

The White House,
November 13, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 5239, approved November 13, was assigned Public Law No. 106-508.

Statement on Signing the National Marine Sanctuaries Amendments Act of 2000

November 13, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign S. 1482, the “National Marine Sanctuaries Amendments Act of 2000,” further strengthening Nation’s commitment to ocean conservation. This Nation prides itself on its conservation ethic, as embodied in our national parks and refuges. The 13 marine sanctuaries extend this ethic into the sea, ensuring a healthy ocean environment for future generations of swimmers and surfers, fishermen and explorers, teachers and students.

National marine sanctuaries enjoy broad bipartisan support, and I am particularly grateful to the Congressional leadership of this legislation for their efforts. I am especially pleased that this act creates the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program, named in memory of Dr. Foster, who passed away in June after a 23-year career fighting for ocean conservation. It is a fitting tribute to Dr. Foster to encourage scholarship, particularly by women and minorities, in the

fields of oceanography, marine biology, and maritime archeology.

This legislation builds on the Clinton-Gore administration’s work to preserve our Nation’s oceans. Over the past 7 years, the Vice President and I have fought for healthier beaches and cleaner coastal waters, greater protection for endangered and threatened marine species, sound fisheries management, and support for marine protected areas. We have worked with Congress to secure a fivefold increase in marine sanctuary funding to \$26 million and add new sanctuaries off Massachusetts, Florida, Washington, Hawaii, and, most recently, Michigan. Today we extend this program into the future, and with it this Nation’s commitment to an ocean ethic for the 21st century.

NOTE: S. 1482, approved November 13, was assigned Public Law No. 106-513.

Statement on Signing the National Marine Sanctuaries Amendments Act of 2000

November 13, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1482, the “National Marine Sanctuaries Amendments Act of 2000,” which reauthorizes the National Marine Sanctuaries Act for 5 years.

The National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA) authorizes the establishment of a unique system of marine protected areas dedicated to the conservation of special areas of the marine environment for the appreciation and enjoyment of present and future generations. The National Marine Sanctuary Program currently comprises 13 sanctuaries around the country, including sites in American Samoa and Hawaii. In the quarter century since its inception, the NMSA has provided a powerful mandate for marine

resource protection, resulting in the permanent conservation of many invaluable habitats. Drawing upon this experience, S. 1482 refines the NMSA in substantive ways to reflect the growth and evolution of the Program.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program is a key part of my Administration’s ocean policy. In particular, this long-standing program will be an integral part of the national system of marine protected areas, which I recently directed Federal agencies to establish. In addition, sanctuaries are essential to achieving the goals of the Coral Reef Task Force of protecting important coral areas and will be a focus of the Ocean