

BACKGROUND:

The BEACH Act was established in 2000 to require the EPA to develop guidelines for testing, monitoring, and notifying beachgoers of potential water quality problems. In addition, the bill provided state, local, and tribal governments with grant funding needed to protect the public from contaminated water at coastal beaches, giving seniors and families security that swimming will not make them sick.

The original BEACH Act's funds are only eligible for monitoring and notifying the public about contaminated beaches. It does not currently allow local governments to trace this contamination to its source - an error this version of the bill addresses directly.

BILL SUMMARY:

This new version of the BEACH Act would reauthorize this \$30 million program for the next four years, while also expanding the eligible uses of this grant to include the ability to trace any contamination to its source, so that local governments can respond accordingly.

Additionally, the legislation also expands eligible testing locations to include shallow recreational waters adjacent to beaches, where children and elderly people typically play and swim. These populations are more at risk of experiencing health issues from contamination, and this bill will grant them and their families the assurance they need to safely enjoy their beach experience.

ENDORSEMENTS:

The American Shore & Beach Preservation Association, Coastal States Organization, Environment America, and Surfrider Foundation have endorsed the BEACH Act.