

# CSO Welcomes House Introduction of Resilient Coasts and Estuaries Act

by CSOstaff | Dec 19, 2023 | News & Events, Press Release



**The Resilient Coasts and Estuaries Act would reauthorize critical pieces of the Coastal Zone Management Act, the Coastal and Estuarine Resilience and Restoration Program and the National Estuarine Research Reserve System.**

Representatives Mike Levin (D-CA) and Brian Mast (R-FL) reintroduced the Resilient Coasts and Estuaries Act on Friday. This legislation would reauthorize and update two sections of the landmark Coastal Zone Management Act, the Coastal and Estuarine Resilience and Restoration Program (known in the original CZMA as the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conversation Program (CELCP)) and National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS).

The updated Coastal and Estuarine Resilience and Restoration Program would allow state and local governments, as well as non-profit organizations, to purchase threatened coastal and estuarine lands that are of ecological importance or other conservation value. This program, which protected more than 110,000 acres between 2002 and 2019, has recently regained momentum thanks to an influx of funds from the Inflation Reduction Act. Additionally, the bill reauthorizes key program elements of the NERRS and authorizes the designation of at least 5 new reserves over the next 5 years.

"The Coastal Zone Management Act is an essential law in balancing the multiples uses of America's coasts and ensuring every state can manage its own coastline. The Resilient Coasts and Estuaries Act takes an important step in updating this seminal law to better allow for conservation of coastal land, improve estuarine research and provide more public access opportunities, in an era of massive coastal change due to sea level rise, intensifying storms, and increased offshore energy production," said Derek Brockbank, Executive Director of Coastal States Organization.

The protection of coastal lands promotes resilience by conserving, enhancing or restoring the ecological function of these areas. This provides a natural solution to help mitigate the impacts of climate change and other hazards faced by coastal communities, such as flooding. Furthermore, these areas can provide critical habitat for local species, while increasing public access allows community members the opportunity to connect and interact with their coast in new ways and participate in recreational activities.