

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4636

To authorize the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to prioritize and advance efforts to improve waste management systems and prevent and reduce plastic waste and marine debris, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 11, 2019

Mr. McCAUL (for himself and Mr. ENGEL) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to prioritize and advance efforts to improve waste management systems and prevent and reduce plastic waste and marine debris, 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,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Partnering and
5 Leveraging Assistance to Stop Trash for International
6 Cleaner Seas Act” or the “PLASTICS Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Eight million metric tons of plastic enter
4 the ocean every year. Marine debris damages the
5 health of marine life, impedes local economic devel-
6 opment, and threatens health systems. Ten river sys-
7 tems carry an estimated 90 percent of the plastic
8 waste that ends up in the ocean.

9 (2) Mismanaged plastic waste has the highest
10 risk of contaminating rivers and oceans. China con-
11 tributes the largest share of this mismanaged waste,
12 followed by Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam,
13 Thailand, Egypt, Nigeria, and South Africa. The
14 United States is the world's second-largest producer
15 and consumer of plastics products, and the top ex-
16 porter of plastic scrap.

17 (3) Most marine debris, particularly plastics,
18 enters the oceans from land-based sources, mainly in
19 developing countries, that lack the capacity to ade-
20 quately manage waste and prevent dumping.

21 (4) During the Our Ocean Conference in Octo-
22 ber 2018, the United States announced assistance to
23 prevent marine debris from entering the ocean
24 through development of waste management systems
25 and reduce plastics in marine protected areas in the
26 Indo-Pacific.

1 (5) During the June 2019 G20 Summit in
2 Osaka, Japan, the United States joined other G20
3 members in endorsing the “Osaka Blue Ocean Vi-
4 sion” to reduce additional pollution by marine plas-
5 tic litter to zero by 2050 and the G20 Implementa-
6 tion Framework for Actions on Marine Plastic Lit-
7 ter, which outlines a commitment to prevent and re-
8 duce plastic debris in the oceans through waste man-
9 agement and clean-up efforts to remove marine plas-
10 tic debris and prioritizes efforts to advance innova-
11 tive solutions and international cooperation to sup-
12 port such initiatives.

13 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

14 It is the policy of the United States to consult, part-
15 ner, and coordinate with the governments of foreign coun-
16 tries, international organizations, private and civil society
17 entities, and other stakeholders in a concerted effort to—

18 (1) prevent and reduce marine debris and plas-
19 tic waste, including through reduced consumption,
20 greater transparency in global trade of plastic waste,
21 and support for integrated waste management sys-
22 tems in developing countries;

23 (2) advance innovative market-based solutions
24 and catalyze private capital to prevent and reduce
25 marine debris and plastic waste, support integrated

1 waste management systems, and improve market de-
2 mand for recycled material;

3 (3) build the capacity of national and sub-
4 national governments in other countries to develop
5 and implement integrated waste management sys-
6 tems, measure and report progress in reducing plas-
7 tic waste, and prevent plastic waste from entering
8 rivers and oceans;

9 (4) support local economic development through
10 programs that assist community members, particu-
11 larly women, youth, and marginalized populations, to
12 derive economic benefit from waste products and
13 participation in waste management systems; and

14 (5) engage in international and regional co-
15 operation to prevent and reduce marine debris and
16 plastic waste, share best practices, and empower na-
17 tional and subnational governments, local commu-
18 nities, civil society, and the private sector to engage
19 in such efforts.

20 **SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

21 It is the sense of Congress that, in pursuing the pol-
22 icy described in section 3, the President should direct
23 United States representatives to appropriate international
24 bodies to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United
25 States to advocate support for the following:

1 (1) Efforts to improve transparency in global
2 trade of plastic waste, improve plastic waste regula-
3 tion to ensure the safety of humans and the environ-
4 ment, strengthen integrated waste management sys-
5 tems, and prevent, reduce, reuse, and recycle plastic
6 waste, to the extent practical.

7 (2) Collaborative approaches to establish meas-
8 urable targets and objectives, with related action
9 plans, for reducing marine debris and plastic waste
10 from all sources and sharing best practices in waste
11 prevention and management systems to prevent plas-
12 tic waste.

