

HB38 ENGROSSED



1 HB38
2 6Y5FDZ1-2
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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5 A BILL
6 TO BE ENTITLED
7 AN ACT

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

12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

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

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

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

27 (1) The executive director of the Dauphin Island Sea
28 Lab 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.

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 a 10-year Alabama
48 Seagrass and Sea Oats Restoration Plan to recommend the tools,
49 approaches, and technologies developed pursuant to this act.

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

56 (f) (1) The legislative members of the task force shall



57 be entitled to their legislative compensation, per diem, and
58 travel expenses for each day they attend a meeting of the task
59 force pursuant to Section 49 of the Constitution of Alabama of
60 2022.

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

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

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

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

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

84 (b) The Dauphin Island Sea Lab, with the consent of the



85 task force, may use funds appropriated to the task force to
86 facilitate engagement with other relevant marine science and
87 technology development organizations in this state, nation,
88 and around the world to pursue applied research and technology
89 for the successful restoration of seagrass ecosystems.

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

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

96 Section 4. This act shall become effective on October
97 1, 2026.



HB38 Engrossed

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House of Representatives

101 Read for the first time and referred 13-Jan-26
102 to the House of Representatives
103 committee on Ports, Waterways and
104 Intermodal Transit
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106 Read for the second time and placed 14-Jan-26
107 on the calendar:
108 1 amendment
109
110 Read for the third time and passed 22-Jan-26
111 as amended
112 Yeas 102
113 Nays 0
114 Abstains 2
115
116
117 John Treadwell
118 Clerk
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