

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

April 26, 2023

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell,

Our organizations are writing to express our strong support for S. 373, the Reinvesting in Shoreline Economies and Ecosystems (RISEE) Act of 2023, which we hope will move forward and be enacted during the 118th Congress. The RISEE Act was introduced by Senators Whitehouse (D-RI) and Cassidy (R-LA) with strong bipartisan support. Last July, the RISEE Act of 2022, which contained identical legislative text as the version introduced this Congress, passed through the Senate Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) Committee unanimously. We hope to see this legislation passed by the Committee during the May Senate ENR business meeting so that it may advance to the full Senate and we hope you will work with the bill sponsors and support finding an offset for this important legislation. The RISEE Act 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, Carolina, and California lease sales that took place in 2022. Furthermore, the Department of Interior's Proposed Sale Notice for lease areas in the Gulf of Mexico, as well as its ongoing analysis of potential Wind Energy Areas in 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.

To further support coastal states and resilience nationwide, the RISEE Act will also create a much-needed dedicated funding stream for the National Oceans and Coastal Security Fund. This fund 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 118th Congress.

Sincerely,

Environmental Defense Fund

National Audubon Society

National Wildlife Federation

Citizens Climate Lobby

National Ocean Industries Association

American Sportfishing Association

Ducks Unlimited

Trust for Public Land

Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

Restore the Mississippi River Delta

Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

Pontchartrain Conservancy

Bonefish & Tarpon Trust

Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana

Backcountry Hunters & Anglers

Coastal States Organization

National Ocean Policy Coalition

American Clean Power Association

International Game Fish Association

The Nature Conservancy

Coastal Conservation Association

BoatU.S.

Marine Retailers Association of the Americas

CC: Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairman Manchin and Ranking Member Barrasso