

FRIENDS OF NOAA COALITION

<http://www.friendsofnoaa.org/>

October 17, 2007

Honorable Alan B. Mollohan
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and
Science
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and
Science
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Rodney P. Frelinghuysen
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and
Science
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and
Science
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Mollohan, Chairwoman Mikulski, Mr. Frelinghuysen, and Senator Shelby:

The organizations listed on this letter are supporters, stakeholders, unionized employees and partners of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Collectively we make up the Friends of NOAA Coalition. As you prepare to conference on the FY08 Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations Act, we wish to offer our collective support for NOAA. The House bill recommended a total of \$4.0 billion and the Senate bill recommends \$4.2 billion. We urge the conferees to support NOAA at the level recommended by the Senate.

NOAA's programs help protect our ocean, coastal and Great Lakes resources, coastal communities, and contribute to the health and vitality of the economy. Weather and climate sensitive industries account for about one-third of the Nation's GDP. With the resources to be appropriated to NOAA in this bill, every citizen receives weather forecasting, hurricane tracking, tsunami warnings, navigational information, fisheries management, hazard mitigation, scientific research, and local community assistance.

NOAA is one of the premier science agencies in the Federal Government, providing decision makers with critically important data, products, and services that promote and enhance the nation's economy, national security, environmental protection, and our quality of life. It was NOAA -- and the underlying science enterprise of its partners -- that enabled the delivery of accurate and timely information regarding the impending landfall of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, a forecast that saved tens of thousands of lives. A better understanding of the oceans and improvements in forecasting not only benefits coastal communities -- it benefits us all. Economists have estimated that altering planting decisions based on improved El Niño and La Niña forecasts would save U.S. farmers \$265-\$300 million.

NOAA plays a lead role in researching and modeling the causes and impacts of global climate change, working in close collaboration with both NASA and NSF, whose programs are also funded in this legislation. The agency provides policy makers with information necessary to make balanced decisions regarding actions to deal with a changing climate. NOAA also provides critical data to mariners, contributing to the safe navigation of commercial and recreational vessels in U.S. waters. The tides and currents data, real-time information through the PORTS program, and mapping and charting work done by NOAA help fulfill the agency's mission to support and facilitate commerce.

With the exception of NOAA Fisheries, the funds recommended in the House and Senate bills for NOAA would fully fund the President's fiscal year 2008 budget request, including the priorities and initiatives contained in the interagency ocean research priorities plan and implementation strategy; restore funding for core programs, rebuild vital observation programs, and enable NOAA to address other issues germane to their mission that have traditionally been supported by Congress. It would allow enhancements in the development of an integrated ocean and atmospheric observing system; increased research and education activities, expand ocean conservation and management programs; and provide critical improvements in infrastructure (satellites, ships, high performance computers, facilities), and data management. Such an increase would represent significant progress toward addressing recommendations contained in the reports of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Oceans Commission, the recent report card issued by the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative and the interagency Ocean Research Priorities Plan and Implementation Strategy.

We appreciate the tight fiscal constraints facing the conference and the difficult decisions associated with allocating limited financial resources. Nevertheless, we believe NOAA represents an important investment in the future health and well being of the Nation and we urge the conferees to provide the \$4.2 billion proposed by the Senate.

University Corporation for Atmospheric Research
Consortium for Oceanographic Research & Education
Reinsurance Association of America
American Red Cross
National Weather Service Employees Organization
Commercial Weather Services Association
Shipbuilders Council of America
The Weather Channel Inc.
Joint Ocean Commission Initiative
WeatherBank, Inc.
United Fishermen's Marketing Association, Inc.
American Association of Port Authorities
Fugro Pelagos, Inc.
Raytheon Company
The Weather Coalition
National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges
University of Oklahoma
National Association of Marine Laboratories
Sea Grant Association
Campaign for Environmental Literacy
Connecticut Sea Grant
University of Connecticut
American Society of Limnology and Oceanography
National Marine Sanctuary Foundation
Marine Technology Society
Council of Environmental Deans and Directors
National Council for Science and the Environment
Coastal States Organization
West Marine, Inc.
National Estuarine Research Reserve Association
The Ocean Foundation
North Carolina Sea Grant
Maine Sea Grant

Maryland Sea Grant
Skidaway Institute of Oceanography, Georgia
Rhode Island Sea Grant
Annis Water Resources Institute, Grand Valley State University, Michigan
Minnesota Sea Grant
Moss Landing Marine Laboratories, California
Scripps Institution of Oceanography, California
Association of Zoos and Aquariums
National Marine Manufacturers Association
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Massachusetts
New York Sea Grant
University of New Hampshire
Hatfield Marine Science Center, Oregon
University of Texas Marine Science Institute
The Ohio State University
Ohio Sea Grant College Program
F.T. Stone Laboratory, Ohio
Center for Lake Erie Area Research
Great Lakes Aquatic Ecosystem Research Consortium
North Carolina State University
University of Illinois Department of Atmospheric Sciences
University of North Carolina Wilmington
Purdue University
Vaisala Inc.
Michigan Sea Grant
New Hampshire Sea Grant
Institute for Exploration, Connecticut
Delaware Sea Grant
Columbia University
University of North Carolina Chapel Hill
National Fisheries Institute
Natural Resources Defense Council
Humboldt State University Marine Laboratory, California
Center of Marine Biotechnology, University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute
Shoals Marine Laboratory, Cornell University
Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies, University of Southern California
UCLA Institute of the Environment
Old Dominion University
Cooperative Institute for Limnology and Ecosystems Research, University of Michigan
Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences, University of Colorado
University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science
American Rivers
Fish for the Future Foundation
Stony Brook University, New York
Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences, Rutgers University
Great Lakes WATER Institute, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee
Oceanic Institute, Hawaii
Texas A&M University - Galveston
Center for Coastal Studies, Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi
Harte Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies
University of Miami - Rosenstiel School of Marine & Atmospheric Science
University of Rhode Island

Florida Sea Grant
Environmental Defense
Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences, Maine
Florida State University Coastal and Marine Laboratory
Alliance for Earth Observations
Pennsylvania Sea Grant
The University of Texas Marine Science Institute
Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors
Oregon State University
Regional Science Consortium at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center
Oceana
South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium
Mote Marine Laboratory, Florida
Marine Conservation Biology Institute, Washington
California Sea Grant – University of California and University of Southern California
Northeastern University Marine Science Center
Dowling College, Long Island, New York
Coastal Research and Education Society of Long Island, Inc.
Wisconsin Sea Grant
Puerto Rico Sea Grant
Alaska Sea Grant
Louisiana State University
Louisiana Sea Grant College Program
Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant
National Federation of Regional Associations for Coastal and Ocean Observing
University of Florida Seahorse Key Marine Laboratory
University of Washington
AccuWeather, Inc.
The Nature Conservancy
University of Michigan
American Academy of Underwater Sciences
Battelle