

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8541

To direct the Commandant of the Coast Guard to establish a pilot program to improve the issuance of alerts to facilitate cooperation with the public to render aid to distressed individuals under section 521 of title 14, United States Code, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 27, 2022

Mr. PHILLIPS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To direct the Commandant of the Coast Guard to establish a pilot program to improve the issuance of alerts to facilitate cooperation with the public to render aid to distressed individuals under section 521 of title 14, United States Code, and for other purposes.

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 “Aqua Alert Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. AQUA ALERT NOTIFICATION SYSTEM PILOT PRO-**
2 **GRAM.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the
4 date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant of the
5 Coast Guard shall, subject to the availability of appropria-
6 tions, establish a pilot program to improve the issuance
7 of alerts to facilitate cooperation with the public to render
8 aid to distressed individuals under section 521 of title 14,
9 United States Code.

10 (b) PILOT PROGRAM CONTENTS.—The pilot program
11 established under subsection (a) shall, to the maximum
12 extent possible—

13 (1) include a voluntary opt-in program under
14 which members of the public may receive notifica-
15 tions on cellular devices regarding Coast Guard ac-
16 tivities to render aid to distressed individuals under
17 section 521 of title 14, United States Code;

18 (2) cover areas located within the area of re-
19 sponsibility of 3 different Coast Guard sectors in di-
20 verse geographic regions; and

21 (3) provide that the dissemination of an alert
22 be limited to the geographic areas most likely to fa-
23 cilitate the rendering of aide to distressed individ-
24 uals.

25 (c) CONSULTATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES,
26 STATES, TERRITORIES, AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS.—

1 In developing the pilot program under subsection (a), the
2 Commandant shall consult any relevant Federal agency,
3 State, Territory, Tribal government, possession, or polit-
4 ical subdivision.

5 (d) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 2 years
6 after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually
7 thereafter through 2026, the Commandant shall submit
8 to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
9 of the House of Representatives and the Committee on
10 Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate,
11 and make available to the public, a report on the imple-
12 mentation of this Act.

13 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be
15 appropriated to carry out this Act \$3,000,000 to the
16 Commandant for each of fiscal years 2023 through
17 2026.

18 (2) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Amounts appro-
19 priated pursuant to paragraph (1) shall remain
20 available until expended.

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