



CALIFORNIA OCEAN PROTECTION COUNCIL

Mike Chrisman, Secretary for Resources, Council Chair
John Chiang, State Controller, State Lands Commission Chair
Linda Adams, Secretary for Environmental Protection
Susan Golding, Public Member
Geraldine Knatz, Public Member
Darrell Steinberg, State Senator
Pedro Nava, State Assemblymember

July 25, 2008

Representative Nick J. Rahall, Chair
Representative Don Young, Ranking Member
House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Rahall and Young,

The California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) would like to express its support for the specific objectives articulated in the *Oceans Conservation, Education and National Strategy for the 21st Century Act* (H.R. 21).

The OPC was created to help California coordinate and act on ocean and coastal issues of statewide and national significance. As the California's Secretary for Resources, I chair the OPC. Our other members include the Secretary for Environmental Protection Linda Adams; State Lands Commission Chair and State Controller John Chiang; former mayor of San Diego and current CEO and President of the Golding Group Susan Golding; Executive Director of the Port of Los Angeles Geraldine Knatz, State Senator Darrell Steinberg, and State Assemblyman Pedro Nava.

The OPC believes that the specific objectives of H.R. 21 – establishing a national oceans policy, establishing regional ocean partnerships, codifying NOAA into law, and creating a national ocean trust fund – will allow government agencies at all levels to better solve the problems facing our oceans and coasts.

California, Washington, and Oregon are working in partnership to implement the West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health and the current provisions of H.R. 21 would help sustain that effort in partnership with the federal government. In addition, H.R. 21, as currently drafted, would help implement one of the key recommendations of the Coastal States Organization's *Ocean and Coastal Community Call for Action* by establishing a national ocean trust fund to support regional ocean governance. The OPC has formally supported the Call for Action and strongly supports the creation of a sufficiently funded national ocean trust fund.

Further, the OPC supports establishing a unified, national policy on ocean governance. Both the Pew Oceans Commission and the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy recommended establishing a national policy on ocean resources to coordinate and focus federal actions to protect and conserve ocean and coastal ecosystems. A national policy, stakeholder advisory group, and

Committee on Ocean Policy will provide a framework for the OPC to actively engage federal agencies to protect California's ocean resources.

We thank you for your commitment to protecting our nation's ocean and coastal ecosystems and look forward to your prompt action on this landmark legislation.

Sincerely,

Mike Chrisman
Chair, Ocean Protection Council

cc: Representative Sam Farr
House of Representatives Ocean Caucus