

Resolving Clause Amendment

AMENDMENT NO. _____ Calendar No. _____

Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES—118th Cong., 1st Sess.

S. Res. 126

Recognizing the vital importance of the Mekong River to Southeast Asia and the role of the Mekong-United States Partnership in supporting the prosperity of the region.

Referred to the Committee on _____ and
ordered to be printed

Ordered to lie on the table and to be printed

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE intended
to be proposed by Mr. MERKLEY

Viz:

1 Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the fol-
2 lowing: “That the Senate—

3 (1) expresses sincere concern over the environ-
4 mental, economic, and humanitarian threats to the
5 Mekong River and the communities of the Mekong
6 River and continued support to counter those
7 threats; and

8 (2) declares it is the policy of the United States
9 Government—

10 (A) to, through the Mekong-United States
11 Partnership and the Friends of the Mekong,

1 promote the economic and environmental well-
2 being of the people of Mainland Southeast Asia
3 in the 5 countries through which the Mekong
4 River flows, namely, Burma, Cambodia, Laos,
5 Thailand, and Vietnam;

6 (B) to support providing and coordinating
7 Federal aid and assistance throughout the
8 Mekong River Basin under the Mekong-United
9 States Partnership, including programmatic
10 support provided by the Department of State,
11 the United States Agency for International De-
12 velopment, and other Federal agencies;

13 (C) to contribute to the development of
14 quality infrastructure, national electricity mar-
15 kets, cross-border energy trade, cross-border
16 transport, greater energy access, the develop-
17 ment of micro, small, and medium enterprises,
18 agriculture, transportation, the facilitation of
19 trade and investment, strengthened subregional
20 production linkages and supply chains, digital
21 infrastructure, and the digital economy in the
22 Mekong River Basin;

23 (D) to promote engagement and buy-in of
24 the United States private sector to support in-
25 clusive economic growth, resilience, global

1 health, education, and long-term development in
2 the region;

3 (E) to leverage the expertise of the United
4 States, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Aus-
5 tralia, and other partners in high-quality infra-
6 structure to support the economic development
7 needs of the countries in the Mekong River
8 Basin;

9 (F) to support the development of quality
10 infrastructure, including through projects fi-
11 nanced by the United States International De-
12 velopment Finance Corporation, as appropriate,
13 in the countries in the Mekong River Basin;

14 (G) to encourage all members of the Asso-
15 ciation of Southeast Asian Nations to view the
16 environmental, humanitarian, and economic
17 threats to the Mekong River as a danger to the
18 entire region;

19 (H) to promote effective water use policies,
20 natural resources management, and environ-
21 mental conservation and protection, including—

22 (i) through support for a technically
23 sound, well-coordinated, and consensus-
24 based approach to managing the shared re-
25 sources of the Mekong River Basin;

1 (ii) through support for environmental
2 conservation, protection, and resilience in
3 the Mekong subregion; and

4 (iii) by enhancing the capacity of
5 countries in the Mekong River Basin on
6 conservation and management of natural
7 resources, including fishery resources, for
8 long-term food security;

9 (I) to continue the important work that
10 provides vital data and monitoring to the people
11 and Governments of the Mekong River;

12 (J) to support the development of the ca-
13 pacity of the region to respond to a variety of
14 threats, including countering transnational
15 crime such as trafficking of drugs, wildlife, tim-
16 ber, and persons, and criminal activity associ-
17 ated with illegal, unreported and unregulated
18 fishing, and to improve health security, includ-
19 ing emergency preparedness and response for
20 pandemics and epidemics, cybersecurity, and
21 disaster response and preparedness and human-
22 itarian assistance and disaster relief;

23 (K) to promote the development of human
24 capital through education, medical and public
25 health partnerships, vocational training, youth

1 empowerment, women's economic empower-
2 ment, gender equality, university cooperation,
3 and educational and professional exchanges;

4 (L) to work together with countries in the
5 Mekong River Basin to combat pollution, over
6 fishing, natural resource degradation, and the
7 effects that environmental changes are having
8 on the Mekong River, and the communities that
9 depend on the river, and to support the abilities
10 of such communities to adapt and build resil-
11 ience capacities of those countries;

12 (M) to encourage all countries in the
13 Mekong River Basin to provide timely early
14 warning for natural and unnatural operations
15 of the river;

16 (N) to support freedom of expression in
17 the countries in the Mekong River Basin
18 through promoting independent journalism and
19 the freedom to access information;

20 (O) to continue to call for the cessation of
21 violence in Burma and support the return of
22 Burma to a path of inclusive democracy, so that
23 it can fully contribute to regional development;

24 (P) to prioritize the strengthening of peo-
25 ple-to-people ties through United States ex-

1 change programs such as the Fulbright Pro-
2 gram, the Peace Corps, the International Visi-
3 tors Leadership Program, and the Young
4 Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative Program,
5 including the Young Southeast Asian Leaders
6 Initiative Academy at Fulbright University
7 Vietnam; and

8 (Q) to recognize that strong democratic in-
9 stitutions, the promotion and protection of fun-
10 damental freedoms, independent civil society,
11 and free and fair elections are central to imple-
12 menting the shared vision of a Mekong River
13 region, and an Indo-Pacific region, that is free,
14 open, secure, and prosperous.