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N E W S R E L E A S E

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Ocean Champions Helps Secure Funds For Red Tide Research Rallying Support From Ocean Enthusiasts Nationwide

Capitola, California July 31, 2007: Ocean Champions, the bipartisan political organization for the oceans, announced today that their outreach effort helped Rep. Kathy Castor (D-FL) secure significant funding for red tide and other harmful algal bloom research - naturally occurring algal blooms cause respiratory problems in humans and kill fish, shellfish and other marine animals. Castor offered an amendment in Congress that authorized \$90 million dollars in increased research funding. This comes after thousands of Ocean Champions' clean water advocates, from around the country, contacted Congressional offices in support of the Save Our Shores Act.

The Save Our Shores Act was introduced in the House of Representatives by Florida Representatives Connie Mack and Kathy Castor, to increase funding for peer-reviewed research into causes and effects of red tide and strengthen existing algal bloom research programs. In anticipation of positive movement on the bill, Ocean Champions continues to proactively engage grassroots efforts to bolster support. The expectation is that the outcry of support for healthier coastal water will push lawmakers into action.

"This perfectly illustrates Ocean Champions' core mission - to elect champions for the oceans to Congress like Castor and Mack and to work with those champions to pass laws that improve ocean health. These relationships allow us to serve as a nexus point of communication between ocean enthusiasts and lawmakers," said David Wilmot, President & Co-Founder of Ocean Champions. "Congressional leaders need to hear from their constituents. We facilitate that line of communication," adds Wilmot. Rep. Mack and Rep. Castor were two of the twenty Congressional candidates endorsed by Ocean Champions in the last election.

Representative Connie Mack states, "For too long, our shores have been plagued by this nuisance, which has long-lasting economic, environmental, and health implications." Rep. Mack continues, "the sooner we can determine what is causing these extended blooms, the sooner we can develop solutions to prevent red tide from destroying our coastline and economy."

Rep. Castor said, "Red tide brings fish-killing toxins to our waters. Red tide sea spray can irritate the eyes, and lungs of all of us who live in the beautiful Tampa Bay area. This bill will fund research into the causes and effects of this serious problem that threatens our sea life, tourist industry and families."

All coastal states in the U.S. have experienced toxic algal blooms in the past ten years, including areas along The Great Lakes. The problem of red tide is getting worse. Some believe it to be caused by increased water pollution and warmer ocean temperatures. The Save Our Shores Act will help researchers find and explore solutions to the growing problem.

Wilmot added, "based upon this recent public response, we believe people place a high priority on safe and fun ocean experiences. We greatly appreciate the efforts of Rep. Mack and Rep. Castor in serving as leaders to explore the solutions to this critical issue we all face along the coastlines of our country."

Ocean Champions is the only nonprofit political organization that endorses pro-ocean Congressional candidates and lobbies members of Congress on behalf of the oceans. To learn more, visit www.oceanchampions.org.

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