



April 6, 2009

Congressman Henry Brown, Jr.
103 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Rep. Brown,

I am writing to request your support in securing funding to increase the capacity of our Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation program and to develop our associated AquaCare Veterinary Research and Education facility. We are grateful for the leadership you have already demonstrated toward marine conservation in our state and at the Aquarium.

Our Sea Turtle Rescue program has grown from a single "kiddies" pool purchased from K-mart in response to the first turtle stranding brought to the Aquarium, into a complex and diversified care center that has already successfully rehabilitated and released 36 sea turtles. At present, nine patients are in our care. In addition, the Aquarium's animal collection has tripled in size since our opening in 2000, and we now employ a full-time veterinarian to oversee its care.

We are expanding our ability to provide critical veterinary care at the Aquarium rather than transporting animals to local veterinary hospitals for a variety of procedures, including radiographs, endoscopy and cryosurgery. At the same time, we want to broaden the ability to conduct pioneering marine research on-site at the Aquarium in collaboration with our network of community partners from NOAA, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and local universities. Most important, in line with our mission, we want our visiting public to have direct access to the depth and degree of our animal care through organized tours, viewing windows, contact with our veterinary and animal care staff, and fun and interactive learning tools.

While we are seeking private contributions for this effort, we would greatly appreciate federal support to ensure the facility's swift and thorough completion. The medical research conducted at the Aquarium, particularly with endangered sea turtles, has and will have international significance. The Aquarium itself is the most visited attraction in the Charleston region and has an estimated economic

impact of \$155 million (Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce, 2009). This project will put federal dollars to work immediately and will have enduring impact in the region and around the globe.

Again, we thank you for your support of the Aquarium and our efforts to ensure a future for wildlife and wild places.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin Mills". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kevin Mills
President and CEO