CAMPAIGN FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY

September 11, 2007

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
The Capitol S-146A
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard C. Shelby
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Hart Senate Office Building 123
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Mikulski and Senator Shelby;

On behalf of environmental education organizations, educators, students, and industry partners throughout the nation, we write to you today to thank you heartily for restoring and providing a big boost to Fiscal Year 2008 funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of Education, especially the increases in funding to $12 million for each of NOAA's Environmental Literacy Grants and BWET Regional programs. We have requested that the House recede to the Senate on these line items in the final appropriations bill.

As you prepare for conference with the House on the FY08 Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations bill, we are also writing to respectfully request that you recede to the House allocations for climate change education in the CJS appropriation of $10 million for NASA, $10 million for NSF, and $7 million for NOAA (without taking the NOAA funds from the current appropriation). This funding demonstrates great foresight and has been well received by the environmental education community. We believe that, regardless of one's position about the best solutions to climate change, it is imperative that the public in general and our nation's young people in particular understand the key scientific principles involved in climate change and how to best adapt to the coming changes. We trust that a fully informed and engaged public will make the right choices about the best solutions. We look forward to possibility of working with these agencies to help develop a thoughtful and strategic approach to the use of these funds that will make a significant difference in the nation's understanding of climate change.

Your Subcommittee has been a terrific champion of NOAA environmental education in the past, restoring this funding each year for the past three years. This support has been greatly appreciated by all of us and our nearly ten million constituents around the country.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact James L. Elder, at elder@FundEE.org or 978-526-7768.

Co-Signatories:

Aquarium of the Pacific (Jerry R. Schubel, President and CEO)

American Meteorological Society (Keith Seitter, Executive Director)

Association of Nature Center Administrators (Jen Levy, Eecutive Director)

Association of Zoos and Aquariums (Steve Olson, Director of Government Affairs)

Campaign for Environmental Literacy (James L. Elder, Director)

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (Don Baugh, Vice President for Education)

Coalition for Community Schools (Martin J. Blank, Staff Director)

Council of Environmental Deans and Directors (Bruce Coull, President)

Council on Environmental Education (Josetta Hawthorne, Executive Director)

Council on Oceanographic Research and Education (RADM Richard West, President & CEO)

Earth Day Network (Kathleen Rogers, President)

Earth Force (Vince Meldrum, President)

Ecological Society of America (Teresa Mourad, Director of Education)

National Association for Interpretation (Tim Merriman, Executive Director)

National Association of Biology Teachers (Pat Waller, President)

National Association of Marine Laboratories (Tony Michaels, President)

National Audubon Society (Judy Braus, Vice President for Education)

National Council for Science and the Environment (Peter Saundry, Executive Director)

National Marine Sanctuary Foundation (Lori Arguelles, President and CEO)

National Science Teachers Association (Jodi Peterson, Director of Legislative Affairs)

National Wildlife Federation (Kevin Coyle, Vice President for Education)

North American Association for Environmental Education (Brian Day, Executive Director)

Ocean Alliance (Jeffrey Kunz, Chairman)

Orion Society (H. Emerson Blake, Executive Director)

Rural School and Community Trust (Rachel B. Tompkins, President)

Second Nature (Anthony Cortese, President)

Society for Conservation Biology (John Fitzgerald, Policy Director)

The Ocean Project (Bill Mott, Director)

University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (Rick Anthes, President)