

May 6, 2025

The Honorable Bruce Westerman
Chairman
House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515

The Honorable Jared Huffman
Ranking Member
House Committee on Natural Resources
1332 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515

Dear Chair Westerman and Ranking Member Huffman:

We are writing to express our strong opposition to provisions in the House Committee on Natural Resources' budget reconciliation recommendations that would rescind critically needed funds for coastal resilience at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Specifically, these provisions would repeal all unobligated funding allocated to NOAA under Section 40001 of the Inflation Reduction Act (Public Law 117-169) (IRA). The IRA was the most significant investment in climate and clean energy in our nation's history. The funding to NOAA was essential to combating the climate crisis and readying our nation to be resilient against increasing climate impacts.

We applauded the Inflation Reduction Act's historic investment of \$2.6 billion for NOAA to invest in coastal communities and climate resilience. This funding is critically needed for conservation, restoration, and protection of coastal and marine habitats and resources, including fisheries. Projects supported by these funds enable coastal communities to prepare for extreme storms and other changing climate conditions, and support natural resources that sustain coastal and marine resource dependent communities.¹

Climate change is already negatively impacting communities across the US. Adapting to warming oceans, rising sea levels, shifting fish stocks, melting sea ice, ocean acidification, and more frequent and intense extreme weather events including floods, severe storms, and droughts, requires investments in climate resilience. Sea levels are expected to rise up to a foot along the US coastlines in the next 30 years, with damaging flooding expected to occur more than 10 times as often as it does today. This will create a profound shift in coastal flooding, causing tide and storm surge heights to increase and reach further inland. Failing to curb future emissions could cause an additional 1.5 - 5 feet of rise. Flooding already exacerbates racial and social inequality,

¹ CleanEnergy.gov. Building a Clean Energy Economy: A Guidebook to the Inflation Reduction Act's Investments in Clean Energy and Climate Action
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Inflation-Reduction-Act-Guidebook.pdf>

with a history of disproportionate harms for communities of color. Coastal flooding will exacerbate these harms as sea levels rise.

Clawing back IRA funds designated for coastal resilience funding at NOAA would move us in the wrong direction toward preparing our coastal communities for climate impacts and advancing environmental justice. In fact, grant applications for NOAA show that this program is dramatically underfunded, with a recent request for proposals generating 869 eligible letters of intent requesting approximately \$16 billion in funding. It is clear that ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes communities across the nation urgently need this funding and they are ready to implement it now.

Investing in coastal and climate resilience will help reduce future harm to coastal communities and create a multitude of co-benefits by creating jobs, avoiding disaster losses, protecting critical habitat, and supporting US innovation. Investments in coastal resilience are investments in America's future.

We urge you to oppose these provisions in the House Natural Resources Committee markup for the sake of our oceans and communities.

Sincerely,

American Bird Conservancy

Azul

California Trout

Carbon180

Carolina Ocean Alliance

Center for Biological Diversity

Climate Action Campaign

Climate Hawks Vote

Climate Justice Alliance

Conservation Law Foundation

EarthEcho International

Earthjustice Action

Environmental Defense Fund

Environmental Investigation Agency

Environmental Law & Policy Center

Fish On

Food & Water Watch

Friends of the Earth

Greenpeace USA

International Marine Mammal Project of Earth Island Institute
López-Wagner Strategies
Marine Conservation Institute
Micah Six Eight Mission
National Aquarium
National Ocean Protection Coalition
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
New England Aquarium
Next 100 Coalition
Ocean Conservancy
Ocean Defense Initiative
Save Our Wild Salmon Coalition
Seattle Aquarium
Surfrider Foundation
The Ocean Project
Turtle Island Restoration Network
Western Watersheds Project