



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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Paul J. Diodati, (MA), Chair

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Robert E. Beal, Acting Executive Director

Healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015

August 28, 2012

The Honorable Walter B. Jones
United States House of Representatives
2333 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Jones:

This provides additional information in response to your letter of July 27, 2012 regarding broadcasting of Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) meetings via the internet and conducting roll call votes. On August 8, 2012 the ASMFC's Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board (Policy Board) discussed the recommendations in your letter.

The Policy Board agreed to broadcast ASMFC quarterly meetings via the internet beginning in February 2013. We are researching different broadcasting options to ensure easy access by interested stakeholders, while being cost effective for ASMFC.

Regarding roll call votes, the current ASMFC process allows a roll call vote at the request of any Commissioner. In addition, the Policy Board agreed to explore options for the increased use of roll call votes during ASMFC deliberations. The Policy Board wants to provide the necessary transparency to stakeholders, while maintaining the efficiency of management board meetings. The criteria for the use of roll call votes will be discussed at the ASMFC Annual Meeting in October. It is anticipated these criteria will be implemented at the meeting in February 2013. While these criteria are being finalized, your letter has raised the Commissioners' awareness of the stakeholder interest and there will likely be more roll call votes taken at our next meeting.

Also in regards to your request that roll call votes reflect individual Commissioner's positions, the Commission process is based on a one state – one vote principle. This format allows for the Commissioners, a Governor's appointee, a Legislative appointee, and an Administrative representative, to discuss and collectively decide on the best course of action. Our states agreed to this format when they established the Commission and approved its Rules and Regulations. Roll call votes thus reflect the vote of each state rather than individual Commissioners.

Thank you for your continued interest in the cooperative management of the important Atlantic coastal marine resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. Beal".

Robert E. Beal

cc: ASMFC Commissioners

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