

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7973

To direct the Secretary of Commerce to establish a grant program to support the restoration of coral reefs in South Florida.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 12, 2024

Mr. GIMENEZ (for himself and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Commerce to establish a grant program to support the restoration of coral reefs in South Florida.

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. SOUTH FLORIDA CORAL REEF RESTORATION**
4 **GRANT PROGRAM.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a
6 grant program to award amounts to eligible entities—

7 (1) to carry out coral reef restoration activities
8 in South Florida; or

9 (2) to reimburse such eligible entities for
10 amounts spent by such eligible entities to carry out

1 coral reef restoration activities in South Florida
2 within the 5 years preceding the date on which such
3 eligible entities are awarded a grant under this sec-
4 tion.

5 (b) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible for a grant under
6 this section, an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary
7 an application in such form, at such time, and containing
8 such information as the Secretary determines appropriate.

9 (c) GRANT AMOUNT LIMITATION.—The Secretary
10 may not award any single eligible entity more than
11 \$1,000,000 under this section in a single fiscal year.

12 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
13 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry
14 out this section \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2024
15 through 2028.

16 (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

17 (1) CORAL REEF RESTORATION ACTIVITY.—The
18 term “coral reef restoration activity” means—

19 (A) the sexual propagation of coral to in-
20 crease diversity of genetic-based resiliency in
21 support of coral restoration; and

22 (B) the evacuation, rehabilitation, and re-
23 deployment of coral fragments.

24 (2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
25 ty”—

1 (A) means—

2 (i) a State;

3 (ii) a local municipality;

4 (iii) a nonprofit organization; and

5 (iv) a nongovernmental organization;

6 and

7 (B) includes the Mote Marine Laboratory.

8 (3) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.—The term
9 “nonprofit organization” means an organization—

10 (A) described in section 501(c)(3) of the
11 Internal Revenue Code of 1968; and

12 (B) exempt from taxation under section
13 501(a) of such Code.

14 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
15 the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Ad-
16 ministrator of the National Oceanic and Atmos-
17 pheric Administration.

18 (5) SOUTH FLORIDA.—The term “South Flor-
19 ida” means—

20 (A) all land and water within the adminis-
21 trative boundaries of the South Florida Water
22 Management District;

23 (B) regional coastal waters, including Bis-
24 cayne Bay, the Caloosahatchee Estuary, Florida

- 1 Bay, Indian River Lagoon, and St. Lucie River
- 2 Estuary; and
- 3 (C) the Florida Reef Tract.

