

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 20, 2009

The Honorable Steven Chu
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Chu,

Congratulations on your confirmation as Secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy. We look forward to working with you to expand the promise of advanced technologies to meet our urgent energy, economic, environmental and national security needs.

The economic stimulus package calls for a significant investment in developing and deploying renewable energy technologies. In particular, the bill recognizes that the United States has significant ocean, marine and tidal energy resources. The measure provides additional resources to the Department for marine-renewable energy R&D.

Development of technologies to capture ocean and tidal energy resources can play a significant role in our nation's economic recovery and expand our renewable energy portfolio. According to the Electric Power Research Institute, ocean renewable energy in U.S. waters has the estimated potential to supply some 400 Terawatt hours of clean power annually, or roughly 10% of today's electrical demand. This is more than the electric generation currently delivered from all conventional hydropower in the U.S. today. Increasing the level of Federal support and implementing a viable long-term development program are critical if we are to access these abundant domestic energy resources.

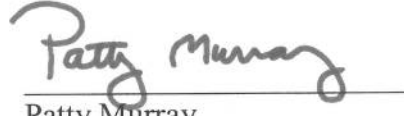
We strongly urge you to direct the Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy to provide at least \$250 million out of the \$2.5 billion appropriated in HR.1 (the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act), to the Water Power R&D program for enhanced support in the research, development, and demonstration of marine renewable technologies. We also recommend that DOE utilize the resources at its only marine sciences laboratory, and build upon and consider expanding the number of National Marine Energy Centers, to launch a comprehensive Marine Renewable Energy Conversion Device Verification Program to fund and facilitate the development, installation, and validation of marine-based projects while addressing critical issues related to energy resource evaluation and environmental monitoring in representative ocean energy ecosystems. The program would increase marine-based power experience and build and operate enough candidate devices to obtain statistically significant operating and maintenance data. These Centers would also provide developers with more accurate assessment of the energy resources and data required to understand costs associated with environmental monitoring. This effort would also enhance DOE's ability to obligate the increased level of funding in a timely fashion with clear results. These actions would accelerate the state of marine-based energy systems and lead to wide-scale production and commercialization of this technology.

We appreciate in advance your favorable response to our request and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
U.S. Senator



Patty Murray
U.S. Senator



Daniel Akaka
U.S. Senator



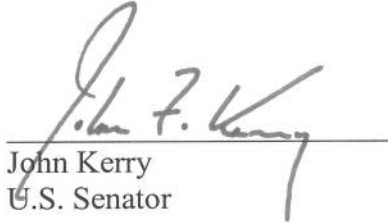
Olympia Snowe
U.S. Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
U.S. Senator



Maria Cantwell
U.S. Senator



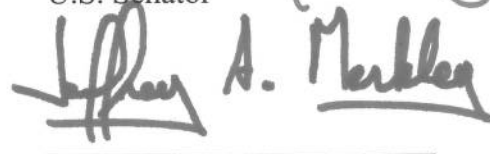
John Kerry
U.S. Senator



Robert Menendez
U.S. Senator



Bill Nelson
U.S. Senator



Jeff Merkley
U.S. Senator



Ben Cardin
U.S. Senator



Mark Begich
U.S. Senator

cc: Steven Chalk, Acting Assistant Secretary, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy
Megan McCleure, Program Manager, Wind and Water Technologies