

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**S.** \_\_\_\_\_

To require the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to establish a constituent-driven program to provide a digital information platform capable of efficiently integrating coastal data with decision-support tools, training, and best practices and to support collection of priority coastal geospatial data to inform and improve local, State, regional, and Federal capacities to manage the coastal region, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. SULLIVAN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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**A BILL**

To require the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to establish a constituent-driven program to provide a digital information platform capable of efficiently integrating coastal data with decision-support tools, training, and best practices and to support collection of priority coastal geospatial data to inform and improve local, State, regional, and Federal capacities to manage the coastal region, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Digital Coast Act”.

3 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress makes the following findings:

5 (1) The Digital Coast is a model approach for  
6 effective Federal partnerships with State and local  
7 government, nongovernmental organizations, and the  
8 private sector.

9 (2) Access to current, accurate, uniform, and  
10 standards-based geospatial information, tools, and  
11 training to characterize the United States coastal re-  
12 gion is critical for public safety and for the environ-  
13 ment, infrastructure, and economy of the United  
14 States.

15 (3) More than half of all people of the United  
16 States (153,000,000) currently live on or near a  
17 coast and an additional 12,000,000 are expected in  
18 the next decade.

19 (4) Coastal counties in the United States aver-  
20 age 300 persons per square mile, compared with the  
21 national average of 98.

22 (5) On a typical day, more than 1,540 permits  
23 for construction of single-family homes are issued in  
24 coastal counties, combined with other commercial,  
25 retail, and institutional construction to support this  
26 population.

1           (6) Over half of the economic productivity of  
2 the United States is located within coastal regions.

3           (7) Highly accurate, high-resolution remote  
4 sensing and other geospatial data play an increas-  
5 ingly important role in decision making and manage-  
6 ment of the coastal zone and economy, including  
7 for—

8                   (A) flood and coastal storm surge pre-  
9 diction;

10                   (B) hazard risk and vulnerability assess-  
11 ment;

12                   (C) emergency response and recovery plan-  
13 ning;

14                   (D) community resilience to longer range  
15 coastal change;

16                   (E) local planning and permitting;

17                   (F) habitat and ecosystem health assess-  
18 ments; and

19                   (G) landscape change detection.

20 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

21 In this Act:

22           (1) COASTAL REGION.—The term “coastal re-  
23 gion” means the area of United States waters ex-  
24 tending inland from the shoreline to include coastal  
25 watersheds and seaward to the territorial sea.

1           (2) COASTAL STATE.—The term “coastal  
2 State” has the meaning given the term “coastal  
3 state” in section 304 of the Coastal Zone Manage-  
4 ment Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1453).

5           (3) FEDERAL GEOGRAPHIC DATA COM-  
6 MITTEE.—The term “Federal Geographic Data  
7 Committee” means the interagency committee that  
8 promotes the coordinated development, use, sharing,  
9 and dissemination of geospatial data on a national  
10 basis.

11          (4) REMOTE SENSING AND OTHER  
12 GEOSPATIAL.—The term “remote sensing and other  
13 geospatial” means collecting, storing, retrieving, or  
14 disseminating graphical or digital data depicting  
15 natural or manmade physical features, phenomena,  
16 or boundaries of the Earth and any information re-  
17 lated thereto, including surveys, maps, charts, sat-  
18 ellite and airborne remote sensing data, images,  
19 LiDAR, and services performed by professionals  
20 such as surveyors, photogrammetrists, hydrog-  
21 raphers, geodesists, cartographers, and other such  
22 services.

23          (5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
24 the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Ad-

1        administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmos-  
2        pheric Administration.

3        **SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DIGITAL COAST.**

4        (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

5                (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish  
6        a program for the provision of an enabling platform  
7        that integrates geospatial data, decision-support  
8        tools, training, and best practices to address coastal  
9        management issues and needs. Under the program,  
10       the Secretary shall strive to enhance resilient com-  
11       munities, ecosystem values, and coastal economic  
12       growth and development by helping communities ad-  
13       dress their issues, needs, and challenges through  
14       cost-effective and participatory solutions.

15               (2) DESIGNATION.—The program established  
16       under paragraph (1) shall be known as the “Digital  
17       Coast” (in this section referred to as the “pro-  
18       gram”).

19        (b) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the  
20       program, the Secretary shall ensure that the program pro-  
21       vides data integration, tool development, training, docu-  
22       mentation, dissemination, and archive by—

23               (1) making data and resulting integrated prod-  
24       ucts developed under this section readily accessible  
25       via the Digital Coast internet website of the Na-

1 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the  
2 GeoPlatform.gov and data.gov internet websites, and  
3 such other information distribution technologies as  
4 the Secretary considers appropriate;

5 (2) developing decision-support tools that use  
6 and display resulting integrated data and provide  
7 training on use of such tools;

8 (3) documenting such data to Federal Geo-  
9 graphic Data Committee standards; and

10 (4) archiving all raw data acquired under this  
11 Act at the appropriate National Oceanic and Atmos-  
12 pheric Administration data center or such other  
13 Federal data center as the Secretary considers ap-  
14 propriate.

