

**The Joint Ocean
Commission Initiative
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The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
Hart Senate Office Building, SH-717
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

October 3, 2011

Dear Senator Whitehouse,

On behalf of the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative, we are writing to thank you for including the National Endowment for the Oceans, Coasts, and Great Lakes in the Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2011 (RESTORE Act). We applaud you and your colleagues on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee for moving this important legislation through the Committee. This is a tremendous step forward in establishing a much-needed stream of funding to protect the ocean and coastal ecosystems upon which so many people's health and livelihood depend.

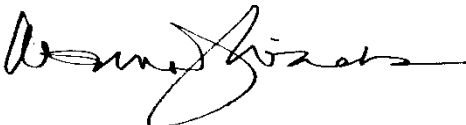
As you know, the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative has long called for a dedicated funding source to improve ocean and coastal science, management, and ecosystem restoration at the federal, state, and local levels. We commend your continued commitment to establish the National Endowment for the Oceans in order to provide the sustained funding needed to achieve healthy oceans and coasts and to help effectively implement the National Ocean Policy.

The RESTORE Act, and the National Endowment for the Oceans, stand at a critical juncture. The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative stands ready to help build support for this measure and help move this legislation toward enactment in this Congress.

Sincerely,



The Honorable William Ruckelshaus
Co-Chair, Joint Ocean Commission Initiative



The Honorable Norman Mineta
Co-Chair, Joint Ocean Commission Initiative

CC: The Honorable Barbara Boxer, Chairwoman, Environment and Public Works Committee