

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 17, 2008

The Honorable Alan B. Mollohan
Chair, Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, and Science
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rodney P. Frelinghuysen
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, and Science
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Mollohan and Ranking Member Frelinghuysen:

We are writing to urge you to appropriate \$72 million in to the National Sea Grant College Program for Fiscal Year 2009. The Administration's request of \$55 million sets the program back, in constant 2007 dollars, to its lowest level in the program's 40 year history. The funding level we are requesting – \$72 million – would sustain ongoing research, extension, outreach and education efforts, address emerging coastal needs, and assist NOAA in carrying out its missions at the national, state and local levels.

For over four decades, the National Sea Grant College Program, as a key component of NOAA's extramural research, education and outreach enterprise, has used research to address ocean and coastal problems of local, state, regional and national significance. Federal dollars appropriated to the Sea Grant program are leveraged and matched by state and private funds. The 32 Sea Grant programs, located in every coastal, Great Lakes and Gulf Coast state, engage the expertise of our Nation's leading universities to conduct relevant competitive research linked to an extensive outreach and education network. This structure ensures that Sea Grant research is useful to coastal resource managers at the regional, state and local levels, marine-related businesses and industries, and most importantly the general public.

Research, outreach, and education activities supported by Sea Grant address important issues for the nation, including:

- Healthy marine ecosystems
- Seafood supply and safety
- Sustainable living marine resources
- Coastal ocean observing efforts
- Economically viable coastal communities
- New technologies for ocean development
- Natural resource management and conservation
- K-12 education and ocean literacy
- Workforce development

It is more crucial than ever for the U.S. to invest in high quality research that is useful and used by state, local and regional decision makers. Sea Grant is a trusted and

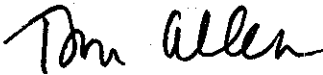
objective source for accurate and timely research and education on ocean, coastal and Great Lakes issues. If you live in a coastal community, chances are you have benefited directly from the work of Sea Grant.

Sea Grant has established long-standing working relationships with a broad spectrum of stakeholders in every coastal state. Because it is science-based and non-regulatory, Sea Grant is viewed as an honest broker among a wide range of constituents. The U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy called on Congress in its 2004 report to expand the Sea Grant program in conjunction with a doubling of all ocean and coastal research funding. In addition, last year the Bush Administration released an interagency Ocean Research Priorities Plan. Several of the plan's most important priorities dovetail with Sea Grant's strength, experience, and relationships with state and local decision makers and ocean, coastal and Great Lakes resource managers.

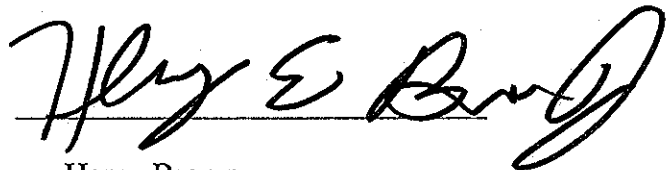
However, while the demands on Sea Grant continue to grow – such as understanding the impacts of regional climate change and developing coastal resiliency in the face of severe weather – the Administration is proposing to once again cut this important program. While we appreciate the very tight fiscal constraints that will confront the Subcommittee, we hope the Subcommittee will see the immediate and long-term value in investing in the Sea Grant program by appropriating \$72 million for Fiscal Year 2009.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

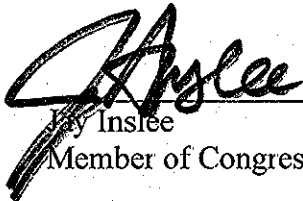
Sincerely,



Tom Allen
Member of Congress



Henry Brown
Member of Congress



Jay Inslee
Member of Congress

Low Capps

Sam Yau

Magie K. Hirano

Neil Abernombie

Mike & Michael

Chris Van Kollen

Ru/Quin

Maddeline J. Boddallo

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