



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**The Assistant Secretary for Legislative**  
**and Intergovernmental Affairs**  
Washington, D.C. 20230

August 31, 2000

The Honorable Trent Lott  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Leader:

This letter provides you with the Department of Commerce's views on the Committee Amendment to S. 1534, entitled the *Coastal Zone Management Act of 2000*, as passed unanimously by the Senate Commerce Committee on June 15, 2000. The reauthorization of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) is of great importance to the Department and provides a unique opportunity to guide coastal and ocean resources management into the next century.

The Department strongly supports S. 1534 as amended, and we are pleased to see that many provisions in the new legislation mirror those included in the Administration's proposal submitted to the Congress last year. We are very appreciative of the support provided by Senator Olympia Snowe and Senator John Kerry of the Ocean and Fisheries Subcommittee and their efforts to move S. 1534 forward.

The new funds provided to States and coastal communities will allow these communities to provide for enormous growth by revitalizing waterfronts, improving public access to the coast and developing other innovative plans and projects. In addition, we are particularly pleased to see dedicated funding for states to implement their Coastal Nonpoint Programs and increased flexibility and resources for the National Estuarine Research Reserves to improve the understanding, stewardship and management of estuarine and coastal areas.

While we support the Committee's efforts to increase funding levels for the CZMA, the Department also notes that the total authorizations levels in S. 1534 are below the President's fiscal year 2001 budget request and recommend that the authorization levels be adjusted accordingly. In particular, aggregate funding proposed in the President's budget for CZMA programs is \$170.5 million, including \$6.6 million for program administration.

In addition, the Department requests that the Senate add federally recognized American Indian Tribes as a "qualified local entity" in the proposed CZMA section 304(20). This provision will help Tribes and the national CZMA program address coastal management issues that are of concern to Federal, State, Local, and Tribal Governments.

The Department has been advised by the Office of Management and Budget that there is no objection to the submission of this letter to the Congress from the standpoint of the Administration's program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Deborah Kilmer".

Deborah Kilmer