

## Bill introduced to reauthorize geologic mapping program through 2023

September 11, 2017

On September 11, Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) introduced a bill (S.1787), cosponsored by Senators Angus King (I-ME) and Dan Sullivan (R-AK), to reauthorize the National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program (NCGMP) through 2023. The program, overseen by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), was originally established through the National Geologic Mapping Act of 1992 to expedite the production of geologic maps of the United States, which are used by public and private entities for resource exploration and extraction, natural hazards mitigation, ground and surface water management, environmental protection, and federal land management. The Act was last reauthorized in 2009, and is currently set to expire in 2018.

The NCGMP works with federal, state, and university partners in three separate program components to produce mapping data which is presented in the National Geologic Map Database. For state (STATEMAP) and education (EDMAP) programs, funds are awarded through a competitive grant process which requires the applying state or university to match any federal funding awarded for mapping projects. Funds for federal geological mapping projects (FEDMAP) are also distributed through a review process that includes external stakeholders, such as other federal agencies and the American Association for State Geologists (AASG), which collaborate with the NCGMP to determine mapping priorities and carry out the mapping projects.

Understanding the geology of an area is essential for making well-informed policy decisions. Geologic maps lay the foundation for minimizing risks from natural hazards and help ensure responsible environmental stewardship, mitigate natural hazards, and foster economic growth. Still, less than a third of the U.S. is mapped at the level of detail needed to make these important decisions for resource and land management.

S.1787 was referred to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

*Sources: Library of Congress, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources*

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