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The Honorable  
Norman Mineta  
The Honorable  
Christine Todd  
Whitman

The Honorable Charles Schumer, Majority Leader, U.S. Senate  
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader, U.S. Senate  
United States Senate  
Washington DC 20510

*Members*

Maite Arce  
Frances Beinecke  
Donald Boesch, Ph.D.

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable  
Norman Dicks  
Quenton Dokken,  
Ph.D.  
Robert Gagosian,  
Ph.D.  
Sherri Goodman  
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Ph.D. U.S. Navy  
(Retired)  
Margaret Leinen,  
Ph.D.  
Julie Packard

October 28, 2021

Dear Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

Our nation has a rare opportunity to secure the future of America's oceans and protect the country from some of the worst ravages of sea level rise, coastal flooding and a changing climate.

The Joint Ocean Commission [Initiative](#) (JOCI) stands ready to assist Congress and the Administration as you move toward swift implementation of broadly supported ocean provisions in the bipartisan infrastructure bill, as well as fulfilling commitments to the U.S. Nationally Determined Contributions to the Paris Accord. JOCI is composed of bipartisan ocean leaders, including members of the Pew Oceans Commission and the US Commission on Ocean Policy. Both commissions spent three years initiating a national dialogue about ocean policy, and recommendations were submitted to Congress as a blueprint for a national ocean policy.

The Honorable  
Leon Panetta  
John Pappalardo  
The Honorable  
Pietro Parravano  
Andrew Rosenberg,  
Ph.D.  
Paul Sandifer, Ph.D.  
Queen Quet

Rarely have we seen a convergence of resources and leadership that can empower the country to equitably confront the existential challenge of climate change, including its dramatic impact on our oceans. Last year Congress provided a powerful tool to address climate impacts in the newly codified Ocean Policy Committee. When combined with the significant resources included in the Senate-approved Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, we can take vital steps to protect coastal communities and our national economy. These resources include nearly a half billion dollars for the National Ocean and Coastal Security Fund, \$491 million for NOAA's Community-based Restoration Program, as well as funding for port infrastructure and electrification, mapping, coastal flood control, protecting vulnerable communities, etc.

We encourage Congress to work in tandem with the Administration to develop a U.S. ocean-climate action plan as a key component of US leadership to reduce GHG emissions by 50-52 percent by 2030.

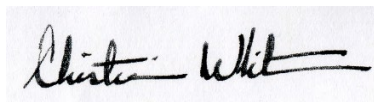
Our oceans and coasts are vital to our nation's economy and security. Oceans are the engines of our planet's weather and climate systems. It is hard to imagine a better return on investment than securing the health and future of our oceans in a just and equitable manner.

The global climate crisis presents enormous opportunities for US leadership and job creation that can result in economic growth and a safer, more sustainable planet. Oceans can play a central and powerful role in forging a new pathway to a low-carbon, climate resilient future. They are also the foundation for growing the blue economy, which is expected to grow at twice the rate of the overall economy.

We urge you to provide the resources and support for an actionable, enforceable, equitable and all-of-government ocean action agenda that harnesses the ability of the ocean to reduce emissions, address poverty and inequity, and promote coastal resilience, peace and security.

We greatly look forward to working with the Congressional Leadership to achieve these ends.

Sincerely,



Christine Todd Whitman  
Co-Chair, Joint Ocean Commission Initiative



Norman Y. Mineta  
Co-Chair, Joint Ocean Commission Initiative



Leon Panetta, Joint Ocean Commission Initiative

Cc:

Chair, Raul Grijalva, House Committee on Natural Resources  
Ranking Member, Bruce Westerman, House Committee on Natural Resources  
Chair, Eddie Johnson, House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology  
Ranking Member, Frank Lucas, House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology  
Chair, Frank Pallone, House Committee on Energy and Commerce  
Ranking Member, Cathy Rodgers, House Committee on Energy and Commerce  
Chair, Peter DeFazio, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
Ranking Member, Sam Graves, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
Chair, Maria Cantwell, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
Ranking Member, Roger Wicker, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
Chair, Tom Carper, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works  
Ranking Member, Shelley Moore Capito, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works  
Chair, Joe Manchin III, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
Ranking Member, John Barrasso, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources