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(Original Signature of Member)

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To authorize the Secretary of Commerce to award competitive grants to combat the certain species of lionfish in the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. CURBELO of Florida introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Commerce to award competitive grants to combat the certain species of lionfish in the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico.

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Finding Innovative
5 Lionfish Elimination Technologies Act of 2017”.

1 **SEC. 2. COMPETITIVE GRANTS TO INSTITUTIONS OF HIGH-**
2 **ER EDUCATION AND NONPROFIT RESEARCH**
3 **ORGANIZATIONS TO COMBAT LIONFISH IN**
4 **THE ATLANTIC OCEAN AND THE GULF OF**
5 **MEXICO.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Commerce,
7 through the Cooperative Science and Education Program
8 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
9 conducted under Public Law 86–685 (74 Stat. 733), the
10 Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et
11 seq.), and the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and
12 State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations
13 Act, 1999 (section 101(b) of division A of Public Law
14 105–277; 112 Stat. 2681–50), shall award competitive
15 grants to institutions of higher education and nonprofit
16 research organizations to combat the species of lionfish
17 *Pterois miles* and *Pterois volitans*, in the Atlantic Ocean
18 and the Gulf of Mexico.

19 (b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible for a grant under
20 this section, an institution of higher education or nonprofit
21 research organization must—

22 (1) have established research infrastructure and
23 proven capabilities of understanding the behavior of
24 such species and the ecosystems of the Atlantic
25 Ocean or the Gulf of Mexico; and

1 (2) demonstrate a clear appreciation and under-
2 standing of the biological, chemical, and physical as-
3 pects of such ecosystem.

4 (c) ENCOURAGEMENT OF COLLABORATION.—In se-
5 lecting projects for grants under this section, the Sec-
6 retary of Commerce may encourage collaborative work
7 with stakeholder groups having practical experience with
8 gear, harvest techniques, and knowledge of local eco-
9 systems.

10 (d) USE.—Amounts awarded as grants under this
11 section shall be used—

12 (1) for lionfish research and the impact of such
13 species on the ecosystems of the of the Atlantic
14 Ocean or the Gulf of Mexico;

15 (2) to develop innovative technologies, including
16 autonomous cameras and active acoustic systems ap-
17 propriate for coastal environments, for detection of
18 lionfish and determination of priority areas for re-
19 moval of invasive species; and

20 (3) to develop lionfish mitigation technologies,
21 including traps and countermeasures.

22 (e) FUNDING.—Of amounts available for each of fis-
23 cal years 2018 through 2022 for the Coastal Ecosystem
24 Resiliency Grant program of the National Oceanic and At-

- 1 mospheric Administration, \$1,500,000 may be used to
- 2 carry out this section.