

HB92 ENGROSSED



1 HB92
2 V2ZUPVL-2
3 By Representative Brown
4 RFD: Ports, Waterways & Intermodal Transit
5 First Read: 04-Feb-25
6 PFD: 24-Jan-25



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A BILL
TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

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

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

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

Section 2. (a) The Alabama Seagrass Restoration Task Force is established to lead and expedite formulating, testing, and developing innovative, effective, cost-efficient, and environmentally sustainable technologies to restore coastal seagrass ecosystems by building upon research and efforts within the public and private sectors.

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

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



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

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

33 (4) The Commissioner of Conservation and Natural
34 Resources, or his or her designee who has expertise in
35 seagrass ecosystems.

36 (5) The Director of the Mobile Bay National Estuary
37 Program.

38 (6) A member from a private commercial enterprise
39 appointed by the Governor.

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

43 (8) Two members from a non-university public or private
44 marine environmental organization with one member appointed by
45 the Speaker of the House of Representatives and one member
46 appointed by the Lieutenant Governor.

47 (c) The task force shall develop in accordance with
48 this act a 10-year Alabama Seagrass Restoration Plan to
49 recommend the tools, approaches, and technologies developed
50 pursuant thereto.

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

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



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57 (f) Task force members shall serve without compensation
58 but may be reimbursed for actual expenses associated with
59 attending meetings by their respective authority, entity, or
60 department according to applicable law.

61 (g) The initial meeting of the task force shall be
62 called by the cochairs and shall be held by January 1, 2026.
63 Thereafter the task force shall meet no less than twice per
64 year.

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

68 (i) Not later than the first day of each regular
69 session of the Legislature, the task force shall provide a
70 report of its progress made in developing and administering
71 the 10-year Alabama Seagrass Restoration Plan and its
72 findings, conclusions, accomplishments, priorities for
73 subsequent years, and recommendations for proposed
74 legislation, if any, to the Governor, President Pro Tempore of
75 the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the
76 Commissioner of Conservation and Natural Resources.

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

80 (b) The Dauphin Island Sea Lab, with the consent of the
81 task force, may use funds appropriated to the task force to
82 facilitate engagement with other relevant marine science and
83 technology development organizations in this state, nation,
84 and around the world to pursue applied research and technology



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85 for the successful restoration of seagrass ecosystems.

86 (c) The Dauphin Island Sea Lab may retain funds
87 appropriated to the task force for administrative costs
88 expended by the sea lab pursuant to this section.

89 (d) The task force shall leverage, to the extent
90 possible, all state-appropriated funds with additional funds
91 from private and federal sources.

92 Section 4. This act shall become effective on October
93 1, 2025.



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House of Representatives

97 Read for the first time and referred04-Feb-25
98 to the House of Representatives
99 committee on Ports, Waterways &
100 Intermodal Transit
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102 Read for the second time and placed12-Feb-25
103 on the calendar:
104 1 amendment
105
106 Read for the third time and passed18-Feb-25
107 as amended
108 Yeas 101
109 Nays 0
110 Abstains 0
111
112
113 John Treadwell
114 Clerk
115