

THE CALIFORNIA COASTAL MANAGEMENT AGENCIES

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

CALIFORNIA STATE COASTAL CONSERVANCY

SAN FRANCISCO BAY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

March 17, 2017

To the Honorable Members of the California Congressional Delegation:

On behalf of the California Coastal Commission, California State Coastal Conservancy, and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, California's three federally certified coastal zone management agencies, we urge you in the strongest way possible to oppose deep cuts to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) as proposed yesterday by the Trump Administration.

Whether your constituents live along the coast, in valleys, or on mountains, we all benefit from the environmental and economic strength of California's coast. Residents of the Inland Empire are frequent visitors to the coast, especially during hot summer months, farmers in the Central Valley ship billions of dollars of agricultural products through the state's major ports, and tourists ski in the Sierras during the morning, buy fruit in the Central Valley in the afternoon, and relax along the coast at night. Fortunately, the nation's Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) requires the federal government, through NOAA, to align its priorities with those of individual states. The CZMA promotes a strong national defense and ensures that our highways and other forms of critical infrastructure are developed while conserving our natural environment, it ensures recreational opportunities for all Californians, and its success helps entice the rest of the country to visit California's amazing coastline and shoreline.

While we recognize that changes to federal funding are likely to come with any new Administration or new Congress, we ask that federal funds provided through the CZMA State Grants be maintained at \$70 million in FY2018. Put simply, these grants leverage federal dollars because they are matched on a one-to-one basis by state funds. Our state relies on these funds to help implement the core work of our federally approved programs; they help the State of California bolster the increasingly important partnership between our state and the federal government and help fulfill the active coastal management at the state level that is essential to strengthening national priorities.

NOAA's other coastal management programs are also very important to California. The National Sea Grant Program is an incredibly successful training ground for scientists and applies scientific research from universities to coastal management issues, the National Estuarine Research Reserves provide on-the-ground real-time coastal field laboratories, Regional Coastal Resiliency Grants support local communities address current and future hazards in their areas, and NOAA's satellite data ocean monitoring system is peerless. Indeed, the satellite monitoring system is critical both to public safety and security and to California's ability to withstand the effects of rising sea level and extreme storm events of the kind we have seen this past winter.



That being said, the state's \$44 billion ocean-based economy and the entire Bay Area shoreline face unprecedented natural challenges. Eliminating NOAA's core state grants program when California and all other coastal states are at increasing risk from these growing threats is shortsighted at best. Most important, it will put California's economy, coastline, and quality of life for millions of residents at risk.

We hope that you will take these thoughts into account when you face the difficult budget decisions upcoming for FY2018. We urge you in the strongest possible terms to represent California's interests and oppose these ill-considered reductions. Please do not hesitate to contact any of us with any questions or concerns that you may have.



R. ZACHARY WASSERMAN
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