June 22, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, United States Capitol
Washington DC, 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy,

Our ocean is a source of solutions and hope when it comes to addressing climate change. The undersigned businesses and organizations are writing to express our strong support for ocean climate action and the inclusion of ocean-based solutions in any larger climate legislation.

Major scientific reports such as the Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere and the High Level Panel Report on a Sustainable Ocean Economy have shown us not just the devastating toll climate change has had on the ocean, but also the incredible role it has to play as a source of climate solutions with the potential to provide a fifth of the greenhouse gas emission reductions needed globally to limit temperature rise to 1.5°C.

Support for ocean climate action is at an all time high. Since January, the Biden Administration has made impressive progress on ocean climate action, through promoting ocean-based renewable energy; pausing offshore oil and gas leasing for a rigorous review; prioritizing environmental justice in ocean and climate decision making; advocating for investments in coastal restoration and resilience; and supporting ocean sanctuaries for fish and wildlife to thrive in a changing climate.

Now, Congress has the opportunity to act and turn the vision for ocean climate action into durable solutions. The Ocean-Based Climate Solutions Act of 2021 (H.R. 3764), led by House Natural Resources Committee Chair Raúl Grijalva, will codify many of the proposals made by the Biden Administration, and includes many other innovative provisions to leverage the power of the ocean to address climate change. By implementing a full suite of ocean-based climate solutions, the legislation would bolster frontline communities, increase the resilience of ocean
ecosystems, and demonstrate much-needed leadership in the global effort to address the climate crisis.

Specifically, the Ocean-Based Climate Solutions Act of 2021 will:

**Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions** by supporting the transition to a clean energy economy through promoting ocean-based renewable energy. The bill also prohibits oil and gas development activities in most areas of the Outer Continental Shelf.

**Increase Carbon Storage in Blue Carbon Ecosystems** by capitalizing on the carbon storage potential and other co-benefits provided by “blue carbon” ecosystems like salt marshes, seagrasses, and mangroves. These ecosystems absorb carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere and safely store it at a rate of up to four times that of forests on land. They also protect coastal communities by limiting the impacts of coastal erosion, flooding, and storms—all while providing habitat for marine wildlife and fisheries.

**Promote Coastal Resiliency** to protect our coasts and communities from the climate impacts we can’t avoid; mandate the establishment of a strategic task force to coordinate federal efforts around voluntary relocation; and recognize and support tribal and Indigenous knowledge and expertise. It also authorizes a $10 billion investment in coastal restoration and resilience that is a win-win-win for our economy, our frontline communities, and our environment.

**Improve Ocean Protection** by supporting the Biden Administration’s goal to protect at least 30% of our ocean by 2030. Marine protected areas, like our protected areas on land, are a key tool for protecting biodiversity, which is more critical than ever in the face of the nature and climate crises.

**Support Climate-Ready Fisheries** by encouraging the development and implementation of strategies to improve the management of fisheries in a changing climate. The bill will help to promote U.S. seafood sourced from environmentally and climate-friendly fisheries and eliminate fishing subsidies in trade agreements for countries that contribute to overfishing or illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing.

**Tackle the Ocean and Human Health Challenges** of ocean acidification and harmful algal blooms and the impacts of plastic pollution by establishing a manufacturers fee on virgin single-use plastic production.
The Ocean-Based Climate Solutions Act of 2021 would bolster frontline communities most at risk from climate change; increase the resilience of ocean ecosystems; and help demonstrate much-needed leadership in the global effort to address the climate crisis. We urge you to act quickly to implement the measures detailed in this legislation—before it’s too late.

Signed,

350 Maine
Acadia Center
AFGE Local 704
Alaska Wilderness League
ALRAS Digital
American Littoral Society
Audubon Delta
Audubon Florida
Audubon Great Lakes
Audubon New York
Audubon Society of Lincoln City
Audubon South Carolina
Audubon Washington
Azul
Bay Area Youth Climate Summit
Benitez Strategies
Blue Frontier
California League of Conservation Voters
Californians for Western Wilderness
Center for American Progress
Center for the Blue Economy
Cetacean Society International
Clean Water Action
Climate Law & Policy Project
Climate Strong Islands Network
Coastal Conservation League
Colorado Ocean Coalition
Conservation Law Foundation
Conservation Voters of PA
Conservation Voters of South Carolina
Corazon Latino
CT League of Conservation Voters
Defenders of Wildlife
EarthEcho International
Endangered Species Coalition
Environment America
Environmental Action Committee of West Marin
Environment California
Environment Connecticut
Environment Florida
Environment Georgia
Environment Maine
Environment Massachusetts
Environment New Jersey
Environment North Carolina
Environment Oregon
Environment Texas
Environment Virginia
Environment Washington
Environmental Defense Center
Environmental Law & Policy Center
Environmental League of MA
Florida Bay Forever
Friends of Casco Bay
Gotham Whale
Great Old Broads for Wilderness
GreenLatinos
Greenpeace USA
Hannah4Change
Healthy Ocean Coalition
Hispanic Access Foundation
Tropical Audubon Society
Urban Ocean Lab
Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center
Waterkeeper Alliance
Wildlife Conservation Society
World Wildlife Fund