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March 17, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker,

I would like to express my support for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Framework Adjustment 53 to the Northeast Multispecies Fisheries Management Plan. New Hampshire's charter boat fishing industry is vital to my district's economy. For this reason, I applaud your reconsideration of this proposed rule. These are jobs that will be lost if NOAA does not take action immediately, so I urge you to please expedite consideration of the required amendments, in collaboration with the New England Fishery Management Council, to allow the final rule to be implemented before the fishing season begins on May 1, 2015.

While I appreciate the work done to protect the Gulf of Maine Cod through the implementation of the emergency Interim Action, there is a concern that certain provisions would close large areas of water off the coast of New England which are crucial to the survival of both our commercial and recreational fishing industries. While FW53 is less restrictive than an all-out ban, it moves in the right direction to mitigate job losses in New Hampshire. However, fisherman would be permitted to target fish populations such as Pollock, haddock and other non-ground fish species whose populations are healthy and thriving.

If FW53 is rejected, the State of New Hampshire would be the first in the nation to lose its rights to fish in federal waters and its fishing industry would disappear. This would have a devastating effect on our region's economy, which is dependent on commercial and recreational fishing and the tourists it attracts to our restaurants, hotels, and shops.

Going forward, it is imperative that regulations and catch quotas be accurate and promote conservation, while allowing for a healthy fishing industry. To this end, I hope you will consider creating a panel made up of both NOAA and non-government scientists and fishermen to develop new more comprehensive methods of sampling and assessing fish populations.

Our charter boat and commercial fisherman are already seeing negative economic impacts because of the uncertainty in the future of the industry. On behalf of the thousands of Granite Staters who depend on fishing for their livelihood, I hope you will act quickly to resolve this situation.

Sincerely,



FRANK GUINTA
New Hampshire -01