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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To amend the National Marine Sanctuaries Act to prohibit requiring an authorization for the installation, continued presence, operation, maintenance, repair, or recovery of undersea fiber optic cables in a national marine sanctuary if such activities have previously been authorized by a Federal or State agency.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. CARTER of Georgia introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend the National Marine Sanctuaries Act to prohibit requiring an authorization for the installation, continued presence, operation, maintenance, repair, or recovery of undersea fiber optic cables in a national marine sanctuary if such activities have previously been authorized by a Federal or State agency.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Undersea Cable Pro-
3 tection Act of 2025”.

4 **SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON REQUIRING AUTHORIZATIONS**
5 **FOR UNDERSEA FIBER OPTIC CABLES PRE-**
6 **VIOUSLY AUTHORIZED BY FEDERAL OR**
7 **STATE AGENCIES.**

8 The National Marine Sanctuaries Act (16 U.S.C.
9 1431 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 310
10 the following:

11 **“SEC. 310A. PROHIBITION ON REQUIRING AUTHORIZA-**
12 **TIONS FOR UNDERSEA FIBER OPTIC CABLES**
13 **PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED BY FEDERAL OR**
14 **STATE AGENCIES.**

15 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other pro-
16 vision of this Act, the Secretary may not prohibit or re-
17 quire any authorization for the installation, continued
18 presence, operation, maintenance, repair, or recovery of
19 undersea fiber optic cables in a national marine sanctuary
20 if a license, lease, or permit has been issued by a Federal
21 or State agency authorizing such installation, continued
22 presence, operation, maintenance, repair, or recovery.

23 “(b) INTERAGENCY COOPERATION.—The Secretary
24 may direct the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin-
25 istration to engage in interagency cooperation under sec-
26 tion 304(d) in any Federal agency action described in that

- 1 section and involving the installation, continued presence,
- 2 operation, maintenance, repair, or recovery of undersea
- 3 fiber optic cables in a national marine sanctuary.”.