

The California Coastal Management Agencies

California Coastal Commission

California State Coastal Conservancy

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission



March 1, 2018

To the 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 in the FY 2019 President's Budget.

We write to you, as we did last year at this time, to express our serious concerns about the President's proposal to eliminate funding for Coastal Zone Management Grants in NOAA's budget. This funding is critical to supporting our state's coastal management program and accomplishing the mandates of the state's coastal protection laws. 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. And, California's coastal program – and the work of our three agencies – is a critical component to maintaining safe, healthy, and prosperous coastal and Bay communities throughout the state.

The nation's Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) requires the federal government, through NOAA, to align its priorities for coastal areas 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.

The CZMA is also a critical tool for the state to use in reviewing any future proposed oil and gas leasing or drilling in coastal waters off our state's shore. Together with the Governor, the State Legislature, and the majority of Californians, our agencies stand in strong opposition to the Administration's proposed Draft Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Lease Program for 2019 – 2024. We will be sharing our concerns with the Department of Interior through the Lease Program development process; however, we would greatly appreciate the support of the entire California Congressional delegation in removing the federal waters adjacent to the State of California from the final 2019 – 2024 OCS Lease Sale Program.

We could not be successful in our efforts if it weren't for the work and partnership of NOAA's other coastal management programs. 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, and NOAA's satellite data ocean monitoring system is peerless. We understand funding for these programs is also in jeopardy and we believe this funding is also critical to the health, safety, and economy of our state.



Finally, the state's roughly \$42 billion ocean-based economy and the entire Bay Area shoreline face unprecedented natural challenges. Our programs work directly with coastal communities to ensure new development and public infrastructure is safe from coastal hazards like rising seas. 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, especially in light of future federal investments in the nation's aging public infrastructure. Eliminating this funding will put California's economy, coastline, and quality of life for millions of residents at risk.

We hope that you will take these concerns into account as you consider the myriad funding priorities for the FY 2019 federal budget. We urge you in the strongest possible terms to represent California's interests in providing funding for CZM Grants and opposing any new lease sales for oil and gas activities offshore of California.

Please do not hesitate to contact any of us with any questions or concerns that you may have.



R. ZACHARY WASSERMAN, Chair
San Francisco Bay Conservation
and Development Commission



DOUGLAS BOSCO, Chair
California State Coastal
Conservancy



DAYNA BOCHCO, Chair
California Coastal Commission