

“RESTORE the Gulf Coast Act”

Sponsored by Reps. Scalise (LA), Bonner (AL), Miller (FL), Olson (TX), Palazzo (MS), Southerland (FL), Richmond (LA) and other Gulf State Members

The “RESTORE the Gulf Coast Act” is a bipartisan, regional approach that will:

- ***Create the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund***
- ***Dedicate 80% of Clean Water Act penalties to be paid by the responsible parties to the restoration of the Gulf Coast ecosystem and economy***

Under current law, the Clean Water Act gives the federal government the authority to fine responsible parties after an oil spill, but these penalties are not returned to the place where the injury occurred. The RESTORE Act will correct this and will establish the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund, to which 80% of all civil penalties paid in connection with the Deepwater Horizon spill will be directed.

- ***Provide needed resources to Gulf Coast States to start recovery by allocating:***
 - ***35% of the funds in equal shares to the five Gulf Coast States*** for economic and ecological recovery. The bill ensures that funds are spent responsibly and for their intended purpose—restoring and protecting the Gulf Coast. States must spend these funds on economic and ecological recovery activities along the coast, as defined in the legislation.
 - ***30% of the funds to be used for the development and implementation of a comprehensive restoration plan, created by a federal/state Gulf Coast Restoration Council with all Gulf States represented on the Council. The Council sunsets once funds are completely expended.***
 - ***30% of the funds according to an impact driven formula and disbursed to the Gulf Coast States according to plans submitted by the Gulf Coast States and approved by the Council.***
- ***Establish a Long Term Science and Fisheries Endowment and Gulf Coast Centers of Excellence, to which 5% of the funds would be allocated.***

Five percent of the Fund will be allocated to a Gulf Coast research, science and technology program. The program will establish Gulf Coast Centers of Excellence to advance research, science and technology in the Gulf around specific disciplines. Preference for funding will be given to Gulf Coast organizations and research institutions. Entities created in this section of the bill sunset once all funds are expended.