

HB38 ENROLLED



1 HB38
2 6Y5FDZ1-3
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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3 An Act, to state marine waters; to create the Alabama
4 Seagrass Restoration Task Force; and to provide for its
5 membership and duties.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

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

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

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

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

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

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

27 (4) The Commissioner of Conservation and Natural
28 Resources, or his or her designee who has expertise in



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29 seagrass ecosystems.

30 (5) The Director of the Mobile Bay National Estuary
31 Program.

32 (6) A member from a private commercial enterprise
33 appointed by the Governor.

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

37 (8) Two members from a non-university public or private
38 marine environmental organization with one member appointed by
39 the Speaker of the House of Representatives and one member
40 appointed by the Lieutenant Governor.

41 (9) A member appointed by the Mobile County Commission.

42 (10) A member appointed by the Baldwin County
43 Commission.

44 (c) The task force shall develop a 10-year Alabama
45 Seagrass and Sea Oats Restoration Plan to recommend the tools,
46 approaches, and technologies developed pursuant to this act.

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

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

53 (f) (1) The legislative members of the task force shall
54 be entitled to their legislative compensation, per diem, and
55 travel expenses for each day they attend a meeting of the task
56 force pursuant to Section 49 of the Constitution of Alabama of



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57 2022.

58 (2) The nonlegislative members of the task force shall
59 serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for necessary
60 expenses in attending meetings of the task force pursuant to
61 the policies of their respective appointing authority.

62 (g) The initial meeting of the task force shall be
63 called by the cochairs and shall be held by January 1, 2027.
64 Thereafter the task force shall meet no less than twice per
65 year.

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

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

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

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



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85 and around the world to pursue applied research and technology
86 for the successful restoration of seagrass ecosystems.

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

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

93 Section 4. This act shall become effective on October
94 1, 2026.

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Speaker of the House of Representatives

President and Presiding Officer of the Senate

House of Representatives

I hereby certify that the within Act originated in and was passed by the House 22-Jan-26, as amended.

John Treadwell
Clerk

Senate	12-Feb-26	Amended and Passed
House	25-Feb-26	Concurred in Senate Amendment