



H.R. 729: Tribal Coastal Resiliency Act

This week Democrats have scheduled a series of bills on the House floor in the name of “combatting climate change” that are in actuality retreads of programs that are already authorized and actions that are already being taken by the federal government. H.R. 729 is clear proof that the Democrats have no agenda and have no plan other than to impeach President Trump.

BACKGROUND:

Most of the bills included in the package duplicate existing authority that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) already has under the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) (tribal CZMA, living shoreline, climate change), NOAA and U.S. Fish and Wildlife have for fishery research and management (Great Lakes fishery) or NOAA has for a digital coastal data platform. Most authorizations of appropriations in the bill package are therefore unnecessary (and are often higher than current levels being spent). NOAA, the agency that would be responsible for carrying out most of this legislation, stated in testimony that it can do (and is doing) most all of these functions under current law.

This package also creates a precedent of having a city -- and a noncoastal one at that -- as participating in the CZMA. There is a real threat that this would give DC veto power over federal actions affecting its “coastal zone” once it develops an approved coastal zone management program. The loan guarantee program under the Working Waterfront program (Section 104) is problematic because the American taxpayer will be on the hook for any default. The National Sea Grant program is popular among coastal members but the bill makes mandatory a fellowship program that provides free graduate students to Congressional offices at taxpayer expense.

BOTTOM LINE:

Ultimately, this package highlights the real opportunity cost of impeachment. The Democrats have rallied and promised real, sweeping policies to address what they call the “climate crisis.” However, they have been so consumed with attacking our President and impeachment that they have nothing to show for it. This is a fruitless attempt to show the American people results.