

Dear _____,

I am writing on behalf of the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee) to urge strong Administration support for prompt Congressional action to reauthorize the Integrated Coastal Ocean Observation System Act of 2009. (ICOOS Act). The Advisory Committee is charged under Sections 12302 and 12304 of the ICOOS Act to provide advice to the NOAA Administrator and the other federal agencies that comprise the Integrated Ocean Observation Committee (IOOC) regarding the purpose and responsibilities of the national IOOS.

A primary purpose of the ICOOS Act is to provide data to *“support national defense, marine commerce, navigation safety, weather, climate, and marine forecasting, energy siting and production, economic development, ecosystem-based marine, coastal, and Great Lakes resource management, public safety, and public outreach training and education.”* The demand is increasing for ocean use; IOOS informs solutions to our ocean challenges, and supports resilience in the face of a dynamic and changing environment. Given this, a commitment to IOOS and the timely and sustained dissemination of accurate data and information about our oceans, coasts and Great Lakes has never been more important.

IOOS is **issue user**-driven, science-based and policy neutral. The ICOOS Act provides the mechanisms and foundation necessary for encouraging innovative partnerships among seventeen federal agencies, eleven regional coastal observing systems, and the private sector. IOOS equips the nation to improve understanding of complex ocean and atmospheric systems, to predict and respond to natural and manmade risks, and to enhance sustainable economic growth and security. The ICOOS Act makes clear that IOOC agencies and non-federal entities must participate cooperatively in building IOOS, and recognizes the national network of Regional IOOS Associations, which is vital for leveraging federal investments and engaging users at the state and regional level.

The ICOOS Act also includes important provisions that would assure continued development and maintenance of the standards and protocols for the seamless integration **and sharing** of coastal data, and provides for certification standards to ensure regional systems' data quality, operational compliance and outreach to regional stakeholders and users.

The Advisory Committee thanks you for your consideration and looks forward to action on reauthorization and continuing our work to strengthen IOOS. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact _____, at _____.

Sincerely,

DRAFT