15 (c) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall coordinate  
16 the activities carried out under the program to optimize  
17 data collection, sharing, and integration, and to minimize  
18 duplication by—

19 (1) consulting with coastal managers and deci-  
20 sion makers concerning coastal issues, and sharing  
21 information and best practices, as the Secretary con-  
22 siders appropriate, with—

23 (A) coastal States;

24 (B) local governments; and

1 (C) representatives of academia, the pri-  
2 vate sector, and nongovernmental organizations;

3 (2) consulting with other Federal agencies, in-  
4 cluding interagency committees, on relevant Federal  
5 activities, including activities carried out under the  
6 Ocean and Coastal Mapping Integration Act (33  
7 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.), the Coastal Zone Management  
8 Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq.), the Integrated  
9 Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009  
10 (33 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.), and the Hydrographic  
11 Services Improvement Act of 1998 (33 U.S.C. 892  
12 et seq.);

13 (3) participating, pursuant to section 216 of the  
14 E-Government Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-347;  
15 44 U.S.C. 3501 note), in the establishment of such  
16 standards and common protocols as the Secretary  
17 considers necessary to assure the interoperability of  
18 remote sensing and other geospatial data with all  
19 users of such information within—

20 (A) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
21 Administration;

22 (B) other Federal agencies;

23 (C) State and local government; and

24 (D) the private sector;

1           (4) coordinating with, seeking assistance and  
2 cooperation of, and providing liaison to the Federal  
3 Geographic Data Committee pursuant to Office of  
4 Management and Budget Circular A-16 and Execu-  
5 tive Order 12906 of April 11, 1994 (59 Fed. Reg.  
6 17671), as amended by Executive Order 13286 of  
7 February 28, 2003 (68 Fed. Reg. 10619); and

8           (5) developing and maintaining a best practices  
9 document that sets out the best practices used by  
10 the Secretary in carrying out the program and pro-  
11 viding such document to the United States Geologi-  
12 cal Survey, the Corps of Engineers, and other rel-  
13 evant Federal agencies.

14       (d) FILLING NEEDS AND GAPS.—In carrying out the  
15 program, the Secretary shall—

16           (1) maximize the use of remote sensing and  
17 other geospatial data collection activities conducted  
18 for other purposes and under other authorities;

19           (2) focus on filling data needs and gaps for  
20 coastal management issues, including with respect to  
21 areas that, as of the date of the enactment of this  
22 Act, were underserved by coastal data and the areas  
23 of the Arctic that are under the jurisdiction of the  
24 United States;



1           (3) pursuant to the Ocean and Coastal Map-  
2           ping Integration Act (33 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.), sup-  
3           port continue improvement in existing efforts to co-  
4           ordinate the acquisition and integration of key data  
5           sets needed for coastal management and other pur-  
6           poses, including—

7                   (A) coastal elevation data;

8                   (B) land use and land cover data;

9                   (C) socioeconomic and human use data;

10                  (D) critical infrastructure data;

11                  (E) structures data;

12                  (F) living resources and habitat data;

13                  (G) cadastral data; and

14                  (H) aerial imagery; and

15           (4) integrate the priority supporting data set  
16           forth under paragraph (3) with other available data  
17           for the benefit of the broadest measure of coastal re-  
18           source management constituents and applications.

19           (e) FINANCIAL AGREEMENTS AND CONTRACTS.—

20                   (1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the program,  
21           the Secretary—

22                           (A) may enter into financial agreements to  
23           carry out the program, including—

1 (i) support to non-Federal entities  
2 that participate in implementing the pro-  
3 gram; and

4 (ii) grants, cooperative agreements,  
5 interagency agreements, contracts, or any  
6 other agreement on a reimbursable or non-  
7 reimbursable basis, with other Federal,  
8 tribal, State, and local governmental and  
9 nongovernmental entities; and

10 (B) may, to the maximum extent prac-  
11 ticable, enter into such contracts with private  
12 sector entities for such products and services as  
13 the Secretary determines may be necessary to  
14 collect, process, and provide remote sensing and  
15 other geospatial data and products for purposes  
16 of the program.

17 (2) FEES.—

18 (A) ASSESSMENT AND COLLECTION.—The  
19 Secretary may assess and collect fees for the  
20 conduct of any training, workshop, or con-  
21 ference that advances the purposes of the pro-  
22 gram.

23 (B) AMOUNTS.—The amount of a fee  
24 under this paragraph may not exceed the sum  
25 of costs incurred, or expected to be incurred, by

1 the Secretary as a direct result of the conduct  
2 of the training, workshop, or conference, includ-  
3 ing for subsistence expenses incidental to the  
4 training, workshop, or conference, as applicable.

5 (C) USE OF FEES.—Amounts collected by  
6 the Secretary in the form of fees under this  
7 paragraph may be used to pay for—

8 (i) the costs incurred for conducting  
9 an activity described in subparagraph (A);  
10 or

11 (ii) the expenses described in subpara-  
12 graph (B).

13 (3) SURVEY AND MAPPING.—Contracts entered  
14 into under paragraph (1)(B) shall be considered  
15 “surveying and mapping” services as such term is  
16 used in and as such contracts are awarded by the  
17 Secretary in accordance with the selection proce-  
18 dures in chapter 11 of title 40, United States Code.

19 (f) OCEAN ECONOMY.—The Secretary may establish  
20 publically available tools that track ocean and Great Lakes  
21 economy data for each coastal State.

22 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is  
23 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary \$4,000,000  
24 for each fiscal year 2020 through 2024 to carry out the  
25 program.