

# Sea Grant Association

October 5, 2006

The Honorable Frank Wolf  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Science, State,  
Justice and Commerce  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Alan Mollohan  
Ranking Minority Member, Subcommittee  
on Science, State, Justice and Commerce  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Commerce,  
Justice and Science  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  
Ranking Minority Member, Subcommittee  
on Commerce, Justice and Science  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Wolf, Ranking Member Mollohan, Chairman Shelby and Ranking Member Mikulski:

As you and your colleagues prepare to conference on the FY 2007 CJS/SSJC appropriations bill, on behalf of the Sea Grant Association, I am writing to strongly encourage you to support an overall appropriation for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of \$4.4 billion, the amount recommended by the Senate. In addition, in order to ensure the continued flow of important research results, education and outreach activities that contribute to the long term health of our coastal communities, an investment of \$72 million for the National Sea Grant College Program is needed. This too represents the amount recommended by the Senate, even though it is still \$10 million below the level authorized in the most recently enacted Sea Grant authorization act.

America's coastal and ocean resources encompass an immense area with more than 95,000 miles of coastline and more than 3.4 million square miles of ocean within the U.S. territorial sea. Coastal tourism and recreation account for 85 percent of all U.S. tourism revenues and the oceans, in one way or another, account for one out of every six American jobs. In addition, given that over half of the American population lives near the coast and one-half of the nation's gross domestic product, \$4.5 trillion annually, is generated in coastal watershed counties, investing in the research, education and other activities of NOAA is in the national interest.

As you know, the National Sea Grant College Program is the premier university-based research program in support of coastal resource use and conservation at NOAA. For nearly four decades, it has been serving the country through research, education, and outreach on coastal and Great Lakes issues of national importance while helping NOAA accomplish its mission. The thirty-one Sea Grant programs, which are located in coastal, Great Lakes and Gulf Coast states and represent a national network of more than 300 participating institutions involving more than

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3,000 individuals, tailor their activities and support to the specific needs of the state, region, or coastal communities in which they operate. This continually provides local resource managers, national, regional and local governments, and citizens on-the-ground support and expertise on a regular basis and especially in times of need.

Sea Grant's research outcomes are far-reaching. Through its extension and outreach programs, it ensures that federal investment is targeted at relevant issues facing NOAA, other federal agencies, state and local governments, coastal environmental managers, local fishermen, other marine resource users, and the general public. With its science-based focus, Sea Grant is seen as an honest broker among a wide range of constituencies – including state and local government, academia, business, industry, and private citizens. In its everyday work, Sea Grant fosters healthy marine ecosystems, seafood safety, sustainable living marine resources, economically viable and safe coastal communities, new technologies for ocean development, coastal observatories and education and human resources development.

We fully recognize the budgetary difficulties the conferees face. However, given the contributions NOAA and the National Sea Grant College Program make to the economic and environmental health of the Nation each year, we urge you to come as close to the levels recommended by the Senate for the agency and this program. An investment in NOAA generally and Sea Grant specifically is an investment in the safety and economic vitality of the national, its localities, and its citizens.

Thank you for the opportunity to convey these views. If at any time I can provide you with additional information about NOAA or the Sea Grant Program, please do not hesitate to contact me at (301) 405-7500 or [kramer@mdsg.umd.edu](mailto:kramer@mdsg.umd.edu).

Sincerely,



Jonathan G. Kramer  
President, Sea Grant Association  
Director, Maryland Sea Grant College