



THE NORTHEAST-MIDWEST SENATE COALITION

GREAT LAKES TASK FORCE

March 27, 2015

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science & Related Agencies
142 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

Dear Chairman Shelby and Ranking Member Mikulski:

As Senators from Great Lakes states, we write to express our support for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) programs that are critically important to the Great Lakes. We urge your support for the following programs in the fiscal year 2016 (FY2016) 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 in coastal communities and effective management of our environmental resources is crucial for economic growth—increasing quality of life, improving property values, and protecting life and property. 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 such as coastal hazards, habitat, and water quality.

- **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 to help shape a better understanding of our marine and Great Lakes habitats and environmental processes. Science conducted at laboratories and research universities throughout the United States helps inform management decisions surrounding a variety of the complex issues, such as the spread of harmful algal blooms, fluctuating water levels and the impact 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.

Thank you for considering our requests. If you have any questions, please contact Jon VanderPlas with Sen. Kirk's office (202-224-0350) or Aaron Suntag with Senator Stabenow (202-224-0839).

Sincerely,