

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 2, 2014

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment &
Related Agencies
B-308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable James Moran
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment &
Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Simpson and Ranking Member Moran:

As you consider the wide range of requests related to protecting America's natural resources, we respectfully urge your continued support for restoration of Long Island Sound. We appreciate your commitment to safeguarding and restoring the water quality and diverse habitats of the Sound in previous fiscal years, and look forward to your continued attention to the great needs facing this Nationally Significant Estuary. For FY 2015, we respectfully request that the Long Island Sound be funded at a level of \$10 million, which is critical to protecting and restoring this national treasure, and keeps pace with the growing demand for this important funding.

The Sound is a national treasure whose watershed covers all or part of six states. Because of its significant and unique ecological and economic value, Long Island Sound was one of the first three estuaries recognized in 1985 under the National Estuary Program. More than ten percent of our nation's population lives in the Long Island Sound watershed, and the resulting development has led to increasingly poor ecosystem health. Despite these challenges, the Sound contributes an estimated \$9.68 billion per year to the regional economy from commercial and recreational fishing, ecotourism and other water dependent businesses.

With federal leadership and investment, a strong partnership has been forged among federal, state, and local agencies as well as regional and local stakeholders to coordinate the natural resource and watershed management activities around Long Island Sound. As part of this effort, the States, Counties and municipalities of Connecticut and New York have invested hundreds of millions of their taxpayer dollars to restore the Sound's water quality and protect its coastal resources. The federal government must continue to play a lead role in this effort. Sustained federal support for the Sound is important to ensure that this partnership continues its successful efforts to improve the health of the estuary and sustain the economy and jobs that depends upon it.

Congress has also recognized the importance of the Sound with two important Authorizations. The Long Island Sound Restoration Act, created as part of the Estuaries and Clean Waters Act of 2000 and reauthorized in 2005, authorizes up to \$40 million to help protect and restore the environmentally and economically vital resources of the Sound. Congress reiterated its recognition of the Sound's importance in 2006 with the enactment of the Long Island Sound Stewardship Act, which authorizes up to \$25 million per year to establish a public/private effort to identify, protect, and enhance the habitats throughout the Sound with significant biological, scientific, or recreational value. Investments in implementing the Long Island Sound Stewardship Act present an important opportunity for the Environmental Protection Agency to further its work along the Sound in a collaborative, non-regulatory manner with state and local conservation programs. The resulting framework for land protection activities benefits Long Island Sound, but also can serve as a national model for such partnerships.

To ensure the mission of the Long Island Sound Restoration and Stewardship Acts are not threatened by mounting environmental pressures, we believe it very important to support the Sound at a robust level in FY 2015. Therefore, we are requesting your support for \$10 million in funding for the Long Island Sound. We recognize the difficult budgetary constraints facing the Committee at this time and appreciate your efforts towards protecting the Long Island Sound for current and future generations.

We look forward to working with you both towards the successful restoration of Long Island Sound.

Sincerely,



ROSAL. DeLAURO
Member of Congress
Co-Chair, Long Island Sound Caucus



STEVE ISRAEL
Member of Congress
Co-Chair, Long Island Sound Caucus



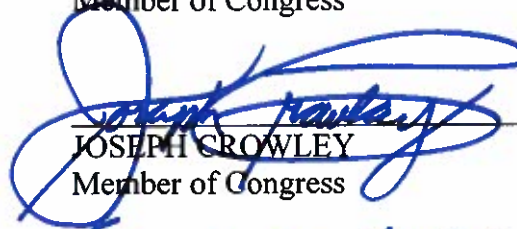
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JOSEPH CROWLEY
Member of Congress



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Member of Congress



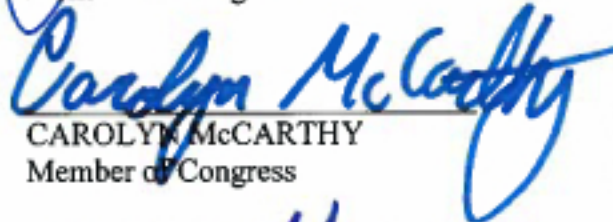
ELIZABETH ESTY
Member of Congress

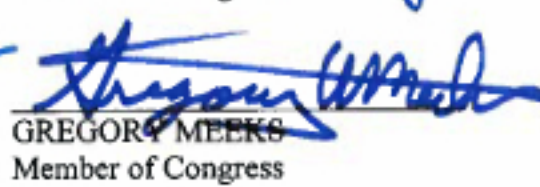

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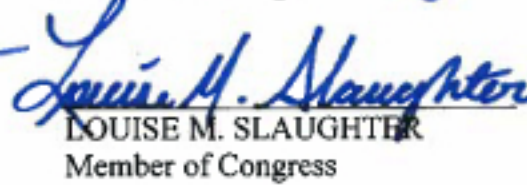

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