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BOBBY JINDAL
Governor



State of Louisiana
Office of the Governor

April 29, 2010

The Honorable Gary Locke
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
14th and Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

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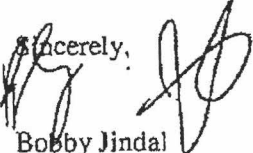
Dear Mr. Secretary:

As Louisiana continues to address the impact of the April 20th Deepwater Horizon rig explosion, I am writing to request your consideration of activating the appropriate Federal disaster declaration clauses in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act as well as relevant clauses to trigger support from the Economic Development Administration (EDA). This action by your office will result in the declaration of a commercial fisheries failure for Louisiana and provide other economic recovery options via EDA.

In coastal Louisiana our communities are driven by three primary industries that provide great benefit to the nation's commerce – ports/maritime, energy and fishing – all vital employers, important components of our state's coastal economy and national economic output. The waters offshore Louisiana's coast supply nearly one-third of all commercial seafood harvested in the lower 48 states, with values in excess of \$2.85 billion annually. As the largest provider of domestic seafood in the continental United States, protection of Louisiana's fisheries, habitats and catch are critical to our nation's economy and food supply. In addition to the potential biologic and ecologic impacts in these coastal communities, we must not overlook the crippling effect that this event will have on the commercial and sport fisheries in Louisiana. The seafood industry is not only a large economic driver, but a defining element of the unique culture, and a crucial tourist draw to the state.

The declaration of a fisheries disaster and the providing of fisheries disaster assistance and EDA support will ensure that our small businesses and families who make a living in the fishing and maritime industries will be sustained through this disaster. The EDA assistance will also ensure that businesses associated with our marinas, bait shops, and other recreational fishing facilities that generate billions of dollars in economic activity annually will be able to sustain this disaster.

The State will also need assistance from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) not only with helping individual fishermen but to ensure that this productive ecosystem is cleaned and restored, that these products are of high quality, and that our small businesses can compete and maintain markets that are under significant pressure from foreign growers. We look forward to working with you on the biologic and ecologic impacts that this event has had and will have, but ask that you declare a commercial fisheries failure and provide associated fisheries and EDA support so that we can begin the process of assuring the fishing community, impacted coastal residents and businesses that economic and financial assistance that are needed can be counted on to help get Louisiana fishermen back on the water once this crisis has passed.

Sincerely,

Bobby Jindal
Governor