# Georgia Congressman Sparks Controversy with Proposal to Delay Whale Protection Rules



**Georgia Congressman Proposes Delay in Whale Protection Rules**

Environmental groups are raising concerns over a proposed delay in new federal rules designed to protect the endangered North Atlantic right whale. Republican Rep. Buddy Carter from Georgia introduced a bill advocating for a postponement of changes to vessel speed regulations until December 31, 2030. These new rules, issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service, aim to expand slow zones for ships off the East Coast to mitigate collisions with the remaining population of less than 360 right whales.

The proposed delay has prompted criticism from conservation organizations. Gib Brogan from Oceana and Jay Petrequin from Defenders of Wildlife argue that immediate action is necessary to prevent further whale deaths caused by ship strikes and fishing gear entanglement. The proposed rule changes currently await finalization by the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, with no clear timeline for implementation.

Meanwhile, stakeholders in the shipping and fishing industries express concern over the economic impact of these protective measures. Frank Hugelmeyer, President of the National Marine Manufacturers Association, described the speed rules as potentially "economically catastrophic" and problematic for the industry.