

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

August 14, 2009

The Honorable Gary Locke
Secretary
Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

The Honorable Jane Lubchenco
Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere
Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW, Room 5128
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Locke and Under Secretary Lubchenco:

I write today to request that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) provide all relevant source documents, materials and information that were part of the decision-making process to award the NOAA Marine Operations Center – Pacific long-term lease to the Port of Newport in Newport, Oregon. In addition, please provide a staff-level debriefing of the competition and the factors that went into the award decision.

While I appreciate the attention and resources NOAA has recently invested in the competitive process for the Marine Operations Center – Pacific, I have grave doubts about whether the final award decision is truly in the best long-term interest of NOAA, its scientific mission, and its employees. As chair of the Senate subcommittee that oversees NOAA, it is part of my oversight responsibilities to make sure that I, and the public, fully understand the rationale behind this decision.

Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell
Chair
Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere,
Fisheries and Coast Guard