May 28, 2019

Senator Sheldon Whitehouse
530 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-3905

Senator Lisa Murkowski
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-0203

Dear Senators Whitehouse and Murkowski:

On behalf of the Consortium for Ocean Leadership (COL), which represents our nation’s leading ocean science, research, and technology organizations from academia, industry, and philanthropy (to include aquariums), I am writing to express support for the Bolstering Long-Term Understanding and Exploration of the Great Lakes, Oceans, Bays, and Estuaries (BLUE GLOBE) Act (S. 933). I regularly stress the importance of ocean science and technology in ensuring a healthy ocean, which is critical to safeguarding our national, homeland, energy, food, water, and economic securities, as well as our public health and safety. An enhanced “ocean security,” where these above-mentioned securities are upheld, guarantees the safety and survival of our nation and its people. The BLUE GLOBE Act would help the United States make great strides in advancing ocean science and technology to increase ocean understanding and strengthen this ocean security.

There is still much to learn about our ocean, coasts, estuaries, bays, and Great Lakes, and the bill’s purposes, to promote and support “monitoring, understanding, and exploration” as well as “collection, analysis, synthesis, and sharing of data” will help us do just that. Increasing data collection and monitoring opportunities, be it through creating an Ocean Innovation Prize; advancing emerging technologies (including e-DNA); or engaging indigenous, subsistence, and fishing communities, will provide us with the data necessary to understand our ocean and make effective management decisions to ensure its health and productivity while supporting the Blue Economy.

I’d like to thank the senators for recognizing the National Oceanographic Partnership Program (NOPP) as a “meaningful venue for collaboration and coordination among Federal agencies, scientists, and ocean users.” NOPP was established to promote national goals related to ocean knowledge (e.g., economic prosperity, quality of life, and national security) by facilitating partnerships among federal agencies, academia, industry, and other members of the oceanographic scientific community. Rather than working as individual entities, we can work together and combine resources for an even greater impact than would be had alone. I offer my sincere thanks to you, Senators Whitehouse and Murkowski, for your bipartisan efforts to help us better understand our ocean through the BLUE GLOBE Act.

Respectfully,

Jonathan W. White, RADM (Ret.), USN
President and CEO
Consortium for Ocean Leadership