

Reauthorization of Regional Ocean Partnerships Introduced in the Senate

Proposed legislation will bring continued support for voluntary, intergovernmental coordination to address ocean and coastal issues

OCEAN SPRINGS, MS, UNITED STATES, February 13, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., introduced the Regional Ocean Partnership Reauthorization Act of 2026 on Feb. 5, 2026.

If passed by Congress and signed by the President, the Act will reauthorize Regional Ocean Partnerships (ROPs)

for the next five years and bring continued support for voluntary, intergovernmental coordination to address ocean and coastal issues. The Gulf of America Alliance is the ROP for the Gulf of America, designated by the governors of the five Gulf states: Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. Three other ROPs are also currently authorized: the Northeast Regional Ocean Council, Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean, and the West Coast Ocean Alliance.

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*Chris Blankenship, Chair,
Alliance Management Team*

Regional Ocean Partnerships have operated for nearly two decades and were formally authorized by Congress in 2022. They focus on issues that are identified by the member states, provide a voice for a wide variety of stakeholders, and foster intentional, efficient coordination on shared priorities. Regional Ocean Partnerships also leverage public and private funding to accomplish

objectives common to multiple stakeholders across the region, reducing duplication.

“It is important for states to work together to provide solutions for the issues our coasts face today,” said Senator Roger Wicker. “This bill promotes regional collaboration, builds stronger database portals, and leverages funding to strengthen our blue economy and protect natural



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resources.”

“Regional Ocean Partnerships sustain intentional, efficient coordination among stakeholders,” said Chris Blankenship, Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Chair of the Alliance Management Team. “Each ROP focuses on issues that are priorities for their region, as identified by its members. This puts states in the driver’s seat on addressing common issues in a voluntary and collaborative way.”

The Gulf of America Alliance would like to thank Sen. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) for introducing the reauthorization bill as well as the leaders of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, & Transportation, Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas, Chairman) and Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-Wash., Ranking Member) along with co-sponsors Sen. Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-Del.), Sen. Christopher Murphy (D-Conn.), Sen. Katie Boyd Britt (R-Ala.), Sen. Christopher Coons (D-Del.), Sen. John Kennedy (R-La.), Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine), Sen. Margaret Wood Hassan (D-N.H.), Sen. Edward Markey (D-Mass.), and Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-La.) for their commitment to recognizing the value of regional collaboration and the benefits to our country.

Go to [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) to follow the progress of S.3791.

About the Gulf of America Alliance

The Gulf of America Alliance is a regional partnership focused on enhancing the environmental and economic health of the region through increased collaboration. Led by the five Gulf states, our network includes over 165 participating organizations from state and federal agencies, local governments, communities, academia, non-governmental organizations, and industry. Working with these partners, we address priority issues including coastal community resilience; data and monitoring; education; habitat; water resources; wildlife and fisheries; and marine debris. Learn more visiting the website at gulfofamericaalliance.org, and on social media: Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn @gulfofamericaalliance.

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