

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

April 9, 2004

The Honorable C.W. Bill Young  
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations  
H-218 Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable David Obey  
Ranking Member, Committee on  
Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 2051

Dear Mr. Chairman and Congressman Obey:

We are writing to urge you to appropriate funds to the National Sea Grant College Program in Fiscal Year 2005 at \$68.4 million, a \$6 million increase over the program's current FY04 appropriations and well within the authorized levels provided for in the National Sea Grant College Program Act Amendments of 2002 (PL 107-299).

The coastal zone is the most densely populated and widely used area in the country; 56% of the nation's civilian income is derived from coastal areas. We cannot have healthy coastal economies without investing in wise coastal resource management. The National Sea Grant College program directly supports the efforts of states and communities to manage coastal resources. Sea Grant has proven its value to taxpayers as a program that supports rigorous, high quality research that is directly responsive to the concerns of coastal constituents. For this reason, Congress overwhelmingly approved reauthorization of this program in 2002 and significantly increased Sea Grant's authorized funding levels.

For nearly four decades, the National Sea Grant College Program has provided an extraordinary return on a rather small federal investment. Federal dollars appropriated to the Sea Grant program are leveraged and matched by state and private funds. The 31 Sea Grant programs, located in coastal and Great Lakes states, serve as the core of a national network of more than 300 participating institutions involving more than 3,000 scientists, engineers, educators, students, and outreach experts. The program's distinguishing feature is policy-relevant science linked to an extensive outreach and education network. This structure ensures that Sea Grant research is useful to marine resource managers and users.

Since its establishment in 1966, Sea Grant has developed long-standing working relationships with a broad spectrum of stakeholders in every coastal state. Because Sea Grant is nonregulatory and science-based, it serves as an honest broker among a wide range of constituents. Sea Grant supports research, outreach and education activities that foster healthy marine ecosystems, seafood safety, sustainable living marine resources, economically viable and safe coastal communities, new technologies for ocean development, coastal observations and education and human resources development.

However, over the last 20 years, Sea Grant has lost significant opportunities to address critical coastal, marine and Great Lakes issues simply because appropriations have not kept pace with inflation and demand. Sea Grant's buying power has decreased by 25% over the last two decades. In addition, Sea Grant has been authorized for work in four priority areas: fisheries extension, aquatic invasive species, oyster disease and harmful algal blooms. Unfortunately, the Sea Grant program has not received funding to fully support these congressionally mandated priority areas of research. We recognize the serious budget situation we face in FY05 and are requesting this increase in order to ensure continued service to the growing number of coastal constituents.

Providing Sea Grant base appropriations at \$68.4 million for FY05 would enable Sea Grant to:

**Reward High Performing Sea Grant College Programs.** Sea Grant's 2002 reauthorization mandated that highly rated university-based Sea Grant College Programs be recognized through the provision of **competitive merit funding** for all funds over FY03 levels. Base funds are needed to provide the resources required to meet this legislative mandate.

**Realize a Fully Operational Fisheries Extension Program.** The goal of the Fisheries Extension program is to permanently place more fisheries field agents and specialists on the docks to assist commercial and recreational fishers. Two million dollars in FY04 appropriations have been provided to fund Fish Extension proposals. Sea Grant could **complete implementation** upon receiving the fully authorized \$3 million appropriation in FY05.

Based on Sea Grant's remarkable assets, we again urge you to provide \$68.4 million for Sea Grant base funding in Fiscal Year 2005.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Michael H. Michael

Sten Isaac

Neil Hansen

Madeline J. Roudsall

Jim McEwen

Jim Davis

D. Conly

Jeff Miller  
Stephen Lynch

Mike Mastropasqua

Robert Miller

Robert Weyl

Carolyn McCarthy

John F. Tierney

Ed Cox

Proa Paul

Frank Pallone, Jr

Jan Schak

Bob Spiller  
William Latta

Pete Stark

Joe Wilson

Mark Foley

Jim Sargent

Antony Blinken

Jane Camp

Lo Borman

Tony Baldoni

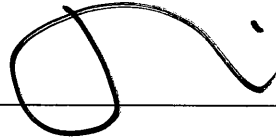
Betty McCall

Ellen Fausch

John B. Jan

Jim McDematt

Dennis J. Kavinich



Barbara Lee

Tom Allen

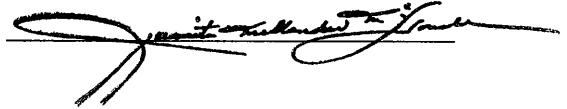
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Luis Capps

Gene J. Kapelians

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Willi Deibel

Neil Rahall

Cale E. Gildee

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Butterfield

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Harsh Agrawal

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Kendrick B. Meek

Sam Farr

Urb. K. Green

Leb Bradley

Max Baucus

Virgil Goode

Frank W. Latta

Brad Sherman

Louie Gohmert

Tim Wirth

Amodeo

~~Gregory W. Meeks~~

Verdell E. Egan

J. Saxton

James R. Lankford

Zoe Lofgren

Jim Moran

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Letter in support of Sea Grant funding

Page 2:

1. Michael Michaud, M.C.
2. Madeline Bordallo, Del.
3. Steve Israel, M.C.
4. James McGovern, M.C.
5. Nick Lampson, M.C.
6. Jim Davis, M.C.

Page 3:

1. Dennis Cardoza, M.C.
2. Janice Schakowsky, M.C.
3. Jeff Miller, M.C.
4. Jay Inslee, M.C.
5. Stephen Lynch, M.C.
6. Adam Smith, M.C.
7. Mike McIntyre, M.C.
8. Pete Stark, M.C.
9. Darrell Issa, M.C.
10. Joe Wilson, M.C.
11. Robert Wexler, M.C.
12. Mark Foley, M.C.
13. Carolyn McCarthy, M.C.
14. Jim Langevin, M.C.
15. John Tierney, M.C.
16. Anibal Acevedo-Vila', R.C.
17. Ed Case, M.C.
18. Dave Camp, M.C.
19. Ron Paul, M.C.
20. Jo Bonner, M.C.
21. Frank Pallone, Jr., M.C.
22. Tammy Baldwin, M.C.

Page 4:

1. Betty McCollum, M.C.
2. Ellen Tauscher, M.C.
3. John Larson, M.C.
4. Jim McDermott, M.C.
5. Dennis Kucinich, M.C.
6. Anthony D. Weiner, M.C.
7. Barbara Lee, M.C.
8. Tom Allen, M.C.
9. Michael Honda, M.C.
10. Lois Capps, M.C.

Page 4, continued:

11. Grace Napolitano, M.C.
12. Brad Miller, M.C.
13. Neil Abercrombie, M.C.
14. Juanita McDonald, M.C.
15. Richard Burr, M.C.
16. Rick Larsen, M.C.
17. Bob Etheridge, M.C.
18. John Spratt, M.C.
19. Phil English, M.C.
20. Chris Van Hollen, M.C.
21. William Delahunt, M.C.
22. Nick Rahall, M.C.

Page 5:

1. Dale Kildee, M.C.
2. Richard Neal, M.C.
3. Edward Markey, M.C.
4. Don Young, M.C.
5. Ben Cardin, M.C.
6. Michael McNulty, M.C.
7. George Miller, M.C.
8. Henry Waxman, M.C.
9. Edolphus Towns, M.C.
10. Howard Berman, M.C.
11. Wayne Gilchrest, M.C.
12. Alcee Hastings, M.C.
13. Barney Frank, M.C.
14. Lincoln Diaz-Balart, M.C.
15. Rosa L. DeLauro, M.C.
16. Eliot Engel, M.C.
17. Lynn Woolsey, M.C.
18. Peter Deutsch, M.C.
19. Sherwood Boehlert, M.C.
20. Sander Levin, M.C.
21. Carolyn Maloney, M.C.
22. John McHugh, M.C.

Page 6:

1. Jerrold Nadler, M.C.
2. Gene Green, M.C.
3. Randy "Duke" Cunningham, M.C.
4. Dan Rohrabacher, M.C.
5. Nancy Pelosi, M.C.
6. Louise Slaughter, M.C.
7. Robert Scott, M.C.
8. Solomon Ortiz, M.C.
9. Tom Lantos, M.C.
10. Clay Shaw, M.C.
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14. Bart Stupak, M.C.
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18. Jerry Kleczka, M.C.
19. Marty Meehan, M.C.
20. Gary Ackerman, M.C.
21. John Dingell, M.C.
22. David Price, M.C.

Page 7:

1. Kendrick Meek, M.C.
2. Tim Bishop, M.C.
3. Sam Farr, M.C.
4. Amo Houghton, M.C.
5. Michael E. Capuano, M.C.
6. Gregory Meeks, M.C.
7. Jeb Bradley, M.C.
8. Vernon Ehlers, M.C.
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10. Jim Saxton, M.C.
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12. Susan Davis, M.C.
13. Frank W. Ballance, Jr., M.C.
14. Zoe Lofgren, M.C.
15. Brad Sherman, M.C.
16. Jim Moran, M.C.
17. Loretta Sanchez, M.C.