

House subcommittee meets to discuss ocean acidification bills

April 9, 2019

The Subcommittee on Environment of the House Science Committee met on [April 9](#) to discuss four bills to address ocean acidification: the National Estuaries and Acidification Research (NEAR) Act of 2019 ([H.R.988](#)), COAST Research Act of 2019 ([H.R.1237](#)), Coastal Communities Ocean Acidification Act of 2019 ([H.R.1716](#)), and Ocean Acidification Innovation Act ([H.R.1921](#)).

The NEAR Act was introduced on February 6 by Bill Posey (R-FL-8) to fund a National Academies study on the impacts of ocean acidification and other estuarine environment stressors. The study is supported by Congress's findings that ocean acidification affects human health, natural resources, and environmental, economic, and recreational coastline usage, as cited in Section 2 of the bill.

The subcommittee held a [hearing](#) in late February to discuss the impacts of climate change on U.S. oceans and coasts. During this hearing Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR-1) voiced support for the COAST Research Act, of which she is a sponsor, because it promotes "long-term stewardship and standardization of ocean acidification data from different sources." The bill, which seeks to establish an ocean acidification advisory board and establish a data archive for ocean and coastal acidification data, has the most support of the four ocean acidification bills, with 28 cosponsors (23 Democrat, 5 Republican) having signed on as of April 9.

Chellie Pingree (D-ME-1) introduced the Coastal Communities Ocean Acidification Act of 2019 on March 13 to direct the Secretary of Commerce, through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to conduct research on coastal community vulnerability to ocean acidification. The bill also requires a public report detailing the research findings to be issued every 7 years.

The most recently introduced bill, the Ocean Acidification Innovation Act, was proposed by Derek Kilmer (D-WA-6) on March 27 to allow government agencies to offer prizes for innovation strategies proposed to help combat ocean acidification.

Committee members have two days to submit additional comments on the bills before they move on to the full committee for a vote.

Sources: American Institute of Physics; E&E News; U.S. House, Committee on Science, Subcommittee on Energy.
