

FRIENDS OF NOAA COALITION

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

December 12, 2006

Honorable Carlos M. Gutierrez
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Gutierrez:

The Friends of NOAA Coalition respectfully urges the Administration to support the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) with a budget request for fiscal year 2008 of \$4.5 billion. This level is consistent with the budget recommended in both fiscal year 2006 and fiscal year 2007 by the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee.

As the Administration continues to develop its fiscal year 2008 budget proposal, we believe that this level of funding for NOAA is necessary to ensure that the agency is able to carry out its overriding missions which directly impact the nation's economic, social, homeland security, and environmental needs. NOAA and its partners are poised to significantly enhance the delivery of vital information and services that will assist decision and policy makers at all levels in meeting society's needs while ensuring continued economic growth and the wise management of our natural resources.

The services, information, research and education provided by NOAA touch the lives of every American. The funding level recommended by the Senate Appropriations Committee and this Coalition would enable the agency to: provide accurate and up-to-date weather forecasting; conserve coastal and marine habitats and living marine resources; ensure continued public access to the benefits derived from these resources; improve fisheries management; predict and track information related to severe weather; provide greater access to navigational information; exploration, and advance weather, climate, and ocean-related scientific research and education.

Additionally, the recommended funding level will allow better integration of NOAA's many activities, including its valuable life-saving services, such as those displayed during Hurricane Katrina. The integration and synthesis of information derived from NOAA and other federal agency observing and monitoring systems, such as satellites, buoys at sea, coastal and ocean observatories, and weather stations, along with an educated and trained workforce, holds immense promise for significantly advancing our nation's capacity to protect public health and safety while enhancing access to cherished ocean and coastal resources.

The Members of the Friends of NOAA Coalition appreciate the difficult budgetary constraints facing the Administration for fiscal year 2008. However, we also believe that NOAA and its partners make vital and direct contributions to the health, safety, and continued economic development of our country and thus deserve a commensurate level of support for fiscal year 2008.

We appreciate your consideration of these views and request that you contact Kevin Wheeler, at 202-448-1291 or Joel Widder at 202-289-7475 if you have any questions regarding this letter or the work of the Coalition.

The **Friends of NOAA** are supporters, stakeholders, partners, and unionized employees of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and exist to encourage the White House and the Congress to provide appropriate support for the agency as it carries out its mission of saving lives and livelihoods. For information about the Friends of NOAA, please visit www.FriendsofNOAA.org.

Sincerely,

University Corporation for Atmospheric Research
Consortium for Oceanographic Research and Education
Reinsurance Association of America
American Red Cross
The Weather Coalition
West Marine
United Fishermen's Marketing Association, Inc.
AccuWeather, Inc
WeatherBank, Inc
Fugro Pelagos, Inc.
National Weather Service Employees Organization
Sea Grant Association
National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges
Coastal States Organization
National Estuarine Research Reserve Association
UCLA Institute of the Environment
National Association of Marine Laboratories
Skidaway Institute of Oceanography
University of Washington
Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences
Oregon Institute of Marine Biology, University of Oregon
Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology
Environmental Defense
Institute for Exploration
Dauphin Island Sea Lab
Center for Coastal Studies, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies
Mote Marine Laboratory
Baruch Institute for Marine and Coastal Sciences
University of Oklahoma
Council of Environmental Deans and Directors
National Marine Sanctuary Foundation
North Carolina State University
Surfrider
USC Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies
Marine Conservation Biology Institute
Association of Zoos and Aquariums
American Rivers
National Marine Manufacturers Association
Scripps Institution of Oceanography
Savannah State University
Hatfield Marine Science Center
National Council for Science and the Environment
Council of Environmental Deans and Directors (NCSE)
American Society of Limnology and Oceanography
National Fisheries Institute
International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers
University of Missouri

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Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, SUNY Albany
National Federation of Regional Associations
Purdue University
Vaisala Inc.
Cornell University
Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC)
North Carolina State University
RS Information Systems
Florida State University
Marine Technology Society
Planetary Data, Incorporated
American Association of State Climatologists
Alliance for Earth Observations
American Geophysical Union
Joint Ocean Commission Initiative
The Ocean Foundation

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