

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 21, 2021

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Chair
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy and Chair Shaheen and Vice Chairman Shelby and Ranking Member Moran:

We are writing to express our request to fully fund the Digital Coast Program established by P.L. 116-223, administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Department of the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

The Digital Coast Act, bipartisan legislation which provides data, tools, and training for coastal communities to better plan for resilience and protect communities and natural resources from damaging natural disasters passed the House and Senate in 2020, authorized the program at \$4 million annually.

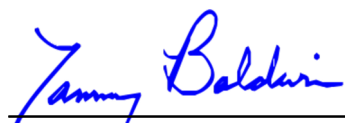
The strong bipartisan support for this surveying, mapping, GIS, and geospatial data program is a demonstration of its broad appeal and value to the nation's coastal communities. By consolidating coastal data from a variety of sources in one place and making it publicly accessible, NOAA's Digital Coast program is helping the coastal management community better plan for resilience and prepare for storms, flooding, natural disasters, and other challenges that impact vulnerable coastal and Great Lakes communities.

Data included in the Digital Coast ranges from surveying, mapping, geospatial, economic, demographic and ecosystem data to satellite imagery. In addition to making this data publicly available online, the Digital Coast provides a wide array of visualization and prediction tools. These tools deliver local leaders essential information for responding to changing environmental conditions, and dramatically improve the effectiveness and efficiency of coastal management projects around the country. Over the next 15 years, NOAA predicts a 411 percent return on investment from the Digital Coast program. In addition to the return on investment, the Digital Coast has played a significant role in protecting communities and natural resources from damaging natural disasters. The Digital Coast approach has a strong record of success, and has become an essential tool that coastal managers across the country rely on. In a survey NOAA

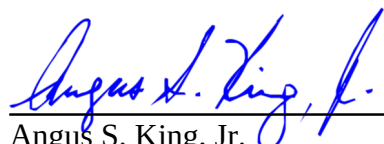
conducted, it found that 75 percent of Digital Coast users indicated that their projects would not have been possible without the Digital Coast.

We are committed to working with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do everything we can to maximize the benefits for our constituents and for citizens across the country from the public applications and business uses of coastal surveying, mapping, GIS, and geospatial data. Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator