

Floor Statement of Rep. Paul Tonko
Safe Climate Caucus
October 28, 2013

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Oceans cover 70% of our earth's surface. They are home to a vast number of organisms that form an intricate food web, one that the world has relied upon for high quality protein and steady employment for generations.

But if we continue on our current path we will face a serious decline in these essential resources. The oceans have been absorbing nearly one fourth of our carbon emissions we release every day.

We think of the oceans as too big to fail, but we are altering their physical, chemical, and biological characteristics at an increasing pace. Our oceans are warming, hurricane patterns are changing, salinity and acidity are changing, sea levels are rising, and many fisheries are being over-exploited.

It is long past time for us to address climate change, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and manage our coastal waters and the oceans in a more sustainable way. Oceans have sustained life on this planet for thousands of years. We should act now to ensure that they continue to do so for thousands more.