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REP. LYNN WOOLSEY
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Wildlife and Oceans
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Thank you for giving me this opportunity to testify in support of H.R. 5498, my bill to convey the NOAA facility in Tiburon, California to the Board of Trustees of California State University.

This NOAA facility is on property in my congressional district that NOAA has shared with San Francisco State University since 1977. At that time, SFSU was given approval to develop a field station and marine laboratory on the property, dedicated to the study of the San Francisco Bay.

The SFSU part of this property became the "Romberg Tiburon Center for Environmental Studies", the off-campus marine and estuarine research and teaching facility for SFSU.

The coastline where the NOAA facility and the Romberg Tiburon Center are situated is one of the largest and most urbanized estuaries in the United States - San Francisco Bay.

Unfortunately, as an eco-system, the San Francisco Bay has suffered extensively from human development.

I've visited the Romberg Tiburon Center and have seen first-hand their

excellent work.

The Romberg Tiburon Center's research stands at the forefront of understanding on how human development affects an eco-system.

Research, however, is not the main purpose of the Romberg Tiburon Center. It is, first and foremost, an educational facility which is unique to this area, providing education for an urban student body about the issues of urban aquatic environments.

Due to its success, the Romberg Tiburon Center now faces significant problems due to run down facilities and lack of space for a growing education and research program.

The facility that NOAA has vacated includes access to the waterfront, a boat ramp and dock, which is crucial to the work of the Romberg Tiburon Center.

My legislation codifies what has been a long-time cooperative working arrangement between NOAA and the Romberg Tiburon Center that gives students and researchers direct access to the bay.

If San Francisco State University had to go through the usual channels to acquire this facility, it would take from three to five years to complete the process and there would still be no guarantee that SFSU would get the facility in the end.

The communities in my district that are closest to the Center, Tiburon and Belvedere, very much want the Romberg Tiburon Center to acquire the NOAA facility and they strongly support my legislation. The Romberg Tiburon Center has been a good neighbor to these and other nearby Marin county communities and they are unanimous in their desire to continue the educational and research use of this property.

Dr. Robert Corrigan, President of San Francisco State University, on the

next panel, will discuss more about the need for this legislation.

Again, I want to thank you for this opportunity to speak and I am, of course, happy to answer any questions you might have.