



NEWS RELEASE

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GROUPS PRAISE MOMENTUM ON GULF RESTORATION AS HOUSE INTRODUCES BILL AND TASK FORCE CALLS FOR BOLD ACTION

Bill dedicates oil spill fines to restore Gulf ecosystems, communities & economies

(Washington, D.C.—October 5, 2011) A coalition of groups supporting Gulf restoration thanked Members from both sides of the aisle who introduced a bill today that will ensure that 80 percent of penalties paid by BP and others responsible for last year's Gulf oil disaster are used to help restore the region, not for unrelated federal spending. The [RESTORE Gulf Coast States Act of 2011](#) was introduced by U.S. Rep. Steve Scalise (R-La.) as lead sponsor, along with more than 20 other bipartisan leaders as joint co-sponsors.

"Our nation depends on a healthy Gulf environment to help drive a strong Gulf economy. The RESTORE Gulf Coast States Act of 2011 provides a path to meaningful restoration, and holds the parties responsible for last year's Gulf spill accountable for Gulf ecosystems, communities and their economies," said a joint statement by [Environmental Defense Fund](#), [National Audubon Society](#), [National Wildlife Federation](#), [The Nature Conservancy](#), [Ocean Conservancy](#) and [Oxfam America](#). "We thank the leaders in the House for their hard work to get this bipartisan legislation introduced, and we look forward to working with them to improve and pass a bill to meet the restoration needs of the Gulf."

Nine Gulf senators have introduced a similar bill in the Senate, the [RESTORE Gulf Coast States Act \(S. 1400\)](#), which passed through the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee last month.

Also today, the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force – a key federal/state panel convened by the White House – released its draft report calling for a major new commitment to restore the vital resources of the Gulf Coast. The report also urged the dedication of oil spill penalties to the environmental and economic restoration of the Gulf, which is what the bills in both the House and Senate would accomplish.

"We laud the Task Force's report calling for swift and far-reaching action to restore the Gulf Coast," said the groups. "The draft report highlights key issues that demand immediate attention and outlines many broad strategies to undertake toward making restoration a reality. Recognizing the urgent need now to translate words into action, we hope the final report will include specific steps that can be taken without delay to address the most pressing needs in the Gulf."

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