

March 16, 2018

The Honorable John Culberson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable José Serrano
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Culberson and Ranking Member Serrano:

As you craft the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, we urge you to support the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries at no less than \$65.5 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019. We respectfully request that you prioritize requests for:

- Sanctuaries and Marine Protected Areas, within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Operations, Research, and Facilities (ORF) account, at a level of \$57 million; and,
- Marine Sanctuaries Construction, within NOAA's Procurement, Acquisition, and Construction (PAC) account, at a level of \$8.5 million.

National marine sanctuaries conserve some of the Nation's most critical natural, historic, and cultural resources. They are home to millions of species, preserve our nation's maritime heritage, and promote public access for exploration and world-class outdoor recreation and enjoyment for future generations. National marine sanctuaries are vital to maintaining the healthy ocean and Great Lakes ecosystems that underpin our incredibly productive coastal economies. They generate \$8 billion annually in local economies and support numerous jobs and businesses in the fishing, tourism, recreation, and scientific research sectors.

The National Marine Sanctuary System, managed by NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS), encompasses more than 620,000 square miles of our marine and Great Lakes waters. Balancing multiple uses on the water and engaging many constituencies in the community, sanctuaries provide a comprehensive, highly participatory approach to managing and conserving marine and Great Lakes resources. Public participation is a hallmark of sanctuaries and underscores their dedication to civic engagement and leadership. From nomination to day-to-day management, communities are at the core of national marine sanctuaries.

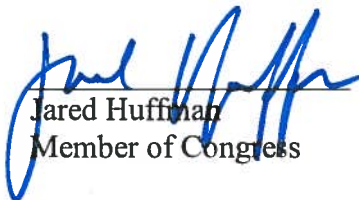
Communities nationwide are coming together to conserve our ocean, coasts, and Great Lakes with expansions at existing national marine sanctuaries to new nominations and designations for the first time in 17 years. In response to this groundswell of local action, ONMS should receive

increased funding to be responsive to the growing enthusiasm for national marine sanctuaries. Given the program's well-known public support and increased responsibilities, we need to invest in our marine sanctuaries to conserve areas of national significance in our oceans and Great Lakes, to advance scientific research and citizen science in these living laboratories, and to support STEM education and public engagement.

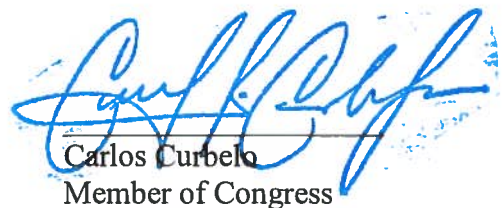
We are concerned that budget reductions would force ONMS to reduce economic opportunities, close visitor's centers, cancel collaborative partnerships with museums and universities, terminate education and research initiatives, and diminish enforcement capacities. In particular, sanctuary visitor centers, vessels, facilities, and other infrastructure boost jobs, support businesses, and anchor local tourism and recreation economies while enabling ONMS to complete core research, education, and law enforcement missions that simply cannot be accomplished from land alone.

We strongly encourage you invest in America's community-based national marine sanctuaries by supporting the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries at no less than \$65.5 million in Fiscal Year 2019. Your support for marine sanctuaries will send a powerful message about the economic growth and job creation benefits of healthy ocean and Great Lakes resources, while simultaneously underscoring the continuing ecological and aesthetic value of America's underwater national treasures. We thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress




Carlos Curbelo
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



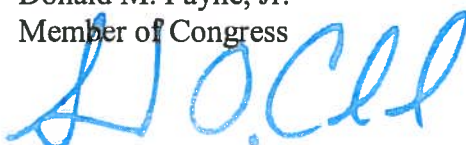
Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress




Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



Salud O. Carbajal
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

A. Donald McEachin

A. Donald McEachin
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Pramila Jayapal

Pramila Jayapal
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Stacey E. Plaskett
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Colleen Hanabusa
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Earl L. "Buddy" Carter

Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress

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Filemon Vela
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Suzanne Bonamici
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Julia Brownley
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Ruben Gallego
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Nanette Diaz Barragan

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William R. Keating

William R. Keating
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Michael E. Capuano

Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress

Darren Soto

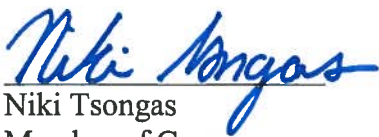
Darren Soto
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Anthony G. Brown
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John Katko
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Niki Tsongas
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Denny K. Davis
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Eleanor Holmes Norton
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Bobby L. Rush
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Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



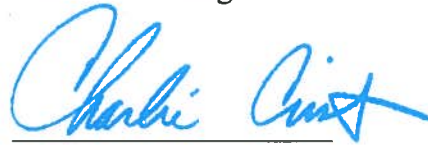
Albio Sires
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



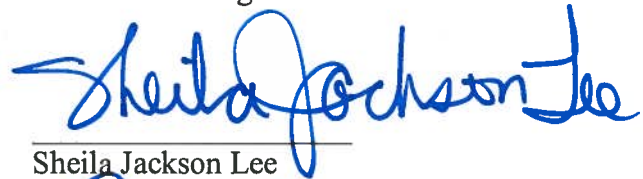
Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



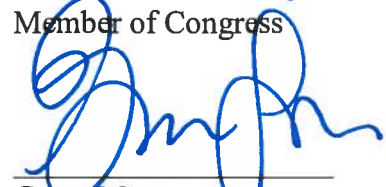
Charlie Crist
Member of Congress



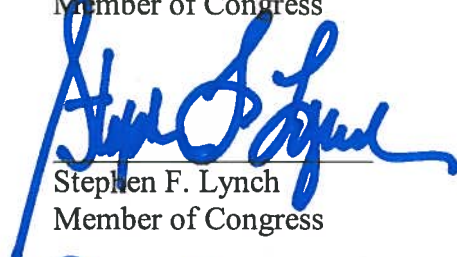
Rick Larsen
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Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



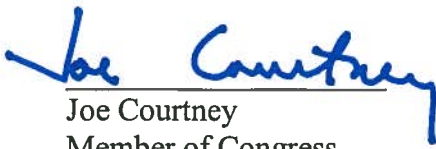
Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



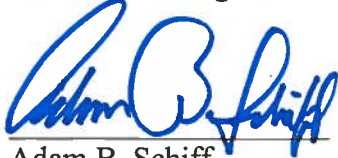
Daniel W. Lipinski
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress



Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
Member of Congress



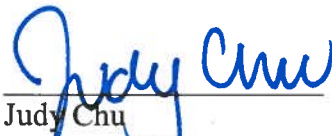
Linda T. Sánchez
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C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
Member of Congress



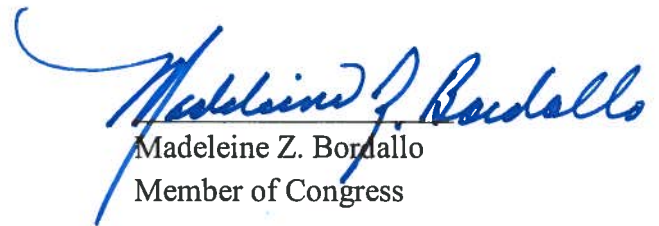
Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
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Madeleine Z. Bordallo
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John P. Sarbanes
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Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



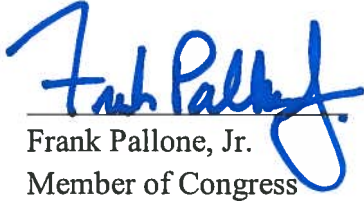
Jackie Speier
Member of Congress



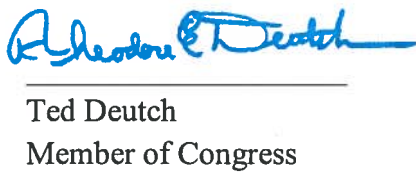
Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress


Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

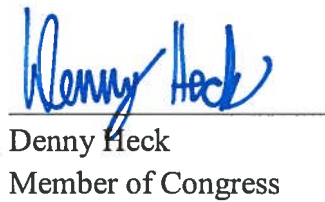

G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress

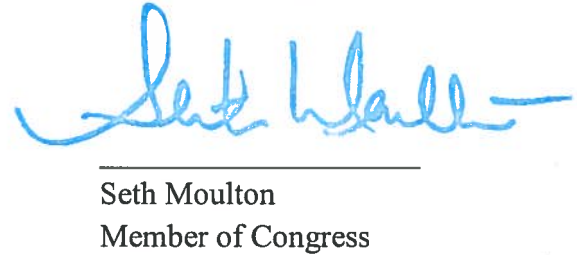

Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress

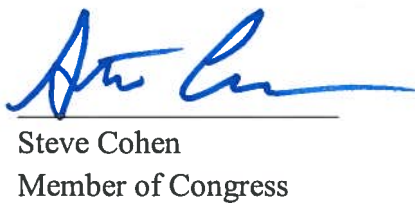

Al Lawson
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Ted Deutch
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Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

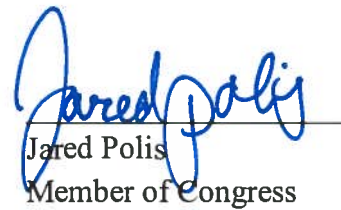

Denny Heck
Member of Congress

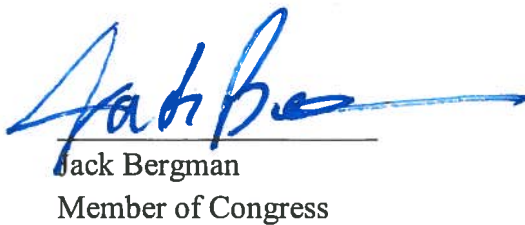

Seth Moulton
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Steve Cohen
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Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress


Brian K. Fitzpatrick
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Jared Polis
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Jack Bergman
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Francis Rooney
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Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



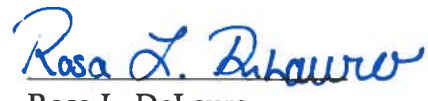
Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress



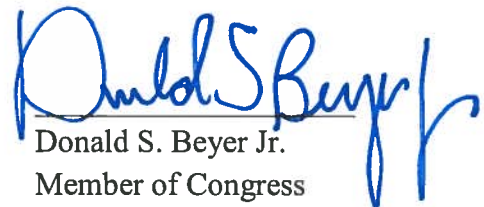
James R. Langevin
Member of Congress



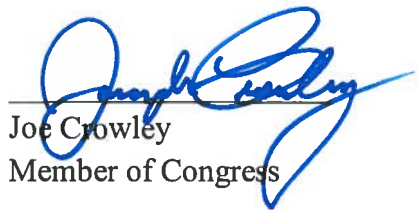
Frank A. LoBiondo
Member of Congress



Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Joe Crowley
Member of Congress




Tony Cardenas
Member of Congress



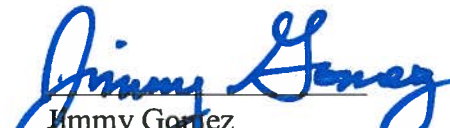
Hakeem Jeffries
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Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Jenniffer Gonzalez-Colon
Member of Congress


Daniel M. Donovan, Jr.
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Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress


Grace F. Napolitano
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Susan A. Davis
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Donald Norcross
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Scott H. Peters
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Beto O'Rourke
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Tulsi Gabbard
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Zoe Lofgren
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