

November 8, 2006

Dr. David Sampson, Deputy Secretary
United States Department of Commerce
14th and Constitution Avenue NW
Mailstop 61
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Dr. Sampson,

Thank you for your remarks at the joint session of the Council Chairs and Executive Directors and New Council Member Orientation meetings on Wednesday, November 1, 2006, emphasizing ending overfishing in the Nation's marine fisheries. While noting that not all Regional Fishery Management Councils have had the same level of success in achieving this goal, we collectively concur that this is a matter of the highest priority. It is a primary expectation of the American public and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and we take this obligation very seriously.

While ending overfishing is a simple goal, it is not a simple task given the complexities of the biological uniqueness of each fish species, the highly variable population dynamics of each fish stock, and the mandate to minimize adverse social and economic impacts to affected fishing communities. Therefore, we particularly appreciate your commitment that the Administration will provide the foundational elements necessary to allow the Regional Fishery Management Councils to take the appropriate, informed action to accomplish this goal. An essential component of the necessary foundation is a funding level for each Council not less than the amount received last year. As you stated in your remarks, providing the necessary scientific information and staffing support from the National Marine Fisheries Service is also an essential component.

You also mentioned in your remarks that instituting performance standards on various necessities would be a helpful tool towards achieving this goal, and that you have requested Dr. Hogarth to begin the process of developing such performance standards. We agree and look forward to jointly developing such performance standards with the National Marine Fisheries Service. It is important that such performance standards include the full process of marine fishery management action, from the onset of considerations at each of the Regional Fishery Management Councils, through final action taken by the Councils, to final approval by the Secretary to implement fishery regulations into Federal law. Therefore, we request



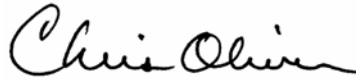
that the topic of establishing comprehensive performance standards be placed on the upcoming meeting agenda of the Regional Fishery Management Councils and National Marine Fisheries Service in January 2007.

Again, we want to thank you for interest in, and support of, improving marine fishery management across the Nation's fisheries.

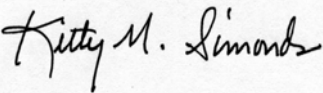
Respectfully submitted on behalf of each of our individual Fishery Management Councils,



Donald McIsaac
Executive Director, Pacific Fishery
Management Council



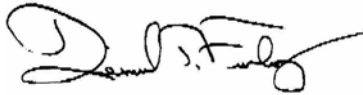
Chris Oliver
Executive Director, North Pacific Fishery
Management Council



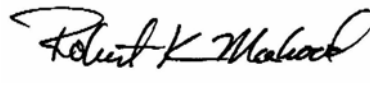
Kitty Simonds
Executive Director, Western Pacific Fishery
Management Council



Paul Howard
Executive Director, New England Fishery
Management Council



Daniel Furlong
Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery
Management Council



Robert Mahood
Executive Director, South Atlantic Fishery
Management Council



Miguel Rolon,
Executive Director, Caribbean Fishery
Management Council



Wayne Swingle
Executive Director, Gulf of Mexico Fishery
Management Council

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Council Chairs and Vice Chairs

Secretary Carlos Gutierrez

Dr. William Hogarth

Mr. Alan Risenhoover

Ms. Patricia Kurkul

Ms. Sue Salvesson

New Council Members Orientation and Training Attendees

Vice Admiral Conrad Lautenbacher

Dr. Jim Balsiger

Mr. Robert Lohn

Mr. Rod McInnis

Mr. Sam Rauch

Mr. Roy Crabtree

Mr. Bill Robinson