

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2554

To provide COVID–19 mitigation instructions for cruise ships, and other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 15, 2021

Ms. SALAZAR (for herself, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Ms. MACE, Mr. GIMENEZ, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. CARL, Mr. POSEY, Mr. MAST, Ms. MALLIOTAKIS, Mrs. LESKO, and Mr. C. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To provide COVID–19 mitigation instructions for cruise ships, and 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 “Careful Resumption
5 Under Improved Safety Enhancements Act” or the
6 “CRUISE Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

8 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) On March 14, 2020, in response to the
2 COVID–19 pandemic, the Centers for Disease Con-
3 trol and Prevention (CDC) issued the “No Sail
4 Order and Suspension of Further Embarkation”
5 which prohibited all cruise ships with capacity to
6 carry 250 or more individuals from embarking pas-
7 sengers in the United States.

8 (2) Prior to the COVID–19 pandemic, the
9 cruise industry supported nearly 450,000 American
10 jobs and contributed over \$55,500,000,000 to the
11 United States economy annually. More than 300,000
12 jobs have been lost in the United States due to the
13 suspension of cruises. The majority of the individ-
14 uals impacted are independent business owners or
15 individuals employed by small- to medium-sized busi-
16 nesses, including travel agents, taxi drivers, port em-
17 ployees, baggage handlers, and longshore workers, as
18 well as airline, hotel, and restaurant employees.

19 (3) On October 30, 2020, the CDC issued the
20 “Framework for Conditional Sailing Order” for
21 cruise ships that laid out a 4-phase approach for the
22 resumption of cruise activity. At that time, the CDC
23 released technical instructions for only the first
24 phase of this conditional sailing order. On April 2,
25 2021, more than 5 months later, CDC released the

1 technical instructions for half of the second phase.
2 Without the complete technical instructions for all 4
3 phases of this framework, no large cruise ships are
4 able to resume operations in the United States
5 under the CDC’s conditional sailing order.

6 (4) The cruise industry is the only segment of
7 the United States economy that is completely pro-
8 hibited from operations by the CDC due to COVID–
9 19. For every other sector of the economy, CDC pro-
10 vides recommendations for how to mitigate the
11 spread of COVID–19 without issuing orders to pro-
12 hibit operations.

13 (5) Since July 2020, cruising has continued in
14 Asia, Europe, and the South Pacific with nearly
15 400,000 passengers sailing with health protocols to
16 mitigate the spread of COVID–19.

17 (6) The increasing availability of vaccines pro-
18 vides a path to the resumption of pre-pandemic ac-
19 tivities. On March 2, 2021, President Biden stated:
20 “We’re now on track to have enough vaccine supply
21 for every adult in America by the end of May. . . .
22 The more people who get vaccinated, the faster we’re
23 going to overcome this virus and get back to our
24 loved ones, get our economy back on track, and start
25 to move back to normal.”.

1 (7) As of March 11, 2021, 65 percent of people
2 over the age of 65 and more than 70 percent of peo-
3 ple over the age of 75 in the United States were
4 fully vaccinated against COVID–19, leading Presi-
5 dent Biden to state: “All adult Americans will be eli-
6 gible to get a vaccine no later than May 1. . . .
7 After this long, hard year, that will make this Inde-
8 pendence Day something truly special, where we not
9 only mark our independence as a nation but we
10 begin to mark our independence from this virus.”.

11 **SEC. 3. COVID–19 MITIGATION GUIDANCE FOR CRUISE**
12 **SHIPS.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the earlier of 30
14 days after the date of enactment of this Act or June 1,
15 2021, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (re-
16 ferred to in this Act as the “Secretary”), acting through
17 the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Pre-
18 vention (referred to in this Act as the “Director”) and
19 in consultation with the interagency working group estab-
20 lished under subsection (c), shall issue recommendations
21 for how to mitigate the risks of COVID–19 introduction,
22 transmission, and spread among passengers and crew on-
23 board cruise ships and ashore to communities. The Sec-
24 retary may later update or modify such recommendations
25 as necessary to mitigate such risks.

1 (b) APPLICABILITY.—The recommendations issued
2 under subsection (a) shall be applicable to all cruise ships
3 subject to the order entitled “No Sail Order and Suspen-
4 sion of Further Embarkation”, issued by the Director on
5 March 24, 2020 (85 Fed. Reg. 16628), or any modifica-
6 tion to, or extension of, such order.

7 (c) WORKING GROUP.—

8 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby estab-
9 lished an interagency working group, for purposes of
10 developing, not later than 30 days after the date of
11 enactment of this Act, the recommendations de-
12 scribed in subsection (a), in order to facilitate the
13 resumption of passenger cruise ship operations in
14 the United States not later than July 4, 2021.

15 (2) MEMBERS.—The interagency working group
16 shall consist of—

17 (A) the Secretary (or designee) serving as
18 Chair;

19 (B) the Secretaries (or designees) of
20 Transportation, of Homeland Security, and of
21 Commerce; and

22 (C) industry stakeholders appointed by the
23 Secretary.

24 (3) SCOPE OF RECOMMENDATIONS.—In devel-
25 oping the recommendations described in subsection

1 (a), the interagency working group shall consider
2 public health safety needs; risk mitigation strategies
3 and health protocols for passengers and crew that
4 are consistent with, and not substantially more bur-
5 densome than, the guidance applied by the Centers
6 for Disease Control and Prevention to other business
7 sectors and travel-related industries; and overall eco-
8 nomic impacts, costs, and benefits of the rec-
9 ommendations.

10 **SEC. 4. RESUMPTION OF CRUISE SHIP OPERATIONS.**

11 Not later than July 4, 2021, the Secretary shall re-
12 voke the order entitled “Framework for Conditional Sail-
13 ing and Initial Phase COVID–19 Testing Requirements
14 for Protection of Crew”, issued by the Director on Novem-
15 ber 4, 2020 (85 Fed. Reg. 70153), under the authority
16 of sections 361 and 365 of the Public Health Service Act
17 (42 U.S.C. 264; 268), and any other order or regulation
18 that prohibits the operation of all cruise ships in United
19 States waters, requires such ships to obtain approval from
20 the Director prior to operating, or otherwise acts as a de
21 facto prohibition for cruise ship operations in the United
22 States.

23 **SEC. 5. RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.**

24 Nothing in this Act shall limit the authority of the
25 Secretary to make and enforce such regulations that, in

1 the judgment of the Secretary, are necessary to prevent
2 the introduction, transmission, or spread of communicable
3 diseases on any individual cruise ship presenting a public
4 health threat by reason of the existence of any commu-
5 nicable disease.

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