

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**  
STATE HOUSE • BOSTON, MA 02133  
(617) 725-4000

**DEVAL L. PATRICK**  
GOVERNOR

**TIMOTHY P. MURRAY**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

April 26, 2013

The Honorable Martha Coakley  
Massachusetts Attorney General  
One Ashburton Place  
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Attorney General Coakley:

Thank you for your recent letter about the severe challenges facing our fishing industry. I share your concerns about the drastic cuts that are scheduled to be implemented on May 1st. As you know, my Administration has made it a priority to support our fishing industry. I have and will continue to actively engage our federal partners to seek their much needed assistance.

In a letter to me last September, the Acting Secretary of Commerce Rebecca Blank promised to work with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the New England Fisheries Management Council, and our fishing community to explore all possible options to help our fishing industry. I intend to hold her and all our federal partners to this commitment. In a letter sent earlier this week, I asked that the Department of Commerce approve and implement an interim measure as requested by the New England Fisheries Management Council. Last year, I fully supported the Council's request for an interim measure and

The Honorable Martha Coakley  
April 26, 2013  
Page Two

agree that NOAA has the legal authority to issue a second measure this year. I also asked NOAA to use every resource at its disposal to provide any additional assistance for our fishing industry.

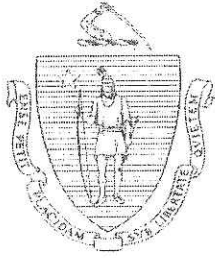
In addition to this letter, I wrote to the leaders of the United States Senate and House Budget Committees asking them to include disaster funding for our fishing industry in the federal fiscal year 2014 budget. In response to my request, last September the Department of Commerce issued a fishery resource disaster declaration for the Northeast groundfish fishery, authorizing Congress to appropriate financial assistance for this community in need. Unfortunately, despite my efforts and those of our Congressional delegation, that vital funding has yet to be provided. I will continue to work with our delegation to secure this much needed and long overdue financial assistance.

Yesterday, I also spoke with Valerie Jarrett, Senior Adviser to the President, about the pressing needs of our fishing industry and the outstanding request with the Department of Commerce for an interim measure to lessen the impact of the impending drastic cuts. I asked that the White House do everything it can to ensure that all federal resources are made available to our fishing community.

I will continue to do all I can to help our groundfish fleet not only to sustain itself but to thrive in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deval Patrick". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large loop at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail.



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DEVAL L. PATRICK  
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TIMOTHY P. MURRAY  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

April 22, 2013

The Honorable Rebecca Blank  
Acting Secretary of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Acting Secretary Blank:

I urge you to work with and