

By Senator Carlton

24-1062-99

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Florida Oceans Study
3 Committee; creating the Florida Oceans Study
4 Committee to study and report on a coordinated
5 management policy for the oceans surrounding
6 the state; directing the Governor to appoint a
7 Florida Ocean Commission; providing for reports
8 and recommendations by the commission;
9 providing an appropriation; providing an
10 effective date.

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12 WHEREAS, Florida, the fourth largest state in the
13 union, has the longest coastline in the contiguous United
14 States and is a paradise in the sun with water, water, water
15 everywhere, both fresh and salt, and

16 WHEREAS, approximately 8,400 miles of tidal coastline
17 wrap around it, and off of its southern tip lies the only
18 living coral reefs in North America--third largest in the
19 world, and

20 WHEREAS, no Florida resident lives more than 50 miles
21 from the Gulf of Mexico or the Atlantic Ocean, and

22 WHEREAS, as an economic engine, Florida's oceans form
23 the basis for its most important industries including fishing,
24 shipping, and tourism, and

25 WHEREAS, increasing demands for Florida's ocean
26 resources, coupled with an ever-growing ability to recover
27 those resources, are threatening the health and vitality of
28 Florida's oceans, NOW, THEREFORE,

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30 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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1 Section 1. The existing Florida Governor's Ocean
2 Committee is re-created as the Florida Oceans Study Committee
3 through June 30, 2000. The final report of the study committee
4 will be submitted to the Governor, the President of the
5 Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives no
6 later than February 2000. The report will address specific
7 priorities for a coordinated management policy for Florida's
8 oceans, including effective public outreach and education. The
9 committee will also recommend priority research and scientific
10 monitoring needs and funding mechanisms for a comprehensive
11 scientific assessment of the present status and future
12 vitality and health of Florida's oceans with consultation from
13 the Florida members of the Southern Association of Marine
14 Laboratories: Eckerd College, Florida Institute of
15 Oceanography, Florida Institute of Technology, Florida Marine
16 Research Institute, Florida State University, Harbor Branch
17 Oceanographic Institution, Inc., Mote Marine Laboratory, Nova
18 Southeastern University, University of Florida, University of
19 Miami, University of South Florida, and the Florida Seagrass
20 Program. Cost-sharing avenues undertaken by the federal
21 government and appropriate equitable-funding responsibilities
22 of U.S. agencies will also be explored to benefit the state.

23 Section 2. Following the submission of the report by
24 the study committee in February 2000, the Governor shall
25 appoint a 24-member Florida Ocean Commission no later than
26 September 30, 2000, consisting of representatives from the
27 Florida Departments of Community Affairs, Environmental
28 Protection, State, Agriculture and Consumer Services,
29 Education, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the
30 Executive Office of the Governor, and local representatives
31 from conservation, education, science, law, recreation, and

1 business interests. Finally, six ex-officio members shall be
2 appointed to represent the federal government, from the
3 Department of Defense, Army Corps of Engineers, Department of
4 the Interior, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,
5 Environmental Protection Agency, and Coast Guard. The
6 commission's responsibility will be to implement the study
7 committee's recommendations and provide ongoing coordination
8 and oversight of ocean policy issues.

9 Section 3. The commission will exist through June 30,
10 2005, and is subject to renewal by the Legislature. Annual
11 reports with recommendations on significant ocean policy
12 issues will be provided by the commission to the Governor, the
13 President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
14 Representatives.

15 Section 4. The sum of \$80,000 is appropriated from the
16 General Revenue Fund to the Florida Oceans Study Committee to
17 carry out the provisions of this act for the 1999-2000 fiscal
18 year. Of the appropriated funds, up to \$30,000 may be used for
19 workshops and activities related to developing priority
20 research and scientific monitoring needs for Florida's waters.
21 No remuneration will be provided to study committee members or
22 workshop participants. Travel expenses will be reimbursed in
23 accordance with section 112.061, Florida Statutes. The study
24 committee and the ensuing commission will be staffed by the
25 Coastal Zone Management Section of the Department of Community
26 Affairs.

27 Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 1999.
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SENATE SUMMARY

Creates the Florida Oceans Study Committee to be composed of the existing Florida Governor's Ocean Committee. Provides for the duties of the committee. Directs the Governor to appoint a 24-member Florida Ocean Commission after the study committee ceases to exist. Provides an appropriation.