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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To authorize the Secretary of the Navy to enter into a contract for the construction of submarine cable laying and repair ships, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. MILLER of Ohio introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of the Navy to enter into a contract for the construction of submarine cable laying and repair ships, and for other purposes.

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 “Naval Enhancement
5 for Protection of Telecommunications Undersea Network
6 Equipment Act” or the “NEPTUNE Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY FOR SUBMARINE**
2 **CABLE LAYING AND REPAIR SHIPS.**

3 (a) CONTRACT AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of the
4 Navy may enter into a contract for the construction of
5 up to two submarine cable laying and repair ships and
6 associated material.

7 (b) LIABILITY.—Any contract entered into under
8 subsection (a) shall provide that—

9 (1) any obligation of the United States to make
10 a payment under the contract is subject to the avail-
11 ability of appropriations for that purpose; and

12 (2) the total liability of the Federal Government
13 for termination of the contract shall be limited to
14 the total amount of funding obligated to the contract
15 at the time of termination.

16 **SEC. 3. LIMITATION ON RETIREMENT OF SUBMARINE**
17 **CABLE LAYING AND REPAIR SHIP.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Navy may
19 not retire, prepare to retire, or place in storage the USNS
20 Zeus until the date on which a replacement ship with ca-
21 pabilities equal to or exceeding those of the USNS Zeus
22 has achieved full operational capability.

23 (b) REPLACEMENT SHIP DEFINED.—In this section,
24 the term “replacement ship”—

1 (1) means a submarine cable laying and repair
2 ship designated “USNS” and maintained in the in-
3 ventory of the Navy; and
4 (2) does not include a commercial vessel leased
5 or chartered by the Navy.