

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8508

To amend the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to reauthorize the bycatch reduction engineering program and establish the Bycatch Mitigation Assistance Fund.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 22, 2024

Mrs. PELTOLA (for herself, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, and Mr. HUFFMAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To amend the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to reauthorize the bycatch reduction engineering program and establish the Bycatch Mitigation Assistance Fund.

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 “Bycatch Reduction and
5 Mitigation Act of 2024”.

6 **SEC. 2. BYCATCH REDUCTION AND MITIGATION.**

7 (a) **REAUTHORIZATION OF BYCATCH REDUCTION**
8 **ENGINEERING PROGRAM.**—Section 316 of the Magnuson-

1 Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16
2 U.S.C. 1865) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
3 lowing:

4 “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
5 is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry
6 out this section \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025
7 through 2029.”.

8 (b) BYCATCH MITIGATION ASSISTANCE FUND.—
9 Title III of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation
10 and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1851 et seq.) is amended
11 by adding at the end the following:

12 **“SEC. 322. BYCATCH MITIGATION ASSISTANCE FUND.**

13 “(a) IN GENERAL.—There is established in the gen-
14 eral fund of the Treasury of the United States an account
15 to be known as the ‘Bycatch Mitigation Assistance Fund’,
16 which shall—

17 “(1) be administered by the Foundation; and

18 “(2) consist of donations of amounts accepted
19 pursuant to subsection (c).

20 “(b) USE.—

21 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Foundation shall use
22 the amounts in the Fund to reduce or mitigate by-
23 catch, including by providing financial assistance to
24 fishermen and owners and operators of commercial

1 fishing vessels to purchase fishing gear, equipment,
2 or technology.

3 “(2) SMALL VESSELS.—In using the amounts
4 in the Fund under paragraph (1), the Foundation
5 shall distribute not less than 60 percent of such
6 amounts to owners and operators of small commer-
7 cial fishing vessels.

8 “(c) DONATIONS.—The Foundation may solicit and
9 accept donations of amounts for deposit into the Fund.

10 “(d) CONSULTATION.—In administering the Fund,
11 the Foundation shall consult with the Secretary, acting
12 through the Administrator of the National Oceanic and
13 Atmospheric Administration, each Council, and each of
14 the regional science centers of the National Marine Fish-
15 eries Service to ensure that, to the maximum extent prac-
16 ticable, amounts in the Fund are used in an efficient and
17 cost-effective manner.

18 “(e) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date
19 of the enactment of this section, and biennially thereafter,
20 the Foundation shall publish and post online in a manner
21 available to the public information regarding the use of
22 the Fund during—

23 “(1) with respect to the first publication of in-
24 formation, the preceding 3 years; and

1 “(2) with respect to each subsequent publica-
2 tion of information, the preceding 2 years.

3 “(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

4 “(1) FOUNDATION.—The term ‘Foundation’
5 means the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

6 “(2) FUND.—The term ‘Fund’ means the By-
7 catch Mitigation Assistance Fund established under
8 subsection (a).

9 “(3) SMALL COMMERCIAL FISHING VESSEL.—
10 The term ‘small commercial fishing vessel’ means a
11 commercial fishing vessel that is 65 feet or less in
12 length.”.

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