



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Ocean Policy Advisory Council

635 Capitol Street NE, Suite 150

Salem, Oregon 97301-2540

Phone: 503-373-0050

Fax: 503-378-5518

www.oregon.gov/LCD

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(Coastal Conservation Organization)

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(Ports, Marine Transportation or
Navigation)

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Federal Agency Liaison, NOAA OCM

March 15, 2024

Governor Tina Kotek
160 State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Proposed Fiscal Year 2025 President's Budget

Dear Governor Kotek,

The Oregon Ocean Policy Advisory Council (OPAC) Executive Committee received a brief update on President Biden's proposed budget cuts for Sea Grant in Fiscal Year 2025 and the importance of local support for the Oregon Sea Grant Program in the federal appropriations process. OPAC strongly supports the Sea Grant Program due to its many contributions to our coastal communities and encourages you to seek continued, robust funding for the Sea Grant program in the federal budget for Fiscal Year 2025.

Oregon Sea Grant is part of a national network of programs and serves as a catalyst to promote discovery, understanding, and resilience for Oregon coastal communities and ecosystems. Oregon Sea Grant has been at the forefront of issues of critical interest to coastal communities, including: preparing coastal communities and local educators for the anticipated Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and tsunami; supporting research into ocean acidification impacts on oysters and other shellfish, and developing mitigation strategies; working closely with the fishing community to improve their access to and use of ocean condition forecasts; and collaborating with local community partners to support responsible coastal tourism.

The Oregon Sea Grant Director is an ex-officio member of OPAC and chairs our Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC). This support is vital to OPAC's work, ensuring our recommendations are scientifically informed and technically accurate. In 2022, STAC reviewed the 10-year assessment report on our state's marine reserve program resulting in a clear and comprehensive, evidence-based report that ultimately formed the basis of OPAC's recommendations on the future of the marine reserve program. Last year, Oregon Sea Grant contributed almost 7,000 hours of service and engaged over 91,000 people including 32,000 students and 293 educators. This outreach is critical to the public's understanding of Oregon's ocean and coastal ecosystem and continued engagement in our coastal communities.

Using a non-regulatory approach based on competitive, peer-reviewed, sound science and technology, the Sea Grant College Program supports state and local decision makers as they address challenges facing coastal communities. Nationally, Sea Grant Programs are dedicated to supporting coastal communities and promoting responsible use of the nation's ocean, coastal and Great Lakes resources through informed personal, policy and management decisions.

Approximately 95 percent of Sea Grant's federal funding goes to the state programs where it is used to conduct research, carry out extension and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education activities, and deliver valuable coastal



resiliency services. Moreover, federal funding through the Sea Grant program has a significant impact with nearly three dollars leveraged for every dollar of federal funding provided. Sea Grant enables coastal economic interests to develop and thrive, which supports the growth and development of our coastal economy. Federal funding should prioritize programs that deliver economic, environmental, and education benefits to our state and local decision makers. The Sea Grant program achieves this while also increasing our coastal communities' resiliency in a cost-effective manner.



Chair Susan Chambers

The Ocean Policy Advisory Council



Vice-Chair Tara Brock