



Chairwoman Madeleine Bordallo  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Natural Resources  
Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, and Oceans  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20015

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Dear Chairwoman Bordallo:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, I would like to first applaud you again for your continued leadership in ensuring that ocean issues remain a priority for Congress. You are doing an outstanding job in considering a breadth of policies and doing so in a bipartisan manner. I would also like to thank you for continuing to keep us engaged in your work to reauthorize and amend the National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA). Your recently introduced bill, H.R. 6537-The Sanctuary Enhancement Act (SEA) of 2008, is overall a strong and well-crafted piece of legislation.

The SEA bill makes certain amendments to the existing law that address many of the issues that are priorities for us, some of which members of our Board have testified to in past hearings held by your subcommittee. In many ways, the bill would improve NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries' ability to protect resources and fulfill its mandates. In addition, it would officially expand the scope of the NMS System and lay the groundwork for the consideration of future sites to be added to the System. To further support the enhancements in the bill, it authorizes increased appropriation levels that much more adequately fund the needs of the System. All combined, the current draft of the SEA bill goes a long way towards greatly improving NMSA, and provides a great platform for introduction of a reauthorization bill in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress.

As a detailed supplement to this letter, my staff has already provided your committee staff with some technical drafting suggestions and other feedback that might be helpful in preparing the next version of the bill. Thank you for considering our comments and please do not hesitate to contact any member of the Board of Trustees or any NMSF staff so that we can better assist you in successfully reauthorizing a strong and effective National Marine Sanctuaries Act.

Sincerely,

Lori Arguelles  
President & CEO