

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 8

Expressing the sense of Congress with respect to the significance of
maintaining the health and stability of coral reef ecosystems.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 9, 1997

Mr. SAXTON (for himself and Mr. ABERCROMBIE) submitted the following
concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress with respect to the significance of maintaining the health and stability of coral reef ecosystems.

Whereas coral reefs are among the world's most biologically diverse and productive marine habitats, often described as the tropical rain forests of the oceans;

Whereas healthy coral reefs provide the basis for subsistence, commercial fisheries, and coastal and marine tourism and are of vital economic importance to coastal States and territories of the United States including Florida, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and American Samoa;

Whereas healthy coral reefs function as natural, regenerating coastal barriers, protecting shorelines and coastal areas from high waves and storm surges;

Whereas the scientific community has long established that coral reefs are subject to a wide range of natural and anthropogenic threats;

Whereas the United States has taken measures to protect national coral reef resources through the designation and management of several underwater national parks (known as National Marine Sanctuaries), containing reefs of the Flower Garden Banks in the Gulf of Mexico, the Florida Keys in south Florida, and offshore Hawaii and American Samoa;

Whereas the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has established itself as a global leader in coral reef stewardship by maintaining professional networks for the purposes of sharing knowledge and information on coral reefs, furnishing near real-time data collected at coral reef sites, providing a repository for historical data relating to coral reefs, and making substantial contributions to the general fund of coral reef knowledge; and

Whereas 1997 has been declared the “International Year of the Reef” by the coral reef research community and over 40 national and international scientific, conservation, and academic organizations: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
 2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of Congress to recognize
 3 the significance of maintaining the health and stability of
 4 coral reef ecosystems, by—

5 (1) promoting comprehensive stewardship for
 6 coral reef ecosystems;

7 (2) encouraging research and education on
 8 coral reef ecosystems; and

- 1 (3) improving the coordination of coral reef ef-
- 2 forts and activities which take place within Federal
- 3 agencies, academic institutions, nongovernmental or-
- 4 ganizations and industry.

