

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to the Oceans and Coastal Resources
 3 Council; creating s. 161.59, F.S.; establishing the Oceans
 4 and Coastal Resources Council; providing findings and
 5 intent; providing for board composition, purpose, and
 6 responsibilities; authorizing reimbursement for travel and
 7 per diem; requiring the Department of Environmental
 8 Protection to provide certain services to the council;
 9 requiring the council to submit preliminary and annual
 10 reports to the Governor and the Legislature; providing an
 11 effective date.

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

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 15 Section 1. Section 161.59, Florida Statutes, is created to
 16 read:

17 161.59 Oceans and Coastal Resources Council.--

18 (1) FINDINGS; INTENT.--In spite of many years of efforts
 19 to protect and conserve the resources of the state's coastal
 20 zone, recent reports, including the September 2004 Final Report
 21 of the United States Commission on Ocean Policy, have identified
 22 troubling trends with regard to continuing degradation of the
 23 state's coastal zone that will require major changes in the way
 24 this area is managed.

25 (a) The Coastal Management Act was adopted in 1972 as a
 26 means for complying with the federal Coastal Zone Management
 27 Act. The coastal zone management plan approved by the Federal
 28 Government for the state to comply with the Coastal Zone

29 Management Act is based on existing statutes and rules and is
30 coordinated through the Coastal Management Program in the
31 Department of Environmental Protection. It is now apparent that
32 the program has not been completely effective in achieving the
33 goal of protecting and conserving the resources of the state's
34 coastal zone, and new measures must be taken to achieve this
35 goal.

36 (b) The inability of the current coastal zone management
37 plan to achieve the goal of protecting and conserving the
38 resources of the state's coastal zone is due in large part to
39 inadequate information with regard to those resources and
40 inadequate management strategies to protect and conserve those
41 resources.

42 (c) It is the intent of the Legislature to create the
43 Oceans and Coastal Resources Council to assist the state in
44 determining what new management strategies should be implemented
45 to achieve the goal of maximizing the protection and
46 conservation of the resources of the state's coastal zone.

47 (2) COMPOSITION.--The Oceans and Coastal Resources Council
48 shall be composed of nine members. The Governor shall appoint
49 two members, the President of the Senate shall appoint two
50 members, the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall
51 appoint two members, and the Board of Directors of the Florida
52 Oceans Alliance shall appoint three members. The Governor shall
53 appoint the chair, and the vice chair shall be elected, from
54 among the membership. All appointments shall be for 4-year
55 terms. The Governor may at any time fill a vacancy for an
56 unexpired term. The members of the council shall serve without

57 compensation but shall be paid travel and per diem as provided
58 in s. 112.061 while in the performance of their official duties.
59 Administrative, personnel, and other support services necessary
60 for the council shall be furnished by the Department of
61 Environmental Protection.

62 (3) PURPOSE.--The purpose of the council shall be to
63 determine those new management strategies that should be
64 implemented to achieve the goal of maximizing the protection and
65 conservation of the resources of the state's coastal zone
66 through the specific responsibilities listed in subsection (4).

67 (4) RESPONSIBILITIES.--

68 (a) The initial responsibility of the council is to review
69 the September 2004 Final Report of the United States Commission
70 on Ocean Policy and other similar reports in order to identify
71 those specific issues of concern that apply to the state.

72 (b) The council shall then conduct a comprehensive
73 evaluation of the state's current coastal zone management plan
74 for the purpose of understanding how that plan is being
75 implemented and why it has not been effective in achieving the
76 goal of protecting and conserving the resources of the state's
77 coastal zone.

78 (c) The council shall identify specific, quantifiable
79 goals that can be achieved to meet the overall goal of
80 protecting and conserving the resources of the state's coastal
81 zone.

82 (d) The council shall create a research task force and a
83 management task force to assist in its work.

84 1. The research task force shall be composed of

85 representatives from the state's marine science institutions and
86 shall be appointed by the council. The research task force shall
87 be responsible for identifying specific inadequacies in the
88 information and data that are essential to the implementation of
89 effective management strategies for achieving the identified
90 goals. The research task force shall make recommendations to the
91 council for specific research projects that can be conducted to
92 provide the needed information.

93 2. The management task force shall be composed of
94 representatives from the Department of Environmental Protection,
95 the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, each of the five
96 water management districts, the South Atlantic Fisheries
97 Management Council, and the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management
98 Council. The management task force shall be responsible for
99 identifying specific inadequacies in the current management of
100 the state's coastal resources. The management task force shall
101 make recommendations to the council for specific changes to the
102 current management programs that can be implemented to address
103 those management inadequacies.

104 (e) The council shall have continuing responsibilities to
105 seek funding for research and propose legislation for new
106 management strategies and realignment of current management
107 responsibilities.

108 (5) REPORTING.--The council shall submit a preliminary
109 report of its work to the Governor, the President of the Senate,
110 and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by February 1,
111 2006. In subsequent years, the council shall report annually by
112 December 31 to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and

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113 the Speaker of the House of Representatives and shall include in
114 such report recommendations for research needs and management
115 strategies, recommendations for legislative appropriations, and
116 proposed legislation needed to implement any recommended changes
117 to management strategies.

118 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2005.