



**CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE**

April 24, 2015

S. 764

National Sea Grant College Program Amendments Act of 2015

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
on March 25, 2015*

SUMMARY

S. 764 would authorize appropriations totaling \$544 million over the 2016-2021 period for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to carry out the National Sea Grant College Program, which funds scientific research, education, and public outreach at certain universities related to marine issues. In addition, under the bill the program would provide funds for marine policy fellowships.

Assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts, CBO estimates that implementing the legislation would cost \$397 million over the 2016-2020 period and \$147 million after 2020. Because enacting the legislation would not affect direct spending or revenues, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

S. 764 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA), and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary impact of S. 764 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars					2016- 2020
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION						
Sea Grant Program						
Authorization Level	76	79	83	88	92	418
Estimated Outlays	49	67	79	85	90	370
Sea Grant Priority Grants						
Authorization Level	6	6	6	6	6	30
Estimated Outlays	4	5	6	6	6	27
Total Changes						
Authorization Level	82	85	89	94	98	448
Estimated Outlays	53	72	85	91	96	397

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For this estimate, CBO assumes that S. 764 will be enacted late in fiscal year 2015, that the authorized amounts will be appropriated for each year, and that outlays will follow historical spending patterns for similar NOAA activities.

S. 764 would amend and reauthorize the National Sea Grant College Program Act. The bill would authorize appropriations totaling \$514 million over the 2016-2021 period to fund activities at a network of 33 Sea Grant programs located at universities in every coastal and Great Lakes state, Vermont, Puerto Rico, and Guam. Those funds also would be used to provide fellowships that support the placement of graduate students studying ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources within the executive and legislative branches of the federal government. In 2015, NOAA received appropriations totaling \$67 million to carry out similar activities. Assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts, CBO estimates that implementing those provisions would cost \$370 million over the 2016-2020 period and \$144 million after 2020.

The bill also would authorize the appropriation of \$6 million a year to fund competitive grants that would fund high-priority research activities at universities. Those activities would include preventing and controlling nonnative aquatic species, developing sustainable aquaculture techniques, and preventing and forecasting harmful algal blooms. Assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts, CBO estimates that implementing these provisions would cost \$27 million over the 2016-2020 period and \$3 million after 2020.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS: None.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

S. 764 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA, and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. The bill would benefit public universities by reauthorizing the National Sea Grant College Program, which provides grants to improve marine resource conservation, management, and utilization. Any costs incurred by state, local, or tribal governments, including matching funds, would result from complying with a voluntary federal program.

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