

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 16, 2018

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman, Subcommittee on Interior
Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Interior
Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum:

We are writing to thank you for your past support of the National Estuary Program (NEP), and ask you to continue to invest directly in the stewardship of our nation's coasts by maintaining historic levels of funding for the NEP, while ensuring that each of the 28 NEPs in the field receives funding of \$650,000 in FY 2019.

As you know important reforms were made to the National Estuary Program in the recent reauthorization (S.1523) that was signed into law in the last Congress. These reforms would create a competitive program to address urgent challenges and maximize funds received by our national estuaries, while streamlining the administrative costs of the program.

Of all federally funded coastal programs, only NEPs organize local stakeholders as partners in a unique decision-making framework to fund local priorities. NEPs provide technical, management, and communication assistance to develop priorities and implement comprehensive actions: storm water and infrastructure projects, seagrass and shellfish restoration which support fishing and tourist industries, science and monitoring to guide decision-making, and innovative education programs designed for the next generation of Americans.

NEPs engage industries, businesses, and other community members to develop solutions for tough problems. The NEP's public-private partnerships stretch federal dollars to provide successful on-the-ground results driven by diverse stakeholders. NEP partners include commercial agriculture and fisheries, energy and water utilities, local restaurants & tourist businesses, construction and landscaping professionals, engineering and mining companies, state and local governments, colleges and universities, and other community organizations.

The NEP consists of 28 unique, voluntary programs established by the Clean Water Act to protect and improve estuaries of national significance. Each NEP engages its local community in a non-regulatory, consensus-driven, and science-based process. For every dollar EPA provides, NEPs leverage \$19 in local funds to protect and improve coastal environments, communities and economies.

We would greatly appreciate the opportunity to work with you to ensure that as you undertake work on the FY 2019 appropriations measure, it reflects the recent reauthorization by allocating at least \$650,000 to each NEP, funds the newly authorized competitive program at approximately \$1.5 million, consistent with funding levels in the House approved appropriations bill for FY 2019, and consistent with the direction of Public Law 114-162.

Thank you for your strong support of this program over the years, and for considering our request.

Sincerely,



Frank A. LoBiondo
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Bill Posey
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Tom MacArthur
Member of Congress



Lee Zeldin
Member of Congress



Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



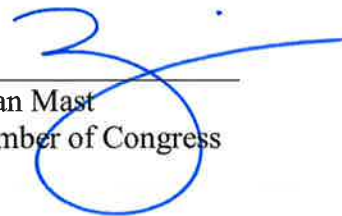
Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



Filemon Vela
Member of Congress



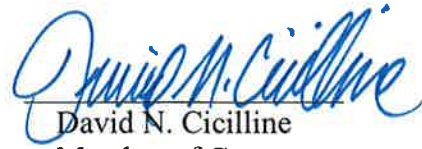
Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



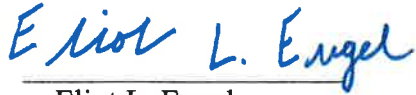
Brian Mast
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Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



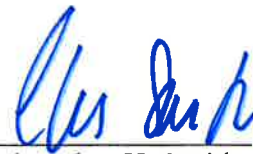
Eliot L. Engel
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Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress



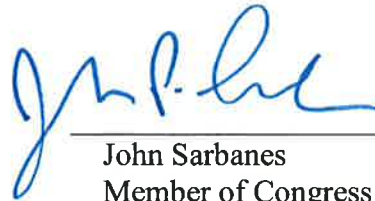
Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress



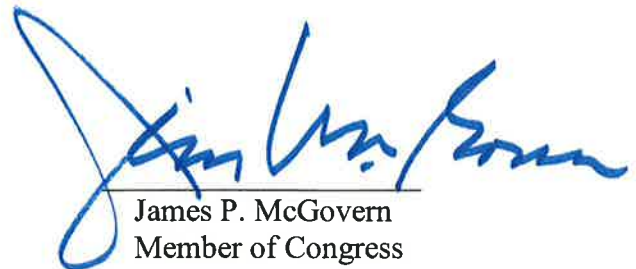
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Ted W. Lieu
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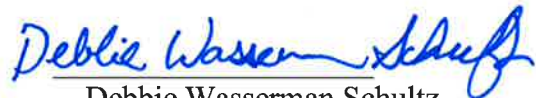
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Donald M. Payne, Jr.
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Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Thomas R. Suozzi
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Darren Soto
Member of Congress



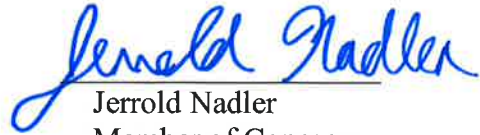
Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



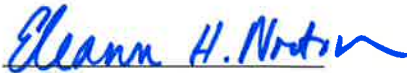
Shelia Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



Jackie Speier
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



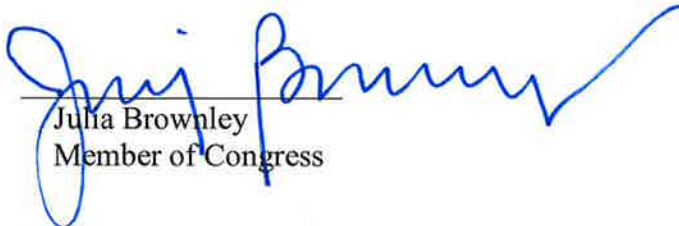
Ted Deutch
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A. Donald McEachin
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Vern Buchanan
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Tulsi Gabbard


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