

The Honorable Jon Corzine
Governor of New Jersey
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 001
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

March 20, 2007

Dear Governor Corzine,

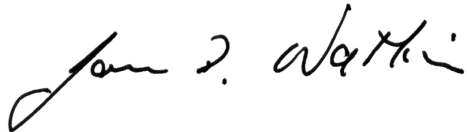
We are writing to you today to urge your leadership on an issue of national importance. The nation relies on the ocean for food, recreation, regulation of climate, and many other services. For too long we have taken this vital resource for granted. As the chairs of the Pew Oceans Commission and of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, we learned first hand about the decline our oceans are experiencing. Recent scientific studies have confirmed the seriousness of the issue, including major depletion of fish stocks, increasing frequency of ocean “dead zones,” ocean acidification, and sea level rise. We must act now to safeguard our ocean heritage or we will lose it forever.

We now co-chair the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative which is dedicated to supporting meaningful ocean policy reform and actions at the state, regional and national levels. While Washington, D.C. has been slow to respond to the challenge, there is growing action at the state level. For example, California and New York have recently passed ocean protection acts and launched initiatives to strengthen ocean management in their states’ waters. Massachusetts is considering legislation that calls for a comprehensive ocean management plan. Regional efforts, such as the one among the governors of Oregon, Washington and California, the Gulf States’ Gulf of Mexico Alliance and the Great Lakes Collaborative, are also underway.

New Jersey’s identity is strongly tied to its coast. New Jersey’s leadership on ocean policy issues can help show the nation how we can restore a vibrant ocean. Your Administration can build on its commitment to climate change, floodplain measures and beach access, by enacting additional measures that will help restore, protect and maintain the state’s coastal and ocean ecosystems. For example, such measures could address new offshore uses (such as wind farms and aquaculture), the maintenance and restoration of healthy habitats and productive fisheries, and the coastal and ocean threats from global warming.

We would be happy to discuss these issues with you further and can be reached through Laura Cantral at the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative at 202.354.6444. We have enclosed some information on the Joint Commission Initiative for your review. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James D. Watkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

James D. Watkins
Admiral, U.S. Navy (Retired)
Chairman, U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leon E. Panetta". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

The Honorable Leon E. Panetta
Chair, Pew Oceans Commission