

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 19, 2010

The Honorable Alan Mollohan, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Wolf, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairman Mollohan and Mr. Wolf:

As Members of Congress with long-standing interest in the health and viability of our nation's ocean, coasts, and Great Lakes, we are writing to request robust funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in Fiscal Year 2011. We greatly appreciate the generous support provided to NOAA in the Subcommittee's Fiscal Year 2010 spending bill, and would like to build on these efforts to continue to advance the agency by increasing the agency's funding level to \$8 billion.

As you know, NOAA's funding remained flat at \$3.9 billion until the Fiscal Year 2009 omnibus appropriations bill, which included a significant jump in the NOAA budget. The President recognizes the need to continue that pattern of increasing NOAA's budget to make up for past years' deficiencies and we appreciate his continued investment in the Fiscal Year 2010 appropriations. We applaud the President's move to restore realistic funding streams to NOAA but feel that his Fiscal Year 2011 budget falls short if NOAA is to truly fulfill its whole mission. NOAA needs robust funding for Fiscal Year 2011 in order to continue meeting its statutory mandates and strengthening its services. The funding support in the past two years has been a welcome step for an agency that monitors and manages so many critical natural processes. However, appropriations levels have not kept up with inflation partly because the agency has had to absorb significantly increased satellite costs resulting in severely eroded funding for base programs—including weather forecasting, climate change monitoring and modeling, fisheries research and management, ocean wildlife protection, spill response, ocean and atmospheric observing, and habitat conservation and restoration. This loss in capability has a direct impact on constituents in every state.

There are several challenges facing NOAA in the near term that justify the need for increasing the Fiscal Year 2011 appropriation to \$8 billion. NOAA has a mandate to maintain its satellite capabilities, which are essential for weather forecasting and other earth observing needs. The costs for such satellites and sensors will continue to increase over the next few fiscal cycles. The President's Fiscal Year 2011 budget recommends a 60 percent increase to implement these satellites – this increase should not come at the cost of shifting funds from non-satellite programs across the agency. Additionally, recognizing the need for a comprehensive approach to ocean and coastal conservation management, in 2009, the President convened an Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force. The task force is charged with proposing a national ocean policy recommendation that ensures protection, maintenance, and restoration of the ocean, coasts and Great Lakes. Our funding request would permit NOAA to meet current mandates, as well as allow for the increasing responsibilities bestowed upon the agency to manage our ocean, coasts, and Great Lakes in a changing world. The attached fact sheet has more detailed descriptions of the critical services that NOAA offers our nation, and some specific programs that need further funding.

As Members of Congress who appreciate the value and contributions given by our ocean, coasts and Great Lakes, we believe that the wise investment of taxpayer dollars in NOAA will result in considerable economic and ecological benefits to our nation. Although we understand difficult decisions must be made in the limited budget available for Fiscal year 2011, we urge the CJS Subcommittee to consider appropriating \$8 billion to NOAA so it may continue to advance ocean and marine science now and for the future.

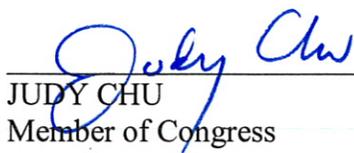
Sincerely,



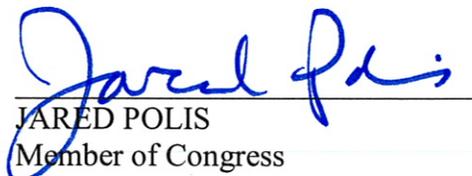
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Member of Congress  
Cochair, House Ocean Caucus



JAY INSLEE  
Member of Congress  
Cochair, House Ocean Caucus



JUDY CHU  
Member of Congress



JARED POLIS  
Member of Congress



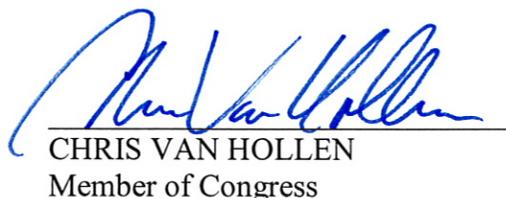
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Member of Congress



MIKE THOMPSON  
Member of Congress



FERROL NADLER  
Member of Congress

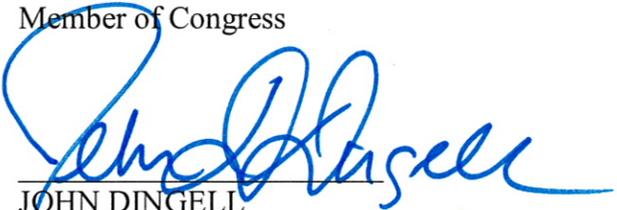


CHRIS VAN HOLLEN  
Member of Congress

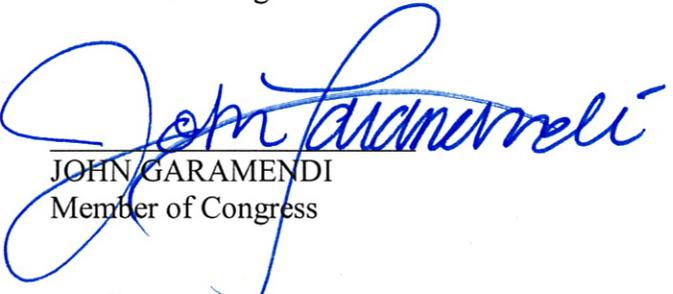
  
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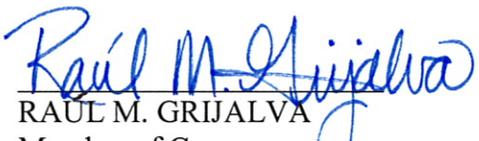
  
