

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 31, 2017

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

As you work to complete your final Fiscal Year 2018 budget, we write to urge you to reconsider your proposed elimination of the National Sea Grant College Program and provide full funding for this program. In addition, we oppose the \$30 million cut to the program the Administration put forward in the Fiscal Year 2017 supplemental appropriations request, which could lead to a mid-year shutdown of the program. We are Senators from some of the 33 states with Sea Grant Programs and see firsthand how important these programs are to our states' economies and higher education communities. Zeroing out or cutting this funding would have a devastating impact and we strongly urge you to reconsider this decision.

The National Sea Grant College Program is a federal-local partnership that funds 33 university based research, extension, and education centers. The federal investment of \$67.3 million in FY 2015 in these centers yielded \$575 million in economic benefit, an 854% return on federal investment. This economic impact includes creating and sustaining nearly 3,000 local businesses and more than 20,000 jobs. Marine businesses and fishermen in coastal communities rely on the knowledge and skills of Sea Grant staff and outreach materials. This is evidenced by the 40,243 fishermen that Sea Grant helped to adopt sustainable harvesting techniques. Sea Grant has also helped train 1,956 professionals working in the seafood processing industry in hazard analysis and critical control points (HAACP).


In addition to supporting businesses and jobs in local communities across the country, Sea Grant programs provide innovative research and technologies to help local communities meet new challenges like coastal resiliency and address long-term goals like habitat restoration or water quality monitoring. In the past year alone, Sea Grant programs conducted 896 trainings to help communities improve resiliency, restored 127,348 acres of degraded ecosystems, and developed 582 Ecosystem-based management (EBM) tools used by 4,033 resource managers.

Finally, Sea Grant programs across the country are helping to educate the next generation of marine scientists by supporting 1,108 graduate fellows and 860 undergraduate students. Sea Grant programs also engage the public in science through a volunteer program. As a part of this program, local volunteers completed 265,602 volunteer hours with Sea Grant programs in 2015.

Sea Grant Programs are vital to local businesses, a source of good jobs, and an important part of preserving our coastal communities for generations to come. We believe zeroing out or

cutting the Sea Grant program is a mistake and urge you to provide robust support for the program in the final Fiscal Year 2018 budget.

Sincerely,



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



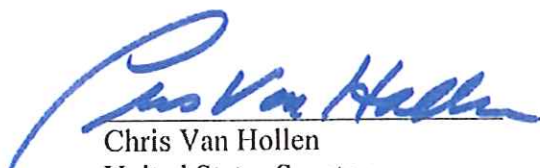
Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



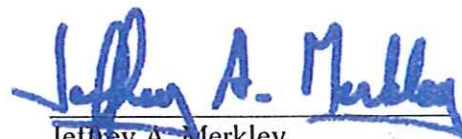
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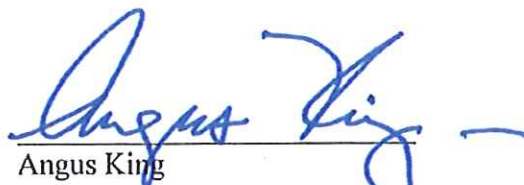

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