Dr. Neil Jacobs  
Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Acting) and Assistant  
Secretary of Commerce for Environmental Observation and Prediction  
14th and Constitution, NW  
Washington, DC 20230  

Dear Dr. Jacobs:

The Ocean Exploration Advisory Board (OEAB) is required by law (33 USC 3405) and by  
its charter to conduct an annual review of the competitive grant selection process used by  
the Office of Ocean Exploration and Research (OER) for the quality and effectiveness of  
the proposal review process established under 33 USC 3403. To that end, OER briefed the  
OEAB on its annual federal funding opportunity at our May 27-28, 2020, meeting. The  
OEAB has determined that OER’s process is akin to the National Science Foundation  
peer-review system but adds a pre-proposal step that is intended to reduce the workload  
for grant applicants, which the OEAB supports.

The OEAB’s review in the future would be further improved if information on the selection  
process included data on any reductions in grants from the amounts requested.

The board voted unanimously to endorse the federal funding opportunity process OER  
uses.

Sincerely,

Ambassador Cameron R. Hume  
Interim Chair