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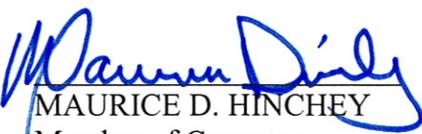
  
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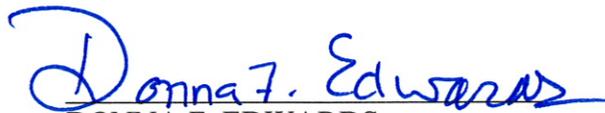
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## THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

**Economic Benefits** - Funding for NOAA's products and services generates significant return on investment due to the support they provide for major industries/sectors of our economy.

- Management and restoration programs help maintain healthy coastal and marine ecosystems that support commercial fishing, tourism, and recreation, generating tens of billions of dollars in economic activity.
- Forecasts and models touch nearly one-third of the U.S. economy, which is sensitive to weather and climate, and provide critical information to managers and insurers during severe weather events.
- Navigation data supports hundreds of billions of dollars in trade that passes through U.S. ports each year.

**Energy & Climate Services** - In the face of a changing climate, NOAA's science, technology, products, and services contribute to our nation's transition to a green economy and a more sustainable energy policy.

- Weather and climate forecasting, observations, and mapping are critical for managing energy distribution and usage and exploiting emerging renewable energy opportunities.
- Extensive research of the atmosphere and ocean allows for improved understanding of climate change and its potential impacts and provides the sound science needed to counteract and adapt to such changes.
- Land, sea, air and space observational assets provide long-term, sustained monitoring to understand and predict climate change and inform management decisions accordingly.

**Ecosystem Services** - A holistic, ecosystem-based approach to managing our ocean and coastal resources is essential.

- Establishing a national ocean policy that ensures that ensures protection, maintenance, and restoration of the ocean, coasts and Great Lakes paired with a governance structure and coastal and marine special planning to implement the policy.
- Protecting and managing ocean wildlife, such as sea turtles, marine mammals, and coral reefs to prevent their loss.
- Conducting research and cooperative studies to support fisheries management decisions and enforce fisheries laws.
- Managing marine protected areas, such national marine sanctuaries and national estuarine reserves.
- Monitoring water quality to detect harmful algal blooms, invasive species, and marine debris.
- Providing grants to state and local governments to assist in managing myriad activities in coastal areas.

### **PRIORITY PROGRAMS IN NEED OF INCREASED FUNDING**

**Ocean and Coastal Conservation and Management** - These programs manage essential resources and habitats:

- Implementation of amendments to the Magnuson-Stevens Act, which seek to end overfishing, including supporting programs that provide fishery managers with the information needed to make decisions, like stock assessments, fishery observers and enforcement in all fisheries.
- Protected Species Research and Management, such as sea turtles and marine mammals
- Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning, Coastal Zone Management, the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program and the Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Implementation Grants Program
- National Estuarine Research Reserve System, National Marine Sanctuaries Program, Community-based Habitat Restoration Program, and the Great Lakes Habitat Restoration Program

**Ocean Science and Research** - Basic research funding is necessary to develop strategies for living in a changing world:

- Ocean acidification, Oceans and Human Health, and other research will help to better understand the impacts of climate change on marine fisheries, mammals, and coastal and ocean ecosystems.
- Competitive extramural grants, including: National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science Research, Ocean Exploration, National Undersea Research Program, Sea Grant, regional laboratories, seafood safety, and ecosystem-based research and cooperative studies supporting salt and freshwater fisheries management and enforcement of fisheries laws.

**Monitoring, Observing, Modeling, and Mapping** - The products these programs offer are vital to many users:

- Oil spill preparedness, prevention, and response programs, including the Office of Response and Restoration Base
- Mapping and Charting, Geodesy, and Tides and Currents, Physical Oceanographic Real Time System (PORTS)
- Integrated Ocean Observing System including regional systems
- NOAA Fleet operations and charters
- The national water quality monitoring network, Harmful Algal Bloom forecasting, ballast water demonstration, early warning/detection for invasive species, marine debris and survey and monitoring of fish and protected species

**Education and Outreach** - Developing capacity to train future scientists and managers is critical to long-term success:

- Programs identified under the NOAA Education category and NOAA Sea Grant education and outreach activities
- The broader interagency ocean education strategy being developed under the auspice of the White House Committee on Ocean Policy, and in particular, education programs in the National Science Foundation