



February 28, 2018

Honorable John Culberson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and
Science
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice and
Science
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Jose Serrano
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and
Science
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice and
Science
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Culberson, Chairman Shelby, Ranking Member Serrano, and Ranking Member Shaheen:

Much of the Federal extramural nondefense, non-biomedical support for research and education is provided by these Subcommittees. Within that overarching enterprise, the Subcommittees are uniquely responsible for the health and vitality of our ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes enterprise through your support for NSF, NOAA, and NASA. In so doing, the Subcommittees are positioned to impact the Nation's economic growth, national security, and public safety by your decisions to support research and education and training. Year after year, under your leadership these Subcommittees have generously embraced that challenge and for that the National Association of Marine Laboratories (NAML) is deeply grateful.

Now that a new budget agreement is in place that provides additional resources for nondefense spending for FY 2018 and FY 2019 and as House and Senate conferees move to resolve their differences within the FY 2018 Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations Bill, NAML would like to urge your maximum support for the ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes research and education programs under the jurisdiction of this Subcommittee as outlined below.

The ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes network of NAML laboratories, is a vital part of the nation's research and education enterprise. That enterprise is a critical contributor to the economic and environmental health of the nation. The nation is faced with a widening gap between the actual level of federal funding for research and education and the required investment to sustain the U.S. as the world's leader in innovation. Accordingly, NAML urges the Conferees to take the following actions:

- Conferees should build on the Federal investment in research to develop the knowledge, people, and technologies that power the ocean and coastal economies, create jobs, improve health, strengthen our national security, and support the U.S. as the global innovation leader. Some of key programs that support this goal include:

The [National Association of Marine Laboratories \(NAML\)](#) is a nonprofit organization representing the ocean, coastal and Great Lakes interests of member laboratories that employ thousands of scientists, engineers and professionals nationwide. NAML labs conduct high quality research and education in the natural and social sciences and translate that science to improve decision-making on important issues facing local, state, regional, national and international entities.



- *NSF funding for research, training, infrastructure, and education much of which is supported by the Directorates for Geosciences and Biological Sciences;*
 - *Extramural funding provided by NOAA including funding the National Sea Grant College Program at \$80 million, marine aquaculture NOAA's cooperative institutes related to ocean, coastal and Great Lakes issues, and restoration of the Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program;*
 - *NOAA National Estuarine Research Reserves at \$27 million in FY 2018 and National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science; and*
 - *NASA Earth Sciences.*
- This investment should include ocean observations, data integration, and related cyber and physical infrastructure; monitoring, research, and response to changing environmental conditions such as:
 - *NSF's Field Stations and Marine Laboratories (FSML) at \$6 million;*
 - *NOAA Integrated Ocean Observing System program at \$43 million;*
 - *Research and Monitoring for Ocean Acidification; and*
 - *NSF's Long Term Ecological Research program and HBCU Research Infrastructure for Science and Engineering (RISE)*
 - Renew the commitment to improve the quality of STEM education and re-energize efforts to attract, recruit, support, and retain women, minorities and others not currently well represented in the science and technology workforce through the following programs:
 - *NSF's Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU), its Alliances for Minority Participation, the graduate and post graduate fellowship programs at NSF, NOAA, and NASA; and*
 - *Reject the Administration's proposal to terminate the NOAA and NASA Offices of Education*

These time-tested programs, that support the extramural research and education community via competitive, merit-based research, provide cost-effective impressive returns on investment, leverage additional resources to meet science and management priorities, and distribute economic and societal benefits over a broad array of communities. With new spending guidelines in place, we hope the Subcommittees will continue to be the leading voice for the health of the Nation's research enterprise via the decisions it makes in finalizing the FY 2018 Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations Act.

NAML is grateful for the opportunity to provide this information to the Subcommittees.

Sincerely,

Robert K. Cowen
President
National Association of Marine Laboratories