

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To direct the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to establish a grant program to fund youth fishing projects.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. WICKER introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To direct the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to establish a grant program to fund youth fishing projects.

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 “Youth Coastal Fishing
5 Program Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. YOUTH COASTAL FISHING GRANT PROGRAM.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a
8 program to award grants and provide technical assistance
9 to eligible entities for the purpose of establishing youth
10 fishing projects.

1 (b) APPLICATIONS.—An eligible entity seeking a
2 grant under this section shall submit an application at
3 such time, in such manner, and containing such informa-
4 tion as the Secretary may require.

5 (c) DETERMINATIONS OF ELIGIBILITY.—The Sec-
6 retary shall develop criteria for purposes of determining
7 whether an entity is eligible to receive a grant under this
8 section in consultation with relevant offices of the Na-
9 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, such as
10 the Office of Coastal Management, the National Sea
11 Grant Office, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and
12 the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries.

13 (d) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity that receives
14 a grant award under this section shall use the amount of
15 the award for purposes related to conducting a youth fish-
16 ing project, including—

17 (1) the purchase or rental of fishing equipment;

18 (2) the cost of transporting participants to and
19 from a youth fishing project;

20 (3) fees associated with boat rental, pier access,
21 or other facilities;

22 (4) fishing license purchases;

23 (5) fishing guide costs; or

1 (6) such other expenses related to conducting a
2 youth fishing project as the Secretary considers ap-
3 propriate.

4 (e) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this sec-
5 tion, the Secretary shall give priority to applications con-
6 taining proposals for youth fishing projects focused on an
7 underserved community.

8 (f) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 1 year after
9 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall
10 submit to Congress a report on—

11 (1) the eligible entities awarded grants under
12 this section;

13 (2) the amount each such entity received;

14 (3) how those entities used the grant award;
15 and

16 (4) the number of participants in youth fishing
17 projects funded by grants under this section.

18 (g) FUNDING.—

19 (1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
20 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
21 retary \$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2024
22 through 2028 to carry out this section.

23 (2) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated pur-
24 suant to the authorization of appropriations under
25 paragraph (1) shall remain available until expended.

1 (3) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Not more than 3
2 percent of amounts appropriated pursuant to the au-
3 thorization of appropriations under paragraph (1)
4 may be used by the Secretary for the administrative
5 costs of carrying out this section.

6 (h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

7 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
8 ty” means—

9 (A) a nonprofit organization;

10 (B) an educational institution;

11 (C) a State, local, or Tribal government; or

12 (D) a Native Hawaiian organization (as
13 defined in section 6207 of the Elementary and
14 Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
15 7517)).

16 (2) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.—The term
17 “nonprofit organization” means an organization de-
18 scribed in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue
19 Code of 1986 and exempt from taxation under
20 501(a) of that Code.

21 (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
22 the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the
23 Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and At-
24 mosphere.

1 (4) STATE.—The term “State” means each
2 State of the United States, the District of Columbia,
3 the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, American
4 Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern
5 Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands of the United
6 States, and any other territory or possession of the
7 United States.

8 (5) TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term “Tribal
9 government” means the recognized governing body
10 of any Indian or Alaska Native Tribe, band, nation,
11 pueblo, village, community, component band, or com-
12 ponent reservation, individually identified (including
13 parenthetically) in the list published most recently as
14 of the date of the enactment of this Act pursuant to
15 section 104 of the Federally Recognized Indian
16 Tribe List Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 5131).

17 (6) UNDERSERVED COMMUNITY.—The term
18 “underserved community” means a population of in-
19 dividuals sharing a particular characteristic, or a ge-
20 ographic community, that has been systematically
21 denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of
22 economic, social, and civic life, such as—

23 (A) racial and ethnic minorities;

24 (B) individuals with access and functional
25 needs; or

1 (C) individuals otherwise adversely affected
2 by persistent poverty or inequality.

3 (7) YOUTH FISHING PROJECT.—The term
4 “youth fishing project” means a project that pro-
5 vides youth with—

6 (A) a recreational fishing experience con-
7 ducted from a shore, pier, or boat located in the
8 Great Lakes, coastal waters, ocean waters, or a
9 tidal river;

10 (B) education about marine science, con-
11 servation, and fishing regulations; and

12 (C) information on where and how to con-
13 tinue fishing.