

April 5, 2006

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
United States Senate  
Washington D.C. 20510

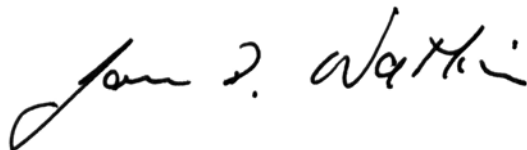
Dear Senator Cochran,

On behalf of the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative, we want to acknowledge receipt of your letter, dated March 16, 2006, in which you ask the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative to assist the Senate in setting priorities for legislation and funding related to oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our thoughts on how the Senate can help advance needed ocean and coastal policy and funding reforms consistent with the recommendations of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Oceans Commission. The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative has already begun the process of outlining specific and immediate actions that the Senate can take and it is our intent to provide you with our report at the end of May.

Thank you for your request. Our Joint Ocean Commission Initiative staff will keep your staff apprised periodically as our report develops. If you require any additional information regarding this effort, please contact Ms. Laura Cantral at 202-354-6444.

Sincerely,



James D. Watkins  
Admiral, U.S. Navy (Retired)  
Chairman, U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy



The Honorable Leon E. Panetta  
Chair, Pew Oceans Commission