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CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
3RD DISTRICT, WASHINGTON
November 5, 2008

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Greetings!

I want to tell you about a unique and exciting educational opportunity for your teachers and students. Please circulate this invitation to all of your teachers to inform them that Thursday, **November 13, 2008** I have arranged to host a briefing for your students from the Aquarius Underwater Ocean Laboratory. It will be streamed live via the Internet and will be accessible to all classes that wish to participate.

Thursday, November 13, 2008
12:00-1:00pm PST
Link: www.house.gov/baird
Click on Aquarius Briefing

This is a rare chance to see inside Aquarius, the world's only operating undersea research laboratory. It is considered America's Innerspace Station. It sits 60 feet below the ocean surface four miles offshore from Key Largo, Florida. I will dive down to Aquarius, meet with scientists, see their work and then host an online video discussion specifically geared for your students. I welcome their questions via email.

To assist teachers in planning, I've worked with Aquarius to provide suggested lesson plans and classroom activities that I think can enrich your students' educational experience. The materials can be easily accessed through a link on my Congressional Website; go to www.house.gov/baird and click on [Aquarius Briefing](#).

Aquarius scientists can field a myriad of questions from your students such as:

- How do buoyancy, pressure and light affect the work of underwater scientists?
- How long can they remain underwater and what are the effects on humans?
- What is the condition of coral reefs subject to ocean acidification?
- What is the significance of the reefs to health of the world ecosystem?

In my research I am gravely concerned the oceans are becoming more acidic by the day, threatening the survival of everything from plankton, to shellfish, to coral reefs and countless other aquatic species. The loss of these ecosystems could affect billions of people around the world who depend on the ocean for their food, or their livelihood. This includes many people in Southwest Washington.

I believe we should research and investigate ocean acidification to minimize current and future environmental impacts. At Aquarius, scientists are engaged in cutting edge research to address ocean acidification and other problems associated with global warming.

I would welcome the chance to share with your students what I am learning on my visit to the Aquarius Underwater Mission.

My staff will be happy to work with you on details of the briefing and how we can be of help. Please contact Kimberly Blake Pincheira at Kimberly.pincheira@mail.house.gov or 360-695-6292 with any questions and to RSVP. I hope to have the chance to connect with as many students as possible from America's Innerspace.

Sincerely,



Notes from Congressman Baird's Office

- The briefing will last approximately 25 minutes but because of the logistical challenges involved, we have set aside a 60 minute window. We advise that you log on to the website at 12:00noon PST and then standby for the briefing to begin.
- To access the briefing, please log on to www.house.gov/baird and then click on [Aquarius Briefing](#). If you have trouble making the connection you can connect directly to http://broadcast.vbrick.com/t/View_Default.aspx?BID=129_addd2
- To ensure students have an opportunity to ask questions, we ask they submit their questions by email ahead of time so the Congressman has them in hand. Please email them to Kimberly.pincheira@mail.house.gov by **Monday, November 10** and include the student's name, grade and school.
- To assist you in planning we have included a link to the Aquarius project which includes suggested lesson plans and student activities. This material can be accessed through the "Resources for Students and Teachers" link on the [Aquarius Briefing](#) page.
- The Congressman has also added specific support materials including a recent USA Today Article, a report by UNESCO on the extent of damage to the coral reefs and several scientific publications. You can access this material through the "Additional Information on Ocean Acidification" link on the [Aquarius Briefing](#) page.
- We ask for an RSVP by **Monday, November 10** so the Congressman can recognize your school's participation and so that we can stay in touch to troubleshoot any possible logistical issue. Please send RSVPs to Kimberly.pincheira@mail.house.gov with your class, grade, and school.
- Our local contact is Kimberly Blake Pincheira in the Vancouver office. She can be reached at Kimberly.pincheira@mail.house.gov or (360) 695-6292