

HOW TO VOICE YOUR CONCERN FOR THE NATIONAL SEA GRANT PROGRAM AND THE NEW JERSEY SEA GRANT CONSORTIUM

(To follow is a sample letter that may help you prepare your own message to our Senators and Representatives. Thank you for your support!)

To the Honorable (insert your Senators or Representatives last name here):

I have recently learned that the President's proposed budget for **FY 2018 would** terminate the **National Sea Grant College Program (Sea Grant)**. As one of your constituents, and as a beneficiary of the New Jersey Sea Grant Program, I respectfully urge you to reject this proposed budget and support the continuation of the Sea Grant Program.

Sea Grant program is a joint federal-state investment that supports the health and resilience of the Nation's coastal communities. The program yields quantifiable economic, social, and environmental benefits at the national, regional, state, and local level. Sea Grant is unique within NOAA in that it sends 95% of its appropriated funds to states including New Jersey where it is used to solve problems identified as locally critical by public and private stakeholders and coastal communities.

In 2016 Sea Grant helped generate an estimated \$575 million in economic impacts; created or sustained nearly 21,000 jobs; provided 33 state-level programs and 534 communities with technical assistance on sustainable development practices; worked with about 1300 industry, local, state and regional partners; and supported the education and training of almost 2000 undergraduate and graduate students. The Sea Grant program achieved this with a Congressional appropriation in FY 2016 of \$73 million, which is leveraged with matching funds provided by states, universities, and other sources.

(At this point, please consider writing about the program from your own personal standpoint, or delete this section before sending your message. You may want to talk about your experience with New Jersey Sea Grant, how you have benefitted from the program, how the state benefits from the program, how your institution, community, or students have benefitted, etc. You may also use, delete, or modify the text to follow as you see fit.)

What would the end of Sea Grant mean for New Jersey? Here are just a few consequences:

- Nearly 25,000 New Jersey schoolchildren and thousands of teachers and youth leaders who depend on New Jersey Sea Grant Consortium for marine and environmental science education would lose the resource;
- Research projects at New Jersey's colleges and universities that respond to the needs of New Jersey's coast and coastal economy would not occur. Currently NJSGC-funded research supports 42 scientists and 73 students at 8 different New Jersey facilities;
- Dozens of community-based projects would end. These include beach and dune projects, flood prevention and living shorelines initiatives, rain gardens and other green infrastructure projects that improve water quality and quantity, repair of pump-out facilities

at marinas statewide, and assistance to New Jersey's growing shellfish aquaculture industry;

- Another Fort Hancock historic structure, currently maintained and used by New Jersey Sea Grant as its headquarters, would be abandoned.

Please do not allow this important, highly effective program to be terminated.

I am grateful for your support of the Sea Grant Program including New Jersey Sea Grant thus far, and I thank you in advance for your continuing attention and support.

Sincerely,

(Be sure to include your home address along with your signature)