

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to the Florida National Estuary
 3 Program Act; creating s. 373.45941, F.S.; providing
 4 legislative findings; providing that partnering with
 5 the federal government and local governments to
 6 protect specified water resources is an important
 7 state interest; requiring the Department of
 8 Environmental Protection to give funding consideration
 9 to each of the state's estuaries of national
 10 significance identified under the National Estuary
 11 Program; requiring that funds be used for specified
 12 projects; requiring each program receiving funding to
 13 prepare an annual report and submit the report to the
 14 Governor, Legislature, department, and respective
 15 water management districts; specifying requirements
 16 for the report; providing an effective date.

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 18 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 20 Section 1. Section 373.45941, Florida Statutes, is created
 21 to read:

22 373.45941 Florida National Estuary Program Act.—
 23 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.—The Legislature finds that:
 24 (a) Estuaries in the state designated as estuaries of
 25 national significance by the United States Congress provide

26 | diverse ecologically and economically productive habitats that
27 | support many wildlife populations, such as migratory birds,
28 | commercially valuable fish species, shellfish, and other species
29 | that depend on estuarine environments;

30 | (b) Significant water quality issues in the state arising
31 | from increased pollution from stormwater and agricultural
32 | runoff, wastewater discharges, industrial pollution, and
33 | commercial and recreational waste are degrading the state's
34 | estuaries of national significance;

35 | (c) Estuaries of national significance identified under
36 | the National Estuary Program are governed and funded by federal,
37 | state, and local governmental entities, including the department
38 | and the respective water management districts;

39 | (d) The natural resource protection and restoration
40 | efforts of the National Estuary Program provide substantial
41 | public health and economic benefits to the state, including its
42 | real estate and tourism sectors;

43 | (e) The state's estuaries of national significance
44 | encompass 50 percent of its coastline and a large proportion of
45 | its population and are economically, environmentally, and
46 | socially defined by some of the state's most important and
47 | vulnerable water resources; and

48 | (f) There is an important state interest in partnering
49 | with the federal government and local governments to protect the
50 | water resources, including the respective watersheds, of:

- 51 1. Tampa Bay;
 52 2. Sarasota Bay;
 53 3. Dona Bay;
 54 4. Roberts Bay;
 55 5. Lemon Bay;
 56 6. Charlotte Harbor, including the Peace and Myakka
 57 Rivers;
 58 7. Pine Island Sound, including the Caloosahatchee River;
 59 8. Estero Bay; and
 60 9. Indian River Lagoon.
 61 (2) FUNDING.-
 62 (a) The department shall give funding consideration to the
 63 conservation and management of the following programs identified
 64 under the National Estuary Program and designated pursuant to s.
 65 320 of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. s. 1330:
 66 1. Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program.
 67 2. Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership.
 68 3. Tampa Bay Estuary Program.
 69 4. Sarasota Bay Estuary Program.
 70 (b) Funds provided pursuant to paragraph (a) must be used
 71 for projects identified in the program's adopted comprehensive
 72 conservation and management plan, including, but not limited to,
 73 projects that:
 74 1. Improve water quality;
 75 2. Improve fisheries and natural habitats;

76 3. Enhance resiliency and protect human health, safety,
 77 and welfare;

78 4. Monitor environmental conditions to determine trends
 79 and project success;

80 5. Promote technology innovation and pilot projects that
 81 support such innovations; or

82 6. Enhance coastal economies and quality of life.

83 (3) ANNUAL REPORT.-

84 (a) Each National Estuary Program receiving recurring
 85 dedicated state funding shall, in coordination with its
 86 respective county and municipal governments, prepare a
 87 comprehensive annual report for water and habitat resource
 88 projects identified for state funding consideration within its
 89 jurisdictions. At a minimum, the report must include the:

90 1. Funds expended on each listed project in the fiscal
 91 year and the total estimated cost of each project;

92 2. Estimated completion date of each listed project;

93 3. Source and amount of financial assistance provided by
 94 county or municipal governments, water management districts, or
 95 other entities for each listed project; and

96 4. Implementation status of each project that has received
 97 state funding but has not been completed.

98 (b) By January 1 of each year, each National Estuary
 99 Program receiving recurring dedicated state funding shall submit
 100 its comprehensive annual report to the Governor, the President

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101 | of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the
102 | department, and the appropriate water management districts.

103 | Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2020.