



Strategic Solutions in Environmental Policy

Key Provisions in the Omnironabus package, signed into law by the President on December 27, 2020.

(OMNIRONABUS = APPROPRIATIONS + COVID RELIEF + ENERGY PACKAGE + WRDA + the kitchen sink)

COVID RELIEF:

- **Additional \$300 million for fisheries disaster assistance via NOAA** (same mechanism as CARES Act)
- **Additional \$1.5 billion for USDA to purchase and distribute food, including seafood, to individuals in need**
- \$600 checks to individuals with income up to \$75,000 a year based on 2019 earnings, and \$600 per dependent child
 - Heads of household who earn up to \$112,500, or a couple who make up to \$150,000 would get \$1,200
- Extended emergency unemployment insurance and paid leave
- Additional \$285 billion for Paycheck Protection Program, with stricter terms
- Funding for vaccines and nursing homes
- Moratorium on evictions through January 31 and \$25 billion in rental assistance
- \$13 billion for increased nutrition assistance

ENERGY PACKAGE ([bill text here](#), [section by section here](#)):

The most significant energy package in over a decade, authorizing \$35 billion toward new energy technologies. It includes:

- Extended tax credits for wind and solar projects, with a particular boost for offshore wind
- Increases funds and expands the mission of DOE's ARPA-E program
- Authorizes DOE research and development programs for energy storage, wind, solar, carbon capture, geothermal, hydropower, and advanced nuclear programs
- Sets a goal that federal lands produce 25 gigawatts of electricity from wind, solar, and geothermal projects by 2025

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT ([bill text here](#), [section by section here](#)):

- Reauthorizes the Water Resources Development Act
- Unlocks appropriation of additional funds for harbor maintenance, including the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, with an emphasis on emerging harbors, energy transfer ports, commercially strategic ports, and Great Lakes Harbors.
- Directs the Army Corps of Engineers to provide technical assistance to non-Federal interests for greater flood resiliency planning, with pilot programs for rural and economically disadvantaged communities
- Directs the Corps to map coastlines of States and territories that are experiencing rapid changes on a recurring basis
- Includes a Sense of Congress on the national security importance of enhancing Arctic maritime infrastructure, including Arctic deep draft ports

APPROPRIATIONS:

Commerce, Justice, Science ([explanatory statement](#)):



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- \$40.5M for the Integrated Ocean Observing System regional observations, a \$1.5M increase from FY20 enacted levels
- Provides an additional \$5.5M for Harmful Algal Bloom work above FY20, including \$2.5M for IOOS
- Provides \$13.665M for Autonomous Uncrewed Technology Operations (AUTO) in support of the Commercial Engagement Through Ocean Technology Act, and encourages OMAO to continue to coordinate with IOOS regarding the use of underwater gliders and leverage partnerships with universities, oceanographic institutions, and other federal agencies, especially the Navy.
- Provides \$15M to establish a new NOAA Cooperative Institute to focus on helping NOAA address the Nation's growing water-related challenges
- Encourages NMFS to prioritize data collection that may be affected by offshore wind energy development and provides \$500k to ensure continuity of fisheries survey data
- Provides a \$2.25M increase for NOAA's aquaculture program in order to execute the [Seafood Executive Order](#)
- Provides \$9M for NOAA's marine debris program
- Provides \$33M for the Coral Reef Program, including \$8.5M for establishing innovative partnerships such as the Mission: Iconic Reef program
- Provides \$3M for the National Oceanographic Partnership Program, a decrease of \$2M from FY20 levels
- Maintains current funding for marine research at NSF, and encourages NSF to continue to advance the Coastlines and People program

Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA ([explanatory statement](#)):

- Encourages the use of Rural Business Development Grants in rural coastal communities to support innovation and job growth, and specifically calls out seafood processing
- Encourages USDA to support aquaculture disease and vaccine research, including on finfish, "which have the potential to accelerate the growth of sustainable U.S. aquaculture, reduce the trade deficit attributed to imported seafood, and reduce the pressure on overfished species."
 - Also "recognizes the importance of the domestic aquaculture industry to the U.S. economy and provides funding for aquaculture research to address issues related to genetics, disease, systems, and economics."
- Urges USDA to reestablish the Wild Caught Working Group under the National Organic Standards Board to assess feasibility of developing organic production, handling, and labeling standards for wild caught seafood.

Energy and Water Development ([explanatory statement](#)):

- Includes \$63.2M to support the advancement of innovative technologies for offshore wind development including freshwater, deep water, shallow water, and transitional depth installations.
- Directs DOE to provide a report that outlines regional and national strategies to accelerate and maximize the effectiveness, reliability, and sustainability of U.S. offshore wind. The study shall address the need for expanded work in this area to potentially include an additional offshore wind consortium.
- \$10M to support innovative offshore wind demonstration projects



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Interior, Environment ([explanatory statement](#)):

- Directs BOEM to work with DOE to identify and permit a national offshore wind test site, and continue working with coastal States and “other stakeholders.”
- An increase of \$5.14M over FY20 to improve BOEM’s offshore wind permit processing capacity and directs them to ensure timely permitting and a predictable regulatory environment for offshore wind development
- Expresses Congressional support for rigorous stakeholder consultation and expectation that BOEM consider input from commercial and recreational fishermen and other overlapping users at each stage of the leasing and development process

State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs ([explanatory statement](#)):

- Provides funding and direction for addressing ocean plastic pollution globally
- Supports efforts by United States research institutions to partner with marine science researchers in developing countries that are highly dependent on ocean health and biodiversity and vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.
- Directs USAID to work across it’s Bureaus to address IUU fishing, including through new or expanded initiatives, as outlined in the Maritime SAFE Act enacted in last year’s NDAA bill (PL 116-92).