

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 9, 2014

COMMITTEES:
HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

BUDGET

SPECIAL COMMITTEE
ON AGING

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY
AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Dr. Kathryn D. Sullivan
Administrator
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

RE: Support for a National Marine Sanctuary in Wisconsin's Lake Michigan waters

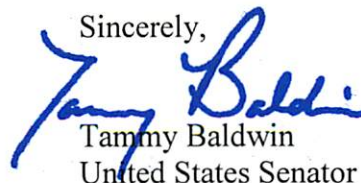
Dear Dr. Sullivan:

I am writing in support of establishing a National Marine Sanctuary off of the Wisconsin coastline in Lake Michigan. The proposed sanctuary is a historical treasure that includes multiple shipwrecks, museums, and historic waterfronts and a federal designation would support the region's tourism economy and preserve its rich cultural history. I have had the opportunity to visit communities in the proposed sanctuary area along the eastern coast of Wisconsin. The area boasts four maritime trail regions, which link shipwrecks, lighthouses, historic waterfronts, museums, shore-side historical markers, and other attractions. In addition to safeguarding these treasures, sanctuaries provide numerous socioeconomic benefits for local communities including recreational opportunities, marine research, tourism, and coastal job growth and economic development.

The proposed sanctuary off the coast of Ozaukee, Sheboygan and Manitowoc counties contains most of the shipwreck sites within the greater Mid-Lake Michigan area. In addition to having some of the best-preserved shipwrecks in Wisconsin, this region also holds the best potential for new shipwreck discoveries in future years. A National Marine Sanctuary would build on the accomplishments of citizen groups, local organizations, and the State of Wisconsin in protecting Great Lakes shipwrecks and educating the public about Wisconsin's nationally significant maritime heritage. Additionally, the shoreline communities in the proposed area have a strong interest in establishing a sanctuary in their coastal waters as they recognize that being a part of the NOAA National Marine Sanctuary System would bring many educational and economic opportunities to their region.

In October 2013, I joined several colleagues in urging NOAA to re-establish the nomination process for marine sanctuaries, and I am delighted that the agency did so. This program provides significant protections to valuable marine assets, and existing sanctuaries have proven to be strong economic drivers in their regional tourism economies.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this application. Please keep Todd Crouch in my office informed of the progress of this application and contact him if you should have further questions or concerns. He can be reached by calling 608-264-5338 or at todd_crouch@baldwin.senate.gov.

Sincerely,

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator