed under subsection (b)(2); and

"(D) meets such other qualifications as the Secretary deems necessary or appropriate.

"(b) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall by regulation prescribe—

"(1) the qualifications required to be met under paragraphs (2)(C) and (3)(D) of subsection (a); and

"(2) guidelines relating to the activities and responsibilities of sea grant colleges and sea grant regional consortia.

Hearing.

"(c) SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION OF DESIGNATION.—The Secretary may, for cause and after an opportunity for hearing, suspend or terminate any designation under subsection (a).

"SEC. 208. SEA GRANT FELLOWSHIPS.

33 USC 1127.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall support a sea grant fellowship program to provide educational and training assistance to qualified individuals at the undergraduate and graduate levels of education

in fields related to ocean and coastal resources. Such fellowships shall be awarded pursuant to guidelines established by the Secretary. Sea grant fellowships may only be awarded by sea grant colleges, sea grant regional consortia, institutions of higher education, and professional associations and institutes. Guidelines.

"(b) LIMITATION ON TOTAL FELLOWSHIP GRANTS.—The total amount which may be provided for grants under the sea grant fellowship program during any fiscal year shall not exceed an amount equal to 5 percent of the total funds appropriated for such year pursuant to section 212.

"SEC. 209. SEA GRANT REVIEW PANEL.

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There shall be established an independent committee to be known as the sea grant review panel. The panel shall, on the 60th day after the date of the enactment of the Sea Grant Program Improvement Act of 1976, supersede the sea grant advisory panel in existence before such date of enactment. 33 USC 1128. *Ante*, p. 1961.

"(b) DUTIES.—The panel shall take such steps as may be necessary to review, and shall advise the Secretary, the Administrator, and the Director with respect to—

"(1) applications or proposals for, and performance under, grants and contracts awarded under sections 205 and 206;

"(2) the sea grant fellowship program;

"(3) the designation and operation of sea grant colleges and sea grant regional consortia, and the operation of sea grant programs;

"(4) the formulation and application of the planning guidelines and priorities under section 204 (a) and (c)(1); and

"(5) such other matters as the Secretary refers to the panel for review and advice.

The Secretary shall make available to the panel such information, personnel, and administrative services and assistance as it may reasonably require to carry out its duties.

"(c) MEMBERSHIP, TERMS, AND POWERS.—(1) The panel shall consist of 15 voting members who shall be appointed by the Secretary. The Director shall serve as a nonvoting member of the panel. Not less than five of the voting members of the panel shall be individuals who, by reason of knowledge, experience, or training, are especially qualified in one or more of the disciplines and fields included in marine science. The other voting members shall be individuals who, by reason of knowledge, experience, or training, are especially qualified in, or representative of, education, extension services, State government, industry, economics, planning, or any other activity which is appropriate to, and important for, any effort to enhance the understanding, assessment, development, utilization, or conservation of ocean and coastal resources. No individual is eligible to be a voting member of the panel if the individual is (A) the director of a sea grant college, sea grant regional consortium, or sea grant program; (B) an applicant for, or beneficiary (as determined by the Secretary) of, any grant or contract under section 205 or 206; or (C) a full-time officer or employee of the United States.

"(2) The term of office of a voting member of the panel shall be 3 years, except that of the original appointees, five shall be appointed for a term of 1 year, five shall be appointed for a term of 2 years, and five shall be appointed for a term of 3 years.

"(3) Any individual appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for which his or her predecessor was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of such term.

No individual may be appointed as a voting member after serving one full term as such a member. A voting member may serve after the date of the expiration of the term of office for which appointed until his or her successor has taken office, or until 90 days after such date, whichever is earlier.

Chairman, Vice Chairman.

"(4) The panel shall select one voting member to serve as the Chairman and another voting member to serve as the Vice Chairman. The Vice Chairman shall act as Chairman in the absence or incapacity of the Chairman.

"(5) Voting members of the panel shall—

Compensation. 5 USC 5332 note.

"(A) receive compensation at the daily rate for GS-18 of the General Schedule under section 5332 of title 5, United States Code, when actually engaged in the performance of duties for such panel; and

"(B) be reimbursed for actual and reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of such duties.

"(6) The panel shall meet on a biannual basis and, at any other time, at the call of the Chairman or upon the request of a majority of the voting members or of the Director.

"(7) The panel may exercise such powers as are reasonably necessary in order to carry out its duties under subsection (b).

"SEC. 210. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION.

33 USC 1129.

"Each department, agency, or other instrumentality of the Federal Government which is engaged in or concerned with, or which has authority over, matters relating to ocean and coastal resources—

"(1) may, upon a written request from the Secretary, make available, on a reimbursable basis or otherwise any personnel (with their consent and without prejudice to their position and rating), service, or facility which the Secretary deems necessary to carry out any provision of this title;

"(2) shall, upon a written request from the Secretary, furnish any available data or other information which the Secretary deems necessary to carry out any provision of this title; and

"(3) shall cooperate with the Administration and duly authorized officials thereof.

"SEC. 211. ANNUAL REPORT AND EVALUATION.

Submittal to Congress and President. 33 USC 1130.

"(a) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit to the Congress and the President, not later than February 15 of each year, a report on the activities of, and the outlook for, the national sea grant program.

"(b) EVALUATION.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget and the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, in the Executive Office of the President, shall have the opportunity to review each report prepared pursuant to subsection (a). Such Directors may submit, for inclusion in such report, comments and recommendations and an independent evaluation of the national sea grant program. Such material shall be transmitted to the Secretary not later than February 1 of each year, and the Secretary shall cause it to be published as a separate section in the annual report submitted pursuant to subsection (a).

"SEC. 212. AUTHORIZATION FOR APPROPRIATIONS.

33 USC 1131.

"There is authorized to be appropriated for purposes of carrying out the provisions of this title (other than section 206) not to exceed

$50,000,000 for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1977. Such sums as may be appropriated under this section shall remain available until expended.".

SEC. 3. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Commerce (hereafter in this section referred to as the "Secretary") may enter into contracts and make grants under this section to— Contracts. 33 USC 1124a.

(1) enhance the research and development capability of developing foreign nations with respect to ocean and coastal resources, as such term is defined in section 203 of the National Sea Grant Program Act; and

(2) promote the international exchange of information and data with respect to the assessment, development, utilization, and conservation of such resources.

(b) ELIGIBILITY AND PROCEDURE.—Any sea grant college and sea grant regional consortium (as defined in section 203 of the National Sea Grant Program Act) and any institution of higher education, laboratory, or institute (if such institution, laboratory, or institute is located within any State (as defined in such section 203)) may apply for and receive financial assistance under this section. Each grant or contract under this section shall be made pursuant to such requirements as the Secretary shall, after consultation with the Secretary of State, by regulation prescribe. Application shall be made in such form, and with such content and other submissions, as may be so required. Before approving any application for a grant or contract under this section, the Secretary shall consult with the Secretary of State. Any grant made, or contract entered into, under this section shall be subject to the limitations and provisions set forth in section 205(d) (2) and (4) of the National Sea Grant Program Act and to such other terms, conditions, and requirements as the Secretary deems necessary or appropriate. Regulation. Consultation.

(c) AUTHORIZATION FOR APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated for purposes of carrying out this section not to exceed $3,000,000 for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1977. Such sums as may be appropriated under this section shall remain available until expended.

SEC. 4. CONFORMING AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.

(a) Section 5314 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end thereof the following new paragraph:

"(65) Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.".

(b) Section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end thereof the following new paragraphs:

"(109) Deputy Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

"(110) Associate Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.".

(c)(1) Section 2(d) of Reorganization Plan Numbered 4 of 1970 (84 Stat. 2090) is amended by striking out "Level V" and "(5 U.S.C. 5316)" and inserting in lieu thereof "Level IV" and "(5 U.S.C. 5315)", respectively. 5 USC app. II; 15 USC 1511 note.

5 USC app. II.

(2) The individual serving as the Associate Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (pursuant to section 2(d) of Reorganization Plan Numbered 4 of 1970) on the date of the enactment of this Act shall continue as the Associate Administrator, notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (1).

Approved October 8, 1976.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 94-1048 (Comm. on Merchant Marine and Fisheries) and No. 94-1556 (Comm. of Conference).

SENATE REPORT No. 94-848 accompanying S. 3165 (Committees on Labor and Public Welfare and Commerce).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 122 (1976):

May 3, considered and passed House.

June 14, considered and passed Senate, amended, in lieu of S. 3165.

Sept. 17, Senate agreed to conference report.

Sept. 23, House agreed to conference report.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS, Vol. 12, No. 42:

Oct. 10, Presidential statement.