

Sea Grant Association

House FY 2004 Appropriations Request

NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM

The coastal regions of the U.S. represent enormous potential for food production, biomedical advances, economic development, and responsible uses. Sea Grant supports research, education, training, and extension programs that seek to maximize the economic, environmental, and social potential of the nation's coastal, marine, and Great Lakes resources. **Sea Grant is "Science Serving America's Coasts."**

- **Sea Grant is an excellent investment.** Over 300 Sea Grant universities across 31 programs collaborate to respond to issues of national and regional importance through partnerships that bring together federal, state, and private sectors for extraordinary return on a modest federal investment. Studies show that *each federal dollar is leveraged tenfold or more* in private sector economic development.
- **Sea Grant is responsive to a broad constituency.** Sea Grant supports competitive, peer-reviewed, and user-driven research, and extends critical information, practical knowledge, and new technologies to stakeholders in businesses, government, and to the general public. Sea Grant also educates many of our nation's future marine scientists through formal K-12 and university programs.
- **Sea Grant addresses critical national issues and opportunities.** Sea Grant program efforts foster healthy marine ecosystems, sustainable living marine resource development, economically viable and safe coastal communities, new technologies for ocean development and management, coastal observations, and education and human resources development for the 21st century.

Sea Grant – Status & Situation

In 2002, Congress recognized the value and needs of Sea Grant by overwhelmingly approving HR3389 to reauthorize the National Sea Grant College Program through 2008 at authorized funding levels that for FY04 represent a \$31 million increase over FY03. **A concomitant increase in FY04 appropriations is critical to the success of Sea Grant.**

Over the last two decades, Sea Grant has lost significant opportunities to address the nation's critical coastal, marine, and Great Lakes issues simply because its base appropriations have not kept pace with inflation and demand. Indeed, Sea Grant's "buying power" has actually decreased by more than 25% during that time.

Sea Grant's base has been augmented by Congressionally authorized programs in fisheries extension, aquatic nuisance species, oyster disease, and harmful algal blooms. However, Sea Grant has been faced with an unfunded mandate of \$3 million to enhance its fisheries extension effort.

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- ✓ **Support Sea Grant appropriations for FY04 of \$68.41 million, an \$8 million increase over our current FY03 appropriation of \$60.41 million, as follows:**
 - ✓ **\$5 million increase in FY04 Sea Grant core funding.** This increase will begin to restore Sea Grant's "buying power" that has been lost due to inflation over the last two decades, and enhance Sea Grant's ability to meet the ever-increasing public demand for information and services.
 - ✓ **\$3 million in FY04 Sea Grant funding for Fisheries Extension.** This will enable Sea Grant to permanently fulfill the mandate by placing additional fisheries extension agents "on the docks" to address critical fisheries issues and needs.
- ✓ **Please sign the letter being circulated by the House Resources and House Science Committees in support of Sea Grant appropriations.** All Representatives are urged to sign. For further information and to sign this letter, contact Edith Thompson in Congressman Gilchrest's office at x55311 or Sunshine Menezes in Congressman Pallone's office at x54671.