



THE NORTHEAST-MIDWEST SENATE COALITION

GREAT LAKES TASK FORCE

April 4, 2014

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science & Related Agencies
142 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science
& Related Agencies
125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Mikulski and Ranking Member Shelby:

As Senators from Great Lakes states, we write to express our support for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) programs that benefit the Great Lakes region. We request that the following programs be supported in the fiscal year 2015 (FY2015) Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

- **We request that the Committee provide strong support for the National Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program grants.**

NOAA's National Coastal Zone Management Program provides grants to states with approved coastal zone management plans for the protection, restoration, and enhancement of coastal zone areas, including those in the Great Lakes region. Today, more than 160 million Americans live within coastal watershed areas. For communities throughout the Great Lakes region, effective management of our environmental resources is key for economic growth—increasing quality of life, improving property values, and protecting life and property. The CZM program supports state and local efforts to mitigate coastal hazards, conserve and restore coastal habitat, and protect coastal water quality. We believe continued support should be provided for this unique program as it recognizes the economic and ecological importance of our national coastal and Great Lakes shorelines, and supports state and local efforts to address critical management issues.

- **We Request that the Committee continues support for NOAA's Oceans, Coasts, and Great Lakes Research program.**

NOAA's Oceans, Coasts, and Great Lakes Research Program supports advanced scientific research, observation and monitoring activities that help shape a better understanding of our marine and Great Lakes habitats and environmental processes. Science conducted at laboratories and research universities across the country is vital to help inform management decisions surrounding a variety of the complex issues, such as fluctuating water levels and water resource management, the development of harmful algal blooms, and the impacts of invasive species. Continued support for this program is critical to advancing the

scientific tools to protect and restore the environmental and economic wellbeing of the Great Lakes region and ensure a robust fishery.

We appreciate the Committee's attention to this important request. If you have any questions, please feel free to have your staff contact Alice Yates (Senator Levin, 202-224-2683) or Sarah Walter (Senator Kirk, 202-224-2854).

Sincerely,

Mark Kirk, Co-Chair
United States Senator

Carl Levin, Co-Chair
United States Senator