



H.R. 5350 – To authorize the Secretary of Commerce to sell or exchange certain National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration property located in Norfolk, Virginia, and for other purposes

FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 5350 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA) on February 12, 2008. The resolution was reported, as amended, from the Committee on Natural Resources on August 1, 2008. The bill was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, but was not considered.

H.R. 5350 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on September 15, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.R. 5350 authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to sell or exchange property currently operated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to the City of Norfolk, Virginia, if the Secretary determines that the conveyance is in the best interests of NOAA and the Federal Government and provides prior notification to the relevant Congressional committees. In addition, the bill requires that the Federal Government receive no less than fair market value for the NOAA property.

BACKGROUND

The City of Norfolk, Virginia, has expressed interest in acquiring property currently owned and operated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The property includes a 700 square foot office building that houses NOAA's National Geodetic Survey Norfolk Field Operations office and consists of 3.78 acres. It was purchased by the Federal Government in 1970 to support NOAA's Marine Operations Center-Atlantic.

NOAA has been contacted about this property several times in the past by both public-private ventures and the City of Norfolk about acquiring the property. However, according to NOAA testimony given before the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, and Oceans on April 24, 2008, "NOAA has a continuing mission that is being served at this location. The property is not excess property; and NOAA has no other property in its inventory that can meet the current NOAA mission requirements supported at this site."

NOAA and the City of Norfolk have agreed to a framework for the future sale, conveyance, or exchange of properties, which is embodied in H.R. 5350. The bill does not mandate that the sale, conveyance, or exchange take place.

COST

According to the Congressional Budget Office, "Based on information from the agency, CBO expects that the administrative cost of the sale would be insignificant. The legislation stipulates that proceeds of the sale, estimated to total \$1.5 million, would be available to the Secretary only if provided in a future appropriation act. Thus, enacting the legislation, would reduce direct spending by that amount. Enacting the bill would not affect revenues." ([CBO Cost Estimate](#))

STAFF CONTACT

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