



For Immediate Release

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Donalds Leads Initiative To Convert Harmful Algal Blooms Polluting Our Waterways Into Renewable Energy

WASHINGTON – Congressman Byron Donalds (R-FL) introduced [legislation](#) directing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to build-upon the successes of its HABITATS Project to develop and deploy innovative technology that will filter water and convert retrieved algae biomass into renewable biofuels.

Potential deployment locations for this innovative and necessary program include the Caloosahatchee River Watershed, St. Lucie River and Estuary Basin, and the Lake Okeechobee Watershed.

The "[Convert Harmful Algal Blooms To Fuels Act](#)" is the 91st piece of legislation introduced by Congressman Donalds during the 118th Congress and has received the support of Rep. Brian Mast (R-FL), the Algae Biomass Organization, the American Sportfishing Association, the Bonefish and Tarpon Trust, Captains for Clean Water, and the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation.

BACKGROUND:

- HABs are overgrowths of algae in natural water bodies that negatively impact the environment and economy.
- Nutrient pollution and HABs cost the United States an estimated \$1 billion+ per year due to their negative impacts on tourism, health, commerce, and natural ecosystems.
- Federal policy says that HABs are one of the “most scientifically complex and economically damaging aquatic issues” and HABs pose a “significant challenge to the ability to safeguard the health of the Nation’s coastal and freshwater ecosystems.”
- HABs can span hundreds of square miles and require highly scalable mitigation measures. Therefore, nutrient control at strategic locations could help prevent large HABs outbreaks.
- In 2007, HABs were documented in 43 of the 48 continental states.
- In recent years, particularly intense, large HABs have occurred in Lake Okeechobee and South Florida.

HABITATS Project:

- The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2018 authorized the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) to begin research on the Harmful Algal Bloom Interception, Treatment And Transformation System (HABITATS) Project.
- Objective of the HABITATS Project → develop and demonstrate a rapidly deployable and scalable capability to remove algae and nutrients from water bodies while simultaneously stabilizing and recovering resources from the resulting biomass to ultimately generate biocrude oil and renewable fuel.
- The HABITATS Project incorporates three phases: (1) interception [collect algae/HABs]; (2) treatment [cleans water, returns purified water to environment]; and (3) transformation [algae/HABs to biocrude fuel]

MORE:

- See graphics rollout [HERE](#).
- See WINK News Exclusive [HERE](#).
- See full text of the "Convert Harmful Algal Blooms To Fuels Act" [HERE](#).
- See bill profile of the "Convert Harmful Algal Blooms To Fuels Act" [HERE](#).

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