

**HB38 INTRODUCED**



1      HB38  
2      DGWWRNT-1  
3      By Representative Brown  
4      RFD: Ports, Waterways and Intermodal Transit  
5      First Read: 13-Jan-26  
6      PFD: 14-Aug-25



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## 4     SYNOPSIS:

5                 This bill would create the Alabama Seagrass  
6                 Restoration Task Force to address and remediate the  
7                 loss of seagrass within state marine waters.

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10                A BILL

11                TO BE ENTITLED

12                AN ACT

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14                Relating to state marine waters; to create the Alabama  
15                Seagrass Restoration Task Force; and to provide for its  
16                membership and duties.

17    BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

18                Section 1. It is the intent of the Legislature to  
19                establish a collaborative and coordinated effort among public  
20                and private research entities to develop restoration  
21                technologies and approaches to address the loss of seagrass  
22                within state marine waters and the cascading ecological and  
23                economic impacts of that loss to this state.

24                Section 2. (a) The Alabama Seagrass Restoration Task  
25                Force is established to lead and expedite formulating,  
26                testing, and developing innovative, effective, cost-efficient,  
27                and environmentally sustainable technologies to restore  
28                coastal seagrass ecosystems by building upon research and



29 efforts within the public and private sectors.

30 (b) The task force shall consist of the following  
31 members:

32 (1) The executive director of the Dauphin Island Sea  
33 Lab to serve as a cochair.

34 (2) The President of the University of South Alabama,  
35 or his or her designee, to serve as a cochair.

36 (3) The Chair of the House of Representatives Ports,  
37 Waterways, and Intermodal Transit Committee.

38 (4) The Commissioner of Conservation and Natural  
39 Resources, or his or her designee who has expertise in  
40 seagrass ecosystems.

41 (5) The Director of the Mobile Bay National Estuary  
42 Program.

43 (6) A member from a private commercial enterprise  
44 appointed by the Governor.

45 (7) A member from a public or private university in  
46 this state other than the University of South Alabama  
47 appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

48 (8) Two members from a non-university public or private  
49 marine environmental organization with one member appointed by  
50 the Speaker of the House of Representatives and one member  
51 appointed by the Lieutenant Governor.

52 (c) The task force shall develop a 10-year Alabama  
53 Seagrass Restoration Plan to recommend the tools, approaches,  
54 and technologies developed pursuant to this act.

55 (d) If a vacancy occurs for any appointed member, the  
56 respective appointing authority shall appoint a new member.



57 (e) The appointing authorities shall coordinate their  
58 appointments to assure the task force membership is inclusive  
59 and reflects the racial, gender, geographic, urban, rural, and  
60 economic diversity of this state.

61 (f) (1) The legislative members of the task force shall  
62 be entitled to their legislative compensation, per diem, and  
63 travel expenses for each day they attend a meeting of the task  
64 force pursuant to Section 49 of the Constitution of Alabama of  
65 2022.

70 (g) The initial meeting of the task force shall be  
71 called by the cochairs and shall be held by January 1, 2027.  
72 Thereafter the task force shall meet no less than twice per  
73 year.

74 (h) The Dauphin Island Sea Lab shall provide all  
75 necessary staff and support, including meeting space, to the  
76 task force for the performance of its duties.

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85      Commissioner of Conservation and Natural Resources.

86            Section 3. (a) The Dauphin Island Sea Lab shall be the  
87      fiscal agent for all funds appropriated to the task force to  
88      achieve the goals of the task force.

89            (b) The Dauphin Island Sea Lab, with the consent of the  
90      task force, may use funds appropriated to the task force to  
91      facilitate engagement with other relevant marine science and  
92      technology development organizations in this state, nation,  
93      and around the world to pursue applied research and technology  
94      for the successful restoration of seagrass ecosystems.

95            (c) The Dauphin Island Sea Lab may retain funds  
96      appropriated to the task force for administrative costs  
97      expended by the sea lab pursuant to this act.

98            (d) In addition to any state-appropriated funds, the  
99      task force may accept gifts, grants, and donations from  
100     private and federal sources.

101           Section 4. This act shall become effective on October  
102     1, 2026.