



May 24, 2005

The Honorable Ted Stevens, Chair
Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science and Transportation
255 Senate Russell Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Daniel Inouye, Ranking
Member
Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science and Transportation
560 Senate Dirksen Office Building
-Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Olympia Snowe
Subcommittee on Fisheries and Coast Guard
Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science and Transportation
227 Senate Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Subcommittee on Fisheries and Coast Guard
Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science and Transportation
425 Senate Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators:

I am writing to express our support for S. 360, the Coastal Zone Enhancement Reauthorization Act of 2005. California, like many other states, faces significant challenges in encouraging economic development in its coastal communities while coping with the resultant growth. If enacted, the provisions of S. 360 would greatly increase the ability of California's three Coastal Zone Management agencies to tackle these challenges. The Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of 1972 provides grant funds to states that are matched, and used to leverage significant additional investment. These funds are critical to support community efforts to manage coastal resources and to abate nonpoint source pollution. The health and prosperity of our coastal communities depends on continued investment in our nation's coastal legacy for future generations.

Both the President's U.S. Ocean Action Plan and the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy's Final Report recommended the reauthorization of the CZMA and highlighted its importance in protecting and managing this nation's coastal and ocean resources. In his June 3, 2004 letter to the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and in his Ocean Action Plan, Governor Schwarzenegger supported the reauthorization of the CZMA to strengthen provisions for addressing non-point source pollution and to maintain the federal consistency provisions that allow California to address the adverse impacts of federally approved activities such as oil and gas development off our coast.

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The following two issues are of primary importance when considering reauthorization of the CZMA:

Maintain existing federal consistency provisions. The landmark federal CZMA is the only land and water use planning and management law at the national level. It represents a unique and carefully crafted partnership between coastal states and the federal government. Through this partnership, the CZMA has also, for the first time, given local coastal government a meaningful voice in federal actions and decisions that directly affect the environmental quality of their local communities. We oppose any change to the consistency rules that would weaken states' rights to have an equal voice in vital decision-making dealing with activities that can have significant adverse effects on local coastal communities and other coastal resources.

Provide Sufficient Funding for Coastal Non-Point Source Pollution Programs. The U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Ocean Commission reported polluted runoff as the top threat to our nation's coastal and ocean resources. In addition, the U.S. EPA has identified runoff from impervious surfaces as the number one threat to the nation's water quality. Congress should adequately fund nonpoint source pollution grants (CZMA Section 6217) to allow coastal states to address one of the most significant sources of pollution to the nation's coastal waters.

We would like to work with you in the coming months on any necessary changes to S. 360 and to ensure its passage during this 109th Congress. Thank you for taking up this important matter at this time.

Sincerely,



Mike Chrisman,
California Secretary for Resources

cc. Meg Caldwell, Chair
California Coastal Commission