Dear Chairman LoBiondo and Ranking Member Larsen:

On behalf of the Consortium for Ocean Leadership and our 99 member institutions, I would like to provide support for the Marine Debris Act Reauthorization Amendments of 2011. Ocean Leadership recognizes the significant threat ocean trash, or marine debris, poses to the health of our oceans, marine wildlife, and our economy. Therefore, we support research efforts to understand and mitigate the impacts of marine debris on the oceans, such as those outlined in H.R. 1171. It is for that reason that we are writing you today in support of this bill.

We believe in the need for sound research as the foundation for developing and implementing policies. Therefore, we especially support the efforts in this legislation to fund research, investigate sources, and understand impacts of marine debris on ecosystems and public health. We also endorse the provisions in this legislation that promote coordination and transparency of information to ensure the best possible implementation plans are being developed.

Since its initial passage, the Marine Debris Act has done great work through NOAA and the U.S. Coast Guard to assess and mitigate the amount and impacts of marine debris. This legislation works to continue those efforts by updating the original measure to meet current demands, and we support in particular those components that address the need for continued research. We would like to thank the Subcommittee for holding this hearing on this important legislation and for their thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert B. Gagosian
President and CEO
Consortium for Ocean Leadership