

October 21, 2025

The Honorable Ted Cruz  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell:

On behalf of the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC), the national non-profit 501(c)(3) organization representing state geographic information system (GIS) leaders and professionals dedicated to advancing geospatial technology and policy at the state and local levels, I write to express support for the nomination of Dr. Timothy Petty for the position of Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

The role of the Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere is, as you know, a position of extreme importance and the confirmation of this nomination is vital to the fulfillment of the agency's mission to serve the Nation by providing reliable scientific information to describe and understand changes in climate, weather, oceans, and coasts. As the Department of Commerce's premier agency for atmospheric and oceanic science, the expeditious confirmation of a qualified nominee for this appointment is paramount to maintain the great work of this agency.

NSGIC believes that Dr. Petty is uniquely qualified to fulfill the responsibilities of this role. With nearly two decades of experience in federal water and science policy, including his tenure as Assistant Secretary for Water and Science at the Department of the Interior where he oversaw the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the Bureau of Reclamation, Dr. Petty will no doubt hit the ground running. In that capacity, he served as Co-Chair of the National Drought Resilience Partnership, coordinating interagency efforts on drought forecasting, research, and technology. He previously served as Acting Assistant Secretary and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water and Science during the George W. Bush Administration, and holds a Ph.D. from the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

NSGIC and its member states work very closely with NOAA to advance its mission by providing geospatial data integration, GIS support, and policy coordination—to name a few. Our contributions include supporting initiatives like the Digital Coast Partnership, which leverages lidar, elevation data, and coastal mapping to enhance resilience and decision-making at state and local levels. Our membership sees firsthand the many benefits NOAA provides our Nation, states, counties, tribal governments, first-responders, institutions of higher learning, and many others. We look forward to continuing to support that important work under the leadership of Dr. Petty, should he be confirmed.

I urge you and your colleagues to give full and fair consideration to this nomination, and to expeditiously confirm Dr. Petty for the position of Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Mark Yacucci*

Mark Yacucci  
President  
National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC)