



National Association of Marine Laboratories

October 25, 2013

PRESIDENT

Jo-Ann Leong
Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology
University of Hawaii - Manoa
46-007 Lilipuna Road
Kane'ohe, HI 96744
p 808-236-7401 f 808-236-7443
joannleo@hawaii.edu

Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Harold Rogers
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

CHAIRMAN

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC POLICY
Nancy N. Rabalais, Ph.D.
Executive Director and Professor
Louisiana Universities Marine
Consortium
8124 Hwy. 56
Chauvin, LA 70344
nrabalais@lumcon.edu

Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Madam Chairwoman, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Members Shelby and Lowey:

As the Committees work to resolve differences in the FY 2014 appropriations bills, I would like to request maximum support for a strong federal investment in ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes research and education – primarily through the agencies addressed below. Support for programs that enhance agency internal research capabilities and support for competitive, merit-based extramural research and education programs provide highly cost-effective returns on investment and distribute economic and societal benefits over a broad array of communities.

National Science Foundation – NSF funds vital basic research that enhances the public understanding of the Nation's oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes. NSF also supports science, engineering and education to inform the societal actions needed for environmental and economic sustainability and sustainable human well-being. NAML is particularly supportive of the creation of new research networks that foster collaboration and data sharing among marine labs and other entities in ways that would enhance ongoing ecological research activities. NAML is also highly supportive of the guidance both committees provided NSF with respect to achieving a more balanced portfolio that protects core research and instrumentation programs.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – NOAA is also important for its activities and support for ocean, coastal and Great Lakes research. NOAA's research and education partnerships at marine labs greatly expand its access to world-class expertise and unique facilities, complementing and expanding the work carried out within NOAA labs. Of special concern to the NAML membership are the following programs, which we hope the Congress can fully support: the NOAA Office of Education, the National Sea Grant College Program, Aquaculture Initiatives, Prescott Marine Mammal Program, Highly Migratory Shark Fishery Research Program, NOAA Cooperative and Joint Institutes, the Integrated Ocean Observing Systems, NOAA's Center for Sponsored Coastal Ocean Research harmful algal bloom, hypoxia, and ecological

The National Association of Marine Laboratories (NAML) is a nonprofit organization of member institutions representing coastal, marine, and Great Lakes laboratories in every coastal state, stretching from Guam to Bermuda and Alaska to Puerto Rico. Members serve as unique "windows on the sea," providing information on the rich environmental mosaic of coastal habitats as well as offshore oceanic regions and the Great Lakes. NAML member laboratories conduct research and provide a variety of academic, education and public service programs to enable local and regional communities to better understand and manage the ocean, coastal and Great Lake environments. NAML is comprised of three regional associations: the Northeastern Association of Marine and Great Lakes Laboratories (NEAMGLL); the Southern Association of Marine Laboratories (SAML); and the Western Association of Marine Laboratories (WAML).

forecasting initiatives, and Ocean and Coastal Management programs including the National Marine Sanctuary Program and the National Estuarine Research Reserve System. These programs help to reduce the nation's vulnerability to storms and flooding, and contribute strongly to the economic vitality of coastal communities and businesses such as fishing, seafood production, tourism, and recreation.

NAML also strongly supports recent recommendations made to the NOAA Science Advisory Board that calls for priority support for NOAA extramural programs. Increased extramural research enables NOAA to leverage its R&D investment with the resources of the nation's leading university scientists resulting in greater and faster scientific advances at lower costs. A predictable and reliable partnership with the extramural research community is critical to NOAA's long-term success. A robust NOAA budget directly coupled with solid support for extramural partnerships is essential for NOAA to accomplish its various missions.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration – Part of NASA's mission is to develop an understanding of the total Earth system and the effects of natural and human-induced changes on the global environment. Oceans play a major role in influencing changes in the world's climate and weather. Long-term ocean data from satellites make it possible to employ modeling techniques for global mapping of seasonal changes in ocean surface topography, currents, waves, winds, phytoplankton content, sea-ice extent, rainfall, sunlight reaching the sea, and sea surface temperature. Studying these patterns at a global scale can help forecast and mitigate the effects of floods and drought. Ocean observing satellite images tell us about the most fundamental climate changes. Satellite data have improved forecasting model capabilities to predict events such as El Niño and other global and regional climate cycles. Protecting NASA extramural support in this area will further develop the ability to better predict ocean phenomena.

Environmental Protection Agency – EPA is an important partner for marine laboratories as EPA's own laboratories are a critical part of the marine science community. EPA's Office of Research and Development and Office of Water provide essential resources to marine labs nationwide, fund research grants in various environmental science and engineering disciplines, and engage the Nation's best scientists and engineers in targeted research complementary to EPA and other federal research activities. Unfortunately, support for research has declined dramatically over the past several years within EPA, and the EPA's Science Advisory Board has called for renewed investments. Enhanced support for ocean, coastal and Great Lakes programs at EPA is essential in helping to mitigate and adapt to environmental change. EPA also funds (with matching state support) the National Estuary Programs that enlist science and stakeholder support in management of important coastal habitats including the social component.

Department of Interior – DOI is an important federal player with respect to the ocean and coastal community through the research supported and conducted by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) via the Coastal and Marine Geology program and the National Biological Service. Greater partnership with NAML Labs would provide USGS and BOEM with needed access to sound marine science information to support their role in the management of ocean and coastal resources.

These agencies' programs make vital contributions to the health and well-being of our rapidly expanding ocean and coastal communities. In addition, the research supported by these agencies enhances the necessary base of knowledge needed to accurately predict trends in coastal communities. Partnerships among NAML labs and these agencies help in the training of a technical workforce essential for the future competitiveness of this country. As the problems facing coastal cities and communities grow in frequency and severity, it is essential that we

maintain a strong a vibrant ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes research and education capacity to help meet the needs of our ocean and coastal communities.

NAML fully recognizes the severe constraints and difficult choices facing the Congress and the nation's citizens. In the face of these difficult choices, NAML believes these agencies and their research and education programs should be seen as an investment in the future health and well-being of the Nation and should be supported to the maximum extent possible. Thank you for the opportunity to present these views about the importance of these agencies to health of our ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes research and education enterprise.

Sincerely,



Jo Ann C. Leong
President



NAML

The National Association of Marine Laboratories