

103D CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 137

To require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to conduct a study of algal blooms off the coast of Maui, Hawaii, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 21 (legislative day, JANUARY 5), 1993

Mr. INOUE introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

A BILL

To require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to conduct a study of algal blooms off the coast of Maui, Hawaii, 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. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress finds the following:

5 (1) Twice since 1989, the northwestern coast of
6 Maui, Hawaii, has been plagued with massive
7 blooms of the green alga, *Cladophora sericea*.
8 Blooms of the red alga, *Hypnea musciformis*, have
9 also occurred in the area and in the Kihei area.

1 (2) The algal blooms have destroyed corals and
2 other reef-building organisms, and have washed up
3 on beaches and severely impeded the recreational use
4 of affected coastal areas.

5 (3) The algal blooms are particularly detrimen-
6 tal to the natural ecological balance of the near-
7 shore reef environment.

8 (4) Although the specific causes of the algal
9 blooms are uncertain, algal growth is stimulated in
10 a proportional manner by concentrations of chemi-
11 cals such as fertilizers and insecticides, which enter
12 the ocean through freshwater runoff.

13 (5) The Department of Health of the State of
14 Hawaii has indicated that the department does not
15 have the resources at this time to determine the
16 cause of the algal blooms.

17 (6) Extensive research will be required to deter-
18 mine the factors that contribute to algal growth.

19 (7) Potential sources of nutrients that may con-
20 tribute to algal growth include the near-shore dis-
21 posal of sewage in injection wells from the Lahaina
22 Wastewater Treatment Plant, surface runoff from
23 agricultural lands and urban resort areas, and sub-
24 surface point sources in the areas.

1 (8) The long-term environmental impacts of the
2 algal blooms are unknown, but in the short term,
3 reefs exposed to the algae are being destroyed and
4 the deterioration of the coral has detrimental effects
5 on fish and other wildlife that depend on the reefs
6 for survival.

7 (9) The algal blooms are generating negative
8 economic impacts as well as negative biological im-
9 pacts, as additional reports indicate that the algae
10 are decreasing the intake of fish caught by local
11 fishermen in the affected marine waters.

12 (10) The Maui Algae Task Force is comprised
13 of community environmental activists and has been
14 assembled to address the problem of algal blooms.

15 (11) The Maui Algae Task Force hopes to work
16 in cooperation with the Department of Health of the
17 State of Hawaii and the Environmental Protection
18 Agency to identify and eradicate the causes of the
19 algal blooms.

20 **SEC. 2. STUDY.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Envi-
22 ronmental Protection Agency (hereafter in this Act re-
23 ferred to as the “Administrator”) shall conduct a study
24 to—

1 (1) determine the causes of recent algal blooms
2 off the northwestern coast of Maui, Hawaii; and

3 (2) research alternatives for the improved man-
4 agement of chemicals present in wastewater treat-
5 ment and fresh water runoff.

6 (b) STUDY REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the
7 study under this section, the Administrator shall—

8 (1) survey and monitor—

9 (A) seaweed populations and animals for
10 which the seaweed is a food source;

11 (B) surface water runoff sediments in the
12 study area; and

13 (C) inputs into the study area from sub-
14 surface point sources, including any such inputs
15 from the Lahaina wastewater treatment plant;
16 and

17 (2) study the responses of—

18 (A) the seaweed populations referred to in
19 paragraph (1)(A) to different concentrations of
20 nutrients; and

21 (B) the animals referred to in paragraph
22 (1)(A) to pesticides and other biological toxins.

23 (c) EQUIPMENT; GRANTS.—

24 (1) ACQUISITION OF EQUIPMENT.—In carrying
25 out the study under this section, the Administrator

1 is authorized to acquire such monitoring and testing
2 equipment as the Administrator determines nec-
3 essary.

4 (2) GRANTS.—In carrying out the study under
5 this section, the Administrator is authorized to es-
6 tablish a grant program to provide grants to eligible
7 entities that submit approved applications to the Ad-
8 ministrator. The following entities may submit an
9 application to conduct study activities under this
10 section:

11 (A) The Department of Health of the
12 State of Hawaii.

13 (B) The Maui Algae Task Force.

14 (C) Appropriate Federal, State, or county
15 departments or agencies.

16 (D) Any other entity that the Adminis-
17 trator determines to be appropriate.

18 (d) DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—In carrying out
19 the study under this section, the Administrator is author-
20 ized to establish demonstration projects to identify and
21 implement best management practices for the control of
22 nonpoint source pollution from erosion and agricultural
23 runoff.

24 (e) REPORTS.—

1 (1) INTERIM REPORT.—Not later than 1 year
2 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Adminis-
3 trator shall submit to Congress a report that in-
4 cludes interim results of the study conducted under
5 this section, and such recommendations as the Ad-
6 ministrator determines to be appropriate.

7 (2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than January
8 31, 1996, the Administrator shall submit to Con-
9 gress a final report that summarizes the results of
10 the study conducted under this section and includes
11 such recommendations as the Administrator deter-
12 mines to be appropriate.

13 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
14 are authorized to be appropriated to the Environmental
15 Protection Agency to carry out this section \$500,000 for
16 each of fiscal years 1994 and 1995.

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