



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Rockville, Maryland 20852

AUG 19 1977

Honorable Ted Stevens
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Senator Stevens:

In response to your letter of June 10, 1977, the FY 78 appropriation for NOAA has now been signed into law and it includes funding of \$200,000 to keep the OREGON in operation. This will not be adequate, however, so we will have to reprogram approximately \$240,000 additional from ship charter money in order to provide a full season of operation in FY 78.

We would like to assure you that it was never our intention to impair the conduct of fishery survey work in the North Pacific. When we planned the lay-up of the OREGON in the FY 78 budget we requested \$1,200,000 in new budget authority in order to lease two 140 foot vessels for back-up fishery survey work in the North Pacific and Bering Sea. This money has now been appropriated, but we will have to direct \$240,000 of it to support the OREGON, as noted above. However, there will certainly be adequate survey capability available in the North Pacific from chartered ships and NOAA ships, including the OREGON.

Sincerely,

Wilmot N. Hess
Acting Deputy Administrator

