

January 29, 2010

The Honorable David E. Price  
2162 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Price,

The purpose of this letter is to ask for your support for \$53 million dollars in funding for the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System as part of the Fiscal Year 2011 NOAA budget. This funding includes \$33 million for the 11 regional associations, which are critical partners with NOAA and the other federal agencies that comprise U.S. IOOS.

The organizations and individuals listed on the attachment to this letter support the Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA) and the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) in their efforts to provide timely and reliable oceanographic information. SECOORA is one of 11 Regional Associations established nationwide through the system. IOOS coordinates the multi-agency, cooperative effort to routinely collect real-time data and manage historical information based on a continuously operating network of buoys, ships, satellites, underwater vehicles, and other platforms. These data are needed for many purposes which include rapid detection and prediction of changes in our nation's ocean and coastal waters.

SECOORA's vision is to protect people, conserve our marine environment, and enhance our coastal economy by focusing on the prioritized regional themes of coastal hazards, ecosystems, marine operations, and climate change. To address these priorities, our previous and ongoing regional observing efforts will focus on delivering information and products to inform harmful algae bloom predictions, inundation modeling, marine weather forecasts, and analysis of circulation and temperature anomalies.

The need for a fully-developed IOOS that builds on the existing federal-regional partnership is critical. Several national reports have recognized this, including the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force's Interim Report released in September 2009. The IOOS system leverages capacity and expertise at the local and regional levels to create an integrated system that delivers both federal and non-federal data and information. Economic benefits are estimated to be in the \$100s of millions for industry, government and the public. Many elements of the national system are in place, but maintenance and enhancement are essential for accurate data and information to enhance maritime safety and commerce, eco-system based resource management, and public safety.

Federal funding is critical to meeting the requirements for a fully operational U.S. IOOS that includes effective regional associations such as SECOORA. Our Nation's needs for alternative energy sources from the oceans, to understand and respond to the impacts of climate change, to protect our marine ecosystems, and to insure our national security warrant the support of Congress via continued appropriations.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your continued service to our country. Please contact me if you have questions or need additional information regarding this request.

Sincerely,

Dr. Harvey Seim  
Chairman, SECOORA

Ms. Kim Cavendish, Museum of Discovery and Science  
Dr. Robert Christian, East Carolina University  
Mr. M. Richard DeVoe, South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium  
Dr. Manhar Dhanak, Florida Atlantic University-SeaTech  
Dr. Ruoying He, North Carolina State University  
Ms. Debra Hernandez, SECOORA  
Mr. Jeffrey Kinder, DownEast Instrumentation  
Dr. Lynn Leonard, University of North Carolina at Wilmington  
Dr. George Maul, Florida Institute of Technology  
Dr. Clifford Merz, DIALYTICS, Inc.  
Dr. Richard Miller, University of North Carolina Coastal Studies Institute  
Dr. James R. Nelson, Skidaway Institute of Oceanography, University System of Georgia  
Dr. Harvey Seim, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill  
Dr. Sandra Vargo, Florida Institute of Oceanography  
Dr. Pat Welsh, University of North Florida