13 **SEC. 5. UNITED STATES SUPPORT TO IMPROVE WASTE**
14 **MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND PREVENT AND**
15 **REDUCE MARINE DEBRIS.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State and the
17 Administrator of the United States Agency for Inter-
18 national Development, in coordination with the heads of
19 relevant Federal departments and agencies, are authorized
20 to prioritize and advance ongoing global efforts to—

21 (1) prevent and reduce marine debris and plas-
22 tic waste, including through reduced consumption,
23 greater transparency in global trade of plastic waste,
24 and support for integrated waste management sys-
25 tems in developing countries;

1 (2) advance innovative market-based solutions
2 and catalyze private capital to prevent and reduce
3 marine debris and plastic waste, support integrated
4 waste management systems, and improve market de-
5 mand for recycled material;

6 (3) build the capacity of national and sub-
7 national governments in other countries to develop
8 and implement integrated waste management sys-
9 tems, measure and report progress in reducing plas-
10 tic waste, and prevent plastic waste from entering
11 rivers and oceans; and

12 (4) support local economic development through
13 programs that assist community members, particu-
14 larly women, youth, and marginalized populations, to
15 derive economic benefit from waste products and
16 participation in waste management systems.

17 (b) COORDINATION WITH PRIVATE SECTOR.—The
18 Secretary and the Administrator, in coordination with the
19 Chief Executive Officer of the U.S. Development Finance
20 Corporation and the Chief Executive Officer of the Millen-
21 nium Challenge Corporation and in consultation with the
22 heads of relevant Federal departments and agencies, are
23 authorized and encouraged to work with entities in the
24 private sector and with nongovernmental organizations to
25 leverage sources of public and private capital to com-

1 plement the efforts described in subsection (a), including
2 by financing infrastructure investments, supporting capac-
3 ity-building activities, and entering into cost-sharing, cost-
4 matching, and other cooperative agreements to support
5 and finance such efforts.

6 (c) **MONITORING AND EVALUATION.**—The Secretary
7 and the Administrator shall establish monitoring and eval-
8 uation mechanisms, including measurable goals, objec-
9 tives, and benchmarks, to ensure the effective use of
10 United States foreign assistance to achieve the objectives
11 described in paragraphs (1) through (4) of subsection (a).

12 (d) **DOMESTIC RESOURCE MOBILIZATION.**—In car-
13 rying out the authority under subsection (a), the Secretary
14 and the Administrator, in coordination with the heads of
15 relevant Federal departments and agencies, shall seek to
16 provide technical assistance to mobilize the domestic re-
17 sources of recipient countries in order to increase cost-
18 sharing, self-reliance, and host country ownership of waste
19 prevention and management programs.

20 (e) **COST LIMITATION.**—No additional funds are au-
21 thorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act.

22 (f) **REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date
23 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the Ad-
24 ministrator, in consultation with the heads of relevant
25 Federal departments and agencies, shall jointly submit to

1 the appropriate congressional committees a report on on-
2 going programs and monitoring and evaluation mecha-
3 nisms to carry out the authority under subsection (a) that
4 includes a description of—

5 (1) the monitoring and evaluation plans and in-
6 dicators used to measure performance of assistance
7 programs, in accordance with subsection (d);

8 (2) best practices and lessons learned in imple-
9 menting the efforts authorized under subsection (a);

10 (3) the extent to which recipient countries have
11 demonstrated a commitment and willingness to co-
12 operate to advance the efforts described in sub-
13 section (a) and to dedicate resources to support
14 waste prevention and management initiatives;

15 (4) the extent to which host country govern-
16 ments and other governments in the region are in-
17 vesting resources to advance initiatives to prevent or
18 reduce marine debris and plastic waste and develop
19 integrated waste management systems; and

20 (5) the extent to which other funding sources,
21 including through private sector investment, have
22 been identified to advance waste prevention and
23 management initiatives.

1 (g) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES

2 DEFINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate con-

3 gressional committees” means—

4 (1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the

5 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-

6 resentatives; and

7 (2) the Committee on Foreign Relations and

8 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

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