

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

November 10, 2022

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

Our organizations are writing to express our strong support for S. 2130, the Reinvesting in Shoreline Economies and Ecosystems (RISEE) Act, which we hope to see enacted during the 117th Congress. Introduced by Senators Whitehouse (D-RI) and Cassidy (R-LA), the RISEE Act was recently passed by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee with strong bipartisan support, and an identical House companion bill (H.R. 9049) has been introduced by Representatives Fletcher (D-TX), Rice (R-SC), Weber (R-TX), and Luria (D-VA). The bill will significantly expand vital coastal restoration and protection efforts for communities and habitats across the United States, providing critical funding to foster resilience in the face of accelerating sea level rise, extreme weather events, and other climate-related threats.

Coastal communities face a unique set of challenges in our changing climate. The RISEE Act will deliver substantial, urgently needed resources to foster resilience in coastal communities and ecosystems threatened by mounting flood risks, more frequent and intense hurricanes, and disastrous economic and natural resource losses. By establishing a revenue-sharing model for offshore wind energy production and directing 37.5% of offshore wind energy revenues back to adjacent states, this legislation would increase resources available to support coastal restoration; hurricane protection; mitigation of potential impacts to fish, wildlife, and other natural resources, including through fisheries science and research; and implementation of federally approved marine, coastal, or comprehensive conservation management plans.

Because wind energy revenue-sharing under the legislation will be retroactive to the start of 2022, adjacent states will receive funds from the New York Bight and Carolina lease sales that took place earlier this year. Furthermore, the Biden Administration's recent announcement of the United States' first offshore wind lease sale in California, and the Department of Interior's ongoing analysis of potential Wind Energy Areas in the Gulf of Mexico, the Central Atlantic, Oregon, and Gulf of Maine, clearly demonstrate the national scope of this legislation for states along the Atlantic, Pacific and Gulf coasts.

The RISEE Act also will eliminate the cap on offshore energy revenues that are shared with producing states for coastal reinvestment under the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA), and will remove the cap on Land and Water Conservation Fund GOMESA funding as well. This provision will directly benefit coastal resilience and restoration along the Gulf coast and will expand resources available for critical land and water conservation efforts in both coastal and non-coastal states all across the nation.

We also appreciate that the RISEE Act will create a dedicated funding stream for the National Oceans and Coastal Security Fund, which provides grants to coastal and Great Lakes states for important, innovative investments in research, restoration, resilience, and monitoring activities. By ensuring reliable annual funding for this account, the RISEE Act will enhance critical community and infrastructure resilience, protect and restore key habitats and natural systems, facilitate nature-based climate solutions, and provide for crucial monitoring of coastal and marine resources. These and other funds provided in the bill will provide a considerable, necessary boost for coastal and Great Lakes communities and states working to safeguard their residents, economies, and coastlines.

By reinvesting coastal energy revenues in coastal protection, restoration, and resilience, the RISEE Act will bring vital resources to mitigate the mounting hazards, risks, and impacts coastal communities face. These investments will yield significant immediate returns for coastal state residents, natural resources, and economies, and will prevent potentially ruinous damage and costs in the future. We strongly encourage your support for advancement of this important legislation, and we look forward to working with you to see it enacted in the 117th Congress.

Sincerely,

Environmental Defense Fund

National Wildlife Federation

The Nature Conservancy

Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

American Shore & Beach Preservation Association

Ducks Unlimited

National Ocean Policy Coalition

National Recreation and Parks Association

American Clean Power Association

Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

National Audubon Society

Restore the Mississippi River Delta

American Sportfishing Association

Coastal States Organization

Citizens Climate Lobby

National Marine Manufacturers Association

City Parks Alliance

National Ocean Industries Association

Trust for Public Land

The Lower 9th Ward Center for Sustainable
Engagement and Development