

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8471

To establish a Federal Maritime Task Force and a private sector advisory committee to address the health, safety, security, and logistical issues relating to the continuation of maritime travel and the resumption of cruise operations in United States waters during the COVID–19 public health emergency.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 1, 2020

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico (for herself, Ms. SHALALA, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Ms. MUCARSEL-POWELL, and Mr. RUTHERFORD) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To establish a Federal Maritime Task Force and a private sector advisory committee to address the health, safety, security, and logistical issues relating to the continuation of maritime travel and the resumption of cruise operations in United States waters during the COVID–19 public health emergency.

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 “Set Sail Safely Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. MARITIME TASK FORCE.**

2 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Upon enactment of the Set
3 Sail Safely Act, there is established a Maritime Task
4 Force to address the health and safety of passengers,
5 crew, and associated workers, logistical issues relating to
6 the continuation of maritime travel, and the resumption
7 of cruise operations, including navigation safety, in United
8 States waters during the COVID–19 public health emer-
9 gency.

10 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—The Maritime Task Force shall
11 consist of the following members, or their designees:

12 (1) The Secretary of the department in which
13 the Coast Guard is operating, who shall serve as the
14 chair of the Task Force.

15 (2) The Secretary of Homeland Security, dur-
16 ing any period in which the Coast Guard is oper-
17 ating as a service in the Navy.

18 (3) The Secretary of Commerce.

19 (4) The Secretary of Transportation.

20 (5) The Secretary of Health and Human Serv-
21 ices.

22 (6) The Director of the Centers for Disease
23 Control and Prevention.

24 (7) The Secretary of State.

25 (8) The Administrator of the Environmental
26 Protection Agency.

1 (9) The Chairman of the Federal Maritime
2 Commission.

3 (10) The Chair of the National Economic
4 Council of the United States.

5 (c) DUTIES.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Maritime Task Force
7 shall meet in-person or virtually during the duration
8 of the COVID–19 public health emergency to de-
9 velop a plan containing information about the re-
10 quirements and protocols that each Federal agency
11 represented on the Maritime Task Force will imple-
12 ment to address the health, safety, security, and
13 logistical issues relating to the continuation of mari-
14 time travel in United States waters during the
15 COVID–19 public health emergency, and with re-
16 spect to the resumption of cruise operations and in-
17 creased passenger maritime travel after the COVID–
18 19 public health emergency ends.

19 (2) PRIVATE SECTOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE
20 RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not more than—

21 (A) 10 days after receiving the written rec-
22 ommendations from the private sector advisory
23 committee under section 3(e), the Chair of the
24 Maritime Task Force shall call an in-person or

1 virtual meeting between the private sector advisory
2 committee and the Maritime Task Force;

3 (B) 10 days after the meeting under sub-
4 paragraph (A), the Chair of the Maritime Task
5 Force shall publish the plan required under
6 paragraph (1) in the Federal Register; and

7 (C) 30 days after publication of such plan
8 in the Federal Register, each Federal agency
9 represented on the Maritime Task Force shall
10 begin implementing the plan developed under
11 paragraph (1), including taking necessary ad-
12 ministrative actions to implement the require-
13 ments and protocols of the plan.

14 (d) COVID–19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY.—The
15 term “COVID–19 public health emergency” means the
16 public health emergency related to the coronavirus that
17 has been declared by the Secretary of Health and Human
18 Services pursuant to section 319 of the Public Health
19 Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d).

20 **SEC. 3. PRIVATE SECTOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 7 days after the
22 date of enactment of this Act, the Chair of the Maritime
23 Task Force shall nominate representatives to a private
24 sector advisory committee to work in consultation with the
25 Maritime Task Force.

1 (b) COMPOSITION.—The private sector advisory com-
2 mittee shall consist of the following members:

3 (1) Two representatives from the passenger
4 cruise line industry.

5 (2) One representative from the harbor pilots
6 industry.

7 (3) Two representatives from longshoremen
8 unions.

9 (4) One representative from the travel agent in-
10 dustry.

11 (5) One representative from a port council.

12 (6) One representative from vessel and cargo
13 operations.

14 (7) One representative from a small business
15 whose primary income is derived from working with
16 a port or cruise company.

17 (8) One representative who is a nongovern-
18 mental medical health professional with expertise in
19 infectious diseases.

20 (c) DUTIES.—Not later than 15 days after the ap-
21 pointment of all members of the private sector advisory
22 committee, the private sector advisory committee shall
23 submit written recommendations to the Maritime Task
24 Force established under section 2 on policies and proce-
25 dures to be adopted for the safe resumption of the cruise

1 line industry during and after the COVID–19 public
2 health emergency, including providing recommendations
3 about—

4 (1) best scientific practices;

5 (2) measures adopted in other travel industries
6 that may be adapted for the cruise line industry;
7 and

8 (3) general matters affecting the safe and rea-
9 sonable resumption of cruise line activity.

10 (d) ADMINISTRATION.—

11 (1) EMPLOYEE STATUS.—A member of the pri-
12 vate sector advisory committee shall not be consid-
13 ered an employee of the Federal Government by rea-
14 son of service on such committee, except for the pur-
15 poses of the following:

16 (A) Chapter 81 of title 5, United States
17 Code.

18 (B) Chapter 171 of title 28, United States
19 Code, and an other Federal law relating to tort
20 liability.

21 (2) ACCEPTANCE OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES.—

22 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a mem-
23 ber of the private sector advisory committee shall
24 serve on such committee on a voluntary basis with-
25 out pay.

1 (3) STATUS OF MEMBERS.—With respect to a
2 member of the committee whom the Chair of the
3 Maritime Task Force appoints to represent an entity
4 or group—

5 (A) the member is authorized to represent
6 the interests of the applicable entity or group;
7 and

8 (B) requirements under Federal law that
9 would interfere with such representation and
10 that apply to a special Government employee
11 (as defined in section 202(a) of title 18, United
12 States Code), including requirements relating to
13 employee conduct, political activities, ethics,
14 conflicts of interest, and corruption, do not
15 apply to the member.

16 (4) SERVICE ON COMMITTEE.—

17 (A) PROHIBITION.—The Chair of the Mar-
18 itime Task Force shall not seek, consider, or
19 otherwise use information concerning the polit-
20 ical affiliation of an appointee in making an ap-
21 pointment to the committee.

22 (B) SERVICE AT PLEASURE OF THE
23 CHAIR.—Each member of the committee shall
24 serve at the pleasure of the Chair of the Mari-
25 time Task Force.

1 (5) SECURITY BACKGROUND EXAMINATIONS.—
2 The Chair of the Maritime Task Force may require
3 an individual to have passed an appropriate security
4 background examination before appointment to the
5 committee.

6 (6) PROHIBITION.—A Federal employee may
7 not be appointed as a member of the committee.

8 (7) STAFF SERVICES.—The Chair of the Mari-
9 time Task Force shall furnish to the committee any
10 staff and services considered by the Chair of the
11 Maritime Task Force to be necessary for the con-
12 duct of the committee’s functions and may accept
13 staff and services from the members of the Maritime
14 Task Force.

15 (8) TERMINATION.—The committee shall termi-
16 nate upon conclusion of the COVID–19 public health
17 emergency, as defined in section 2(d).

○