



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

10-014494

HALEY BARBOUR
GOVERNOR

April 30, 2010

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

Dear Mr. Secretary:

In light of the April 20, 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and Mississippi's efforts to address its impact, I am writing to request the activation of 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). If the U.S. Department of Commerce favorably receives this request, such action will result in the declaration of a commercial fisheries failure for Mississippi and provide other economic recovery options through EDA.

The oil spill off the Gulf Coast will certainly impact three primary industries in Mississippi's coastal communities—ports/maritime, energy, and fishing. Like Louisiana, these industries provide great benefit to the nation's commerce and are vital employers and important components of our state's coastal economy. Protection of Mississippi's fisheries, habitats and catch are critical not only to our state economy but also to our nation's economy and food supply. In addition to the potential biologic and ecologic impacts in these coastal communities, this spill may also have a crippling effect on commercial and sport fisheries in Mississippi. If a disaster declaration is declared, fisheries disaster assistance and EDA support will help sustain our families and small businesses whose livelihoods depend upon the fishing and maritime industries.

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.

We look forward to working with you on the biologic and ecologic impacts that the oil spill 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 Mississippi fishermen back on the water once this crisis has passed.

Sincerely,

Haley Barbour