COASTAL RESILIENCY PLANNING AND ADAPTATION

The Coastal States Organization urges Congress and the Administration to encourage and direct resources to support state-level interagency coordination and to empower, engage, and support state coastal zone management programs as key liaisons for effective action.

The Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA) as amended, directs states to minimize loss of life and property from coastal hazards while continuing to protect natural resources and healthy ecosystems that support economic growth and mitigate natural disasters. The CZMA supports state-level action on shoreline management, coastal land use planning, and development to minimize loss of life and property and to enhance naturally protective coastal features. Disaster reduction involves identification of current and future flood-prone areas, risk assessment of storm surge levels, identification of geological hazards such as landslides, and delineation of erosion-prone areas likely to be affected by, or vulnerable to, sea level rise, water level variability, land subsidence, saltwater intrusion, and loss of natural protective features such as beaches, dunes, wetlands, and barrier islands.

State coastal zone management programs are uniquely positioned to provide technical, financial, and planning assistance to communities to support efforts to improve long-term community resilience. State coastal programs achieve this, in part, through working across programs that have distinctly different, but deeply complementary missions such as land use planning, emergency management, and the conservation of public trust resources within the coastal zone. State coastal zone management programs can effectively reduce vulnerability to coastal hazards and thereby decrease the costs of natural hazards to the Nation.

The Coastal States Organization (CSO) represents the governors of the thirty-five coastal states, territories, and commonwealths on ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes issues and supports the following principles to guide national legislation and policies associated with managing shorelines and reducing community vulnerability to coastal hazards:

- Increase the effectiveness of state and federal programs to reduce community vulnerability to coastal hazards by: 1) supporting state and coastwide community vulnerability assessments and hazard mitigation planning, 2) sharing best management practices, and 3) developing effective resiliency planning and adaptation tools for coastal communities.

- Increase funding and the capacity of state and federal programs to provide technical, financial, and planning assistance to states and communities for pre-disaster preparedness and hazard mitigation based on state and coastwide community vulnerability assessments and anticipated sea level rise scenarios.

- Increase funding and capacity of state and federal programs to provide long-term resiliency planning thereby reducing future potential losses (post-disaster recovery planning). For example, eligibility of pre-disaster mitigation grants should be expanded to include Coastal Zone Management-related projects designed to minimize future loss of

life and property through long-term resiliency planning and adaptation.

- Continue to fund and support the unique and important role played by state coastal programs in managing coastal development and to promote the use of green infrastructure to minimize loss of life and property while protecting natural resources that support coastal economies and ecosystems.

- Foster collaboration across complementary programs through increased coordination between federal and state coastal management and emergency management programs, land use planners, and floodplain managers to create resilient shorelines that minimize the loss of life and property due to coastal hazards.

- Improve community resilience by identifying and eliminating federal-state institutional barriers that limit response to natural hazards. State coastal zone management programs serve as key liaisons to promote effective state and federal coordination and are critical to the successful implementation of post-disaster recovery planning and adaptation efforts.