



## FACT SHEET THE CLEAN CRUISE SHIP ACT

The Clean Cruise Ship Act will achieve landmark reductions in water-based pollution from the many cruise ships plying our waters. The bill prohibits the discharge of hazardous waste, sewage sludge, and incinerator ash within all U.S. waters and prohibits the discharge of sewage, graywater, and oily bilge water within 12 miles of shore. In addition, the bill will establish effluent limitations and monitoring and reporting requirements. This is a substantial but feasible change from the currently under-regulated state of the cruise industry.

### CRUISE SHIP POLLUTION

Cruise ships currently operate largely unregulated. They release hundreds of thousands of gallons of raw sewage and polluted water (containing bacteria, metals, viruses and nutrients) into our oceans and coastal waters as close as three miles from shore.<sup>i</sup> According to the recently released EPA Draft Cruise Ship Discharge Assessment Report, sewage generation rates for ships in Alaska range as high as 74,000 gallons per day, per vessel.<sup>ii</sup> These discharges occur near shellfish beds, public beaches, and sensitive pristine marine ecosystems. Like a floating city, cruise ships carry thousands of passengers at any given time and are growing both in average ship size (increasing by approximately 90 feet every five years)<sup>iii</sup> and demand.<sup>iv</sup>

### THE CLEAN CRUISE SHIP ACT

- Prohibits the discharge of sewage, graywater, and bilge water out to 12 miles and in no-discharge zones such as marine protected areas.
- Prohibits the discharge of sewage sludge, incinerator ash, and hazardous waste within 200 miles of the U.S. coastline. Sludge, incinerator ash, and hazardous waste must be offloaded at an appropriate land-based facility.
- Requires EPA to establish effluent standards for sewage, graywater, and bilge water discharges from 12 to 200 miles. These effluent limits must be consistent with best available technology. The ship must be traveling at not less than 6 knots.
- Establishes a monitoring, sampling, reporting and inspection program with unannounced annual inspections and samples.
- Establishes an observer program for monitoring discharges (one observer per ship).
- Establishes the Cruise Vessel Pollution Control Fund to carry out the programs in the Act. The fund is comprised of reasonable and appropriate fees collected from cruise vessels for each paying passenger.

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<sup>i</sup> Cruise Ship Discharge Assessment Report, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, December 29, 2008, at 1-1, [http://www.epa.gov/owow/oceans/cruise\\_ships/pdf/0812cruiseshipdischargeassess.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/owow/oceans/cruise_ships/pdf/0812cruiseshipdischargeassess.pdf); Assessment of Potential Health Impacts of Virus Discharge from Cruise Ships to Shellfish Growing Areas in Puget Sound, Washington State Department of Health, November 2007, <http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/sf/Pubs/cruise-ship-report.pdf>.

<sup>ii</sup> Cruise Ship Discharge Assessment Report, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, December 29, 2008, at 2-1, [http://www.epa.gov/owow/oceans/cruise\\_ships/pdf/0812cruiseshipdischargeassess.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/owow/oceans/cruise_ships/pdf/0812cruiseshipdischargeassess.pdf).

<sup>iii</sup> Id. at 1-1.

<sup>iv</sup> A Shifting Tide: Environmental Challenges and Cruise Industry Responses, Center for Environmental Leadership in Business, 2003, at 3, [http://www.celb.org/ImageCache/CELB/content/travel\\_2dleisure/cruise\\_5finterim\\_5fsummary\\_2epdf/v1/cruise\\_5finterim\\_5fsummary.pdf](http://www.celb.org/ImageCache/CELB/content/travel_2dleisure/cruise_5finterim_5fsummary_2epdf/v1/cruise_5finterim_5fsummary.pdf).