

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 16, 2018

The Honorable John Culberson  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies  
H-310, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jose Serrano  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Culberson and Ranking Member Serrano:

As you begin to consider Fiscal Year 2019 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations, we write in support of the Regional Coastal Resilience Grants (RCRG) program. In order to competitively fund projects across the 35 coastal states and territories, we are requesting at least \$20 million in funding in FY 2019 for Regional Coastal Resilience Grants.

The resilience of our coastal communities is a critical mission for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the National Ocean Service. Resilience means more than just storm-ready. Truly resilient communities are able to effectively adapt to changing economic, social, and environmental conditions over time and effectively respond to new challenges and threats to infrastructure, local economies, ecosystem health, and national security. Comprehensive resilience for coastal communities and economies can only be achieved at the regional level when communities, states, and federal agencies come together to share knowledge and establish a unified direction. Competitive RCRG grants from NOAA support work to address regional challenges, ensuring that ocean priorities are set with fine-resolution, localized data to enable regional, state, and local implementation of resilience actions.

Regional Coastal Resilience Grants are working through state-led regional ocean partnerships, academic institutions, and others to produce on-the-coast results. For example, the following projects have been funded in the last three years:

**Gulf of Mexico**

The Gulf of Mexico region has received almost \$2.5 million. Grantees have included the Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA), Dauphin Island Sea Lab, Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium, Northern Gulf of Mexico Sentinel Site Cooperative, University of Florida, Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, and Louisiana Sea Grant. This funding has allowed Gulf communities to evaluate and enhance community resilience,

address coastal flooding impacts and recovery, and address challenges that communities are facing in preparing for extreme weather hazards, developing solutions that save lives and protect the economy.

### **Mid-Atlantic**

The Mid-Atlantic region has been awarded over \$3 million, including grantees like the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO), Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal, Monmouth University, Mid-Atlantic Regional Association Coastal Ocean Observing System, University of Delaware, Rutgers University, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership, City of Virginia Beach, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, Old Dominion University, and Virginia Sea Grant. This funding has assisted local communities in ocean planning, increasing resilience to address flooding issues across coastal communities, improving water quality, and developing community understanding of the changing ocean conditions and effects on local economies and ocean resources.

### **Northeast**

New England has received over \$4.3 million, including grantees like the Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC), Cape Cod Commission, Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, Town of Barnstable, Northeast Regional Association of Coastal and Ocean Observing Systems, University of Maine, University of New Hampshire, University of Massachusetts, University of Rhode Island, University of Connecticut, Gulf of Maine Research Institute, City of Dover, Town of Charlestown, Town of Kingston, and state agencies in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. These grants have supported a regional approach to reducing coastal flood risk in New England, predicting of coastal storm impacts, supporting states working with their local communities on shoreline and ocean planning, and developing region-specific information on suitable natural infrastructure to ensure local communities and the region have resilient coastal areas and economies

### **South Atlantic**

The South Atlantic region has received over \$1.68 million, including grantees like the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Georgia Emergency Management Agency–Homeland Security, Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association, South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium, College of Charleston, University of South Carolina, and The Citadel. Funding has allowed for comprehensive disaster recovery and redevelopment plans for coastal counties with the goal to ensure that the rebuilding that occurs after a catastrophic disaster or major storm aligns with local values and improves the ability to recover from coastal disasters.

### **West Coast**

The West Coast region has received over \$6.8 million, including grantees like the University of San Diego, Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve, Washington Sea Grant, University of Washington, Island County Department of Natural Resources, Western Washington University, Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, Santa Clara Valley Water District, San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority, San Mateo County Resource Conservation District, Skagit River Systems Cooperative, Beaver Slough Drainage District, Coquille Indian Tribe, state agencies in Washington, Oregon, and California, and

dozens of local governments in the region. Funding has supported development of new tsunami evacuation maps, improved evacuation procedures, and innovative land use strategies. Funding has also helped tackle vulnerabilities to sea level rise, flooding, and extreme weather for better resilience planning overall.

### **Great Lakes**

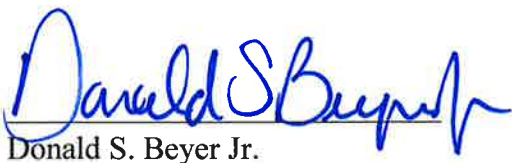
The Great Lakes region has been awarded over \$1.54 million, including grantees like the Wisconsin Department of Administration, University of Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute, and Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. This funding has supported the development of options for protecting bluff, beach, and harbor ecosystems and the coastal economy in consultation with municipalities and various state and local organizations.

### **Pacific**

The Pacific Islands region has been awarded over \$1.85 million, including grantees like the University of Hawai'i, Pacific Islands Ocean Observing System, University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program, County of Maui Planning Department, and the State of Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources. Funding has helped coastal communities prepare for large-wave and high-tide events that significantly damage the shore and impact the local economy. New information and real-time tools to forecast flooding will help local officials enhance preparedness and response and will be replicable for other communities in Hawai'i and the Pacific Islands.

Resource needs greatly outpace the funding that has been historically available for competitive regional grants. A total of 167 proposals requesting more than \$135 million in funding competed for just \$15 million in grant funding last year. We greatly appreciate your willingness to consider our request for robust funding for this important program.

Sincerely,



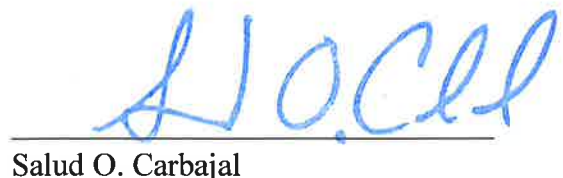
Donald S. Beyer Jr.



Pramila Jayapal



Kathy Castor



Salud O. Carbajal



Anthony G. Brown



Alan Lowenthal

  
Suzanne Bonamici

  
Juan Vargas

  
Joe Courtney

  
Linda T. Sánchez

  
Filemon Vela

  
Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan

  
Lois Frankel

  
Donald M. Payne, Jr.

  
Jackie Speier

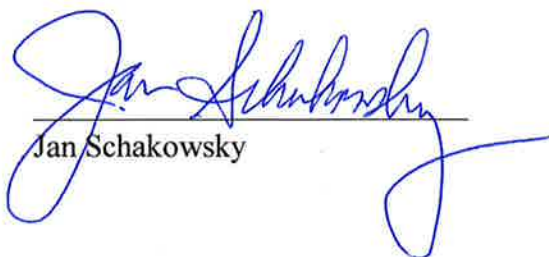
  
Niki Tsongas

  
Gerald E. Connolly

  
Alcee L. Hastings

  
Seth Moulton

  
Mark DeSaulnier

  
Jan Schakowsky


  
Peter A. DeFazio



  
Anna G. Eshoo

  
Colleen Hanabusa

  
Bill Pascrell, Jr.

  
James P. McGovern

  
Bobby L. Rush

  
Frank Pallone, Jr.

  
Rick Larsen

  
Nanette Diaz Barragán

  
Albio Sires

  
Scott Peters

  
Chellie Pingree

  
Debbie Dingell

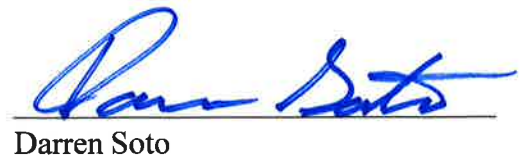
  
Barbara Lee

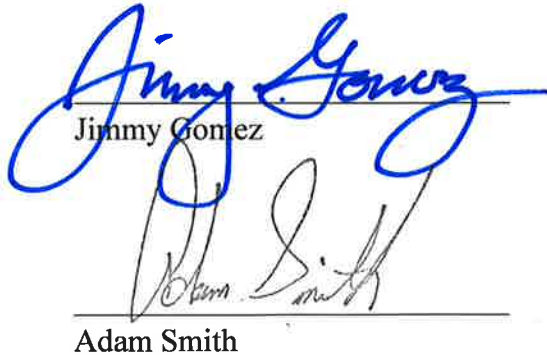
  
Robert C. "Bobby" Scott

  
Eleanor Holmes Norton

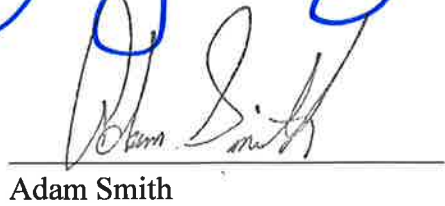
  
Al Green

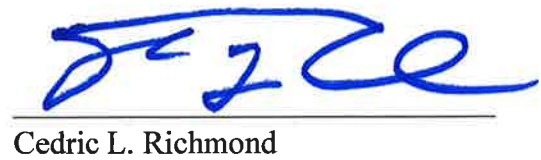
  
Mike Thompson

  
Darren Soto

  
Jimmy Gomez

  
Carol Shea-Porter

  
Adam Smith

  
Cedric L. Richmond

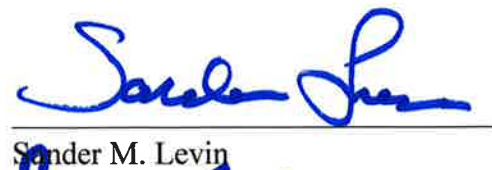
  
Denny Heck

  
Elijah E. Cummings

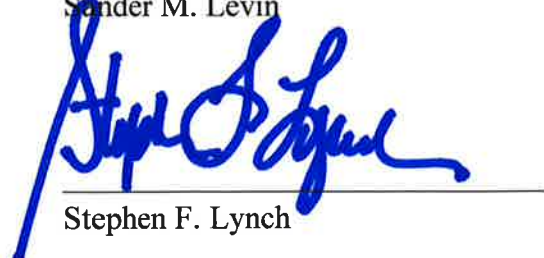
  
Donald Norcross

  
Thomas R. Suozzi

  
James R. Langevin


  
Sander M. Levin

  
Debbie Wasserman Schultz

  
Stephen F. Lynch

  
Karen Bass

  
Suzan DelBene

  
Jerrold Nadler

  
Madeleine Z. Bordallo

  
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A. Donald McEachin

  
Stacey E. Plaskett

  
Christopher H. Smith

  
William R. Keating

  
Gregory W. Meeks