

As founder and co-chair of the House Oceans Caucus, I continue to provide leadership on ocean policy in Congress. Monterey Bay is one of the most majestic meetings of land and sea in the world, and growing up on the Central Coast taught me about the bounty and the beauty of the oceans as well as our responsibility to protect them. For these reasons, throughout the last 19 years, I have consistently fought for funding of ocean activities and programs, especially as administered through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Bills I sponsored during the 112th Congress:

- [H.R. 1171](#) - Marine Debris Act Reauthorization Amendments of 2011 – Reauthorizes the Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act which established the NOAA Marine Debris Program. This program conducts vital activities that address the impacts of marine debris on marine ecosystems, coastal economies, and navigation safety through research, prevention, and reduction activities. This legislation would allow NOAA to continue to conduct these vital marine debris activities. Also during a recent taping of the television show “Focus with Farr,” I discussed the devastating impacts of marine debris, as well as innovative solutions with the Director of the NOAA Marine Debris Program and the Sustainability Director of Covanta Energy, a company that converts derelict fishing gear into energy. The episode can be viewed [here](#)

Bills I cosponsored during the 112th Congress:

- [H.R. 492](#) – Big Oil Bailout Prevention Act – Removes the liability cap of a party responsible for an oil spill from an offshore facility. This bill would also place retroactive requirements on B.P. so they are fully responsible for the costs of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.
- [H.R. 521](#) - Ban on Genetically Engineered salmon – Would amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to prevent the approval of genetically engineered fish by deeming genetically-engineered fish to be unsafe for human consumption
- [H.R. 612](#) – West Coast Ocean Protection Act of 2011 – Would permanently prohibit exploration, development, or production of oil or natural gas in any area off the coast of California, Oregon, or Washington.
- [H.R. 738](#) – Coral Reef Conservation Act Reauthorization and Enhancement Amendments of 2011 – Extends grant funds to appropriate coral reef projects, including monitoring and assessment, research, pollution reduction, and education.

- [H.R. 1628](#) - Trash Reduction Act of 2011 - Imposes a 5 cent tax on all disposable carryout bags. Tax revenues would be directed into a "Disposable carryout bag Trust Fund" – which would help fund land and water conservation projects.
- [H.R. 1761](#) – Reauthorization of the Marine Turtle Conservation Act - Facilitates the conservation of marine turtles and their nesting habitats by supporting—and providing financial resources for—both US and international conservation projects.

Important actions taken during the 112th Congress:

- Spoke at the opening plenary session at NOAA's 5th Annual International Marine Debris Conference, alongside of Jean-Michel Cousteau and Achim Steiner, the Director of the United Nations Environment Programme
- Sponsored a letter providing guidance to the National Ocean Council on the implementation on the National Ocean Policy's Strategic Action Plans. The letter can be viewed [here](#)
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- [Signed letter](#) in opposition to the use of Styrofoam in the House cafeteria.