

HJR270 INTRODUCED



1 HJR270
2 I3TYM6Z-1
3 By Representatives Pringle, Ledbetter
4 RFD: Rules
5 First Read: 19-Mar-26



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HJR___ AUTHORIZING AN INDEPENDENT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
BY THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA OF MAINTENANCE DREDGING
OPERATIONS IN MOBILE BAY.

WHEREAS, the continued maintenance of expanded
waterway depths and widths is vital to the economic
prosperity and navigational safety of the great State of
Alabama; and

WHEREAS, the health of Mobile Bay is Coastal
Alabama's greatest natural resource and is of critical
importance to the great State of Alabama and its tourism
industry, the commercial and recreational fishing industry,
and property values; and

WHEREAS, the University of South Alabama, through the
Stokes School of Marine and Environmental Sciences,
possesses the specialized expertise and academic
independence necessary to evaluate complex coastal
ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, the methods utilized for the disposal of
dredged material carry distinct environmental profiles that
require rigorous scientific scrutiny; and

WHEREAS, it is essential to distinguish between
immediate ecological shifts and chronic environmental
changes occurring over extended periods; and

WHEREAS, the University of South Alabama (the



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29 University) is the appropriate entity to perform an
30 independent assessment of the environmental impacts
31 associated with the federal maintenance dredging program and
32 its associated disposal methods; and

33 WHEREAS, it is necessary that this study be completed
34 within a duration of one year from its official commencement
35 date; and

36 WHEREAS, the methodology of said study shall include
37 a rigorous synthesis of all existing published research and
38 electronic data, including previous research from federal
39 and state agencies, academic institutions, and
40 nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); and

41 WHEREAS, the core objectives of the study shall be a
42 comprehensive evaluation of short-term impacts, long-term
43 chronic effects on habitat and biodiversity, and a
44 comparative analysis and impact of disposal methods; and

45 WHEREAS, the study shall also include a gap analysis
46 to identify impacts requiring further study to achieve the
47 core objectives of the assessment, including a strategic
48 plan and estimated funding needs to address information
49 voids; and

50 WHEREAS, the assessment shall provide actionable
51 mitigation strategies to minimize or offset any identified
52 negative environmental consequences of the dredging
53 disposal; and

54 WHEREAS, the University is further encouraged to
55 conduct an economic analysis evaluating the implications and
56 risks of failing to maintain the authorized depth and width,



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57 as well as potential implications related to tourism and
58 seafood; and

59 WHEREAS, the Stokes School of Marine and
60 Environmental Sciences is authorized to conduct limited,
61 targeted field surveys to directly address gaps identified
62 in the research; and

63 WHEREAS, the University shall ensure all results are
64 accessible to the Speaker of the House of Representatives;
65 now therefore,

66 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
67 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the University of South
68 Alabama is hereby authorized and requested to execute the
69 assessment according to the directives and objectives set
70 forth above.