

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 1, 2012

The Honorable Jane Lubchenco, PhD  
Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere,  
Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Room 5128  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Administrator Lubchenco:

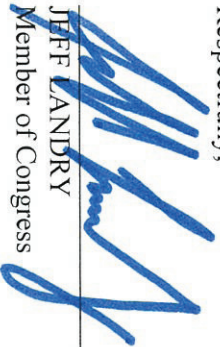
As you know, shrimpers are struggling to recover from the damage caused by Hurricane Isaac. The debris left by this storm throughout our shrimping waters have severely impacted shrimpers' harvests. Thus, we request a temporary exemption from federal Turtle Excluder Device (TED) requirements for inland and offshore shrimp trawlers.


As you are aware, temporary exemptions from TED requirements have been granted after previous storms. These exemptions were granted because the increased debris in the water was restricting the effectiveness of the device while still lessening the shrimpers' catch. As the condition of our waterways after Hurricane Isaac mirrors the conditions after those storms, we find a temporary exclusion to be consistent with Departmental policy.

Additionally, we note that Congress has already stated its general opposition to the TED requirements by approving House Amendment No. 1080 to H.R. 5326, Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for FY2013 by a large bipartisan majority. This amendment extended a prohibition on enforcing the TED requirements. Clearly, if Congress believes that TEDs should not be required during the best of times, they should not be required as shrimpers try to salvage what is left of their hurricane-shortened season.

We hope you will agree that we must do everything we can to help these small businessmen and women to return to fishing. Allowing for a temporary exemption of current TED requirements is a good first step. Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your commitment to the full recovery of Gulf Coast communities from Hurricane Isaac. We look forward to your reply.

Respectfully,

  
JEFF LANDRY  
Member of Congress

  
DAVID VITTER  
U.S. Senator

  
JOHN C. FLEMING, M.D.  
Member of Congress

  
RODNEY ALEXANDER  
Member of Congress