Rep. John Campbell hopes to protect a string of historic offshore rocks and small islands off the California coast with a bill he has sponsored to make them part of a national monument.

The new legislation would put about 40 rocks off of Laguna Beach, Newport Beach and Dana Point under the protection of the California Coastal National Monument.

During World War II, the threat of submarines lurking off the coast of Southern California were a frequent worry for many Californians. Intended to be used for the construction of lighthouses and various other civil-defense purposes, the rocks were designated to be used by the Coast Guard in 1935. Seventy-four years after the initial transfer, the rocks have never been used.

The House of Representatives passed Campbell's bill Wednesday, and the legislation now awaits consideration in the Senate.