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Joint Initiative Expresses Support for the National Oceans and Coastal Security Act

September 14, 2015 (Washington, D.C.) — The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative applauds the National Oceans and Coastal Security Act, a key bill recently introduced by Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, that aims to establish a dedicated fund for protecting our oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes. This forward looking legislation seeks to provide a long-term source of funding to address critical oceans issues such as sea level rise, ocean acidification, and coastal resilience and adaptation. The Joint Initiative has a long history of leadership in the call for a dedicated oceans fund since the concept was initially proposed by both the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Oceans Commission more than a decade ago.

Our oceans and coasts are vital to our nation's economy and security as well as the health and quality of the life of its citizens. Yet our oceans, their resources, and the communities that depend on them are threatened by warming temperatures, rising seas, and more intense and frequent extreme weather events. The Joint Initiative has continuously urged our nation's leaders to create a dedicated oceans fund to sustainably finance science, research, and infrastructure needs that ensure the health and productivity of our oceans and coasts well into the future.

The National Oceans and Coastal Security Act would provide grants to strengthen infrastructure in coastal communities and would support work by state and local governments, universities, non-profit organizations, and other oceans and coastal stakeholders to restore habitats, manage fisheries, plan for sustainable coastal development, enhance oceans monitoring and research, and acquire coastal properties for preservation. Allocating adequate and sustained funding has been a missing but essential link to any policy to achieve healthy oceans and coasts. This important piece of legislation provides an opportunity for our nation to establish a much-needed source of funding to better support oceans and coastal science, management, and restoration.

The National Oceans and Coastal Security Act represents a commitment to better managing and protecting our nation's valuable oceans resources. As a long-time and principal supporter of this concept, the Joint Initiative stands ready to support our leaders in acting on this critical issue. For more information on the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative and our work, please visit www.jointoceancommission.org or call Laura Cantral at 202-354-6444.

The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and Pew Oceans Commission. The primary goal of the Joint Initiative is to accelerate the pace of change that results in meaningful ocean policy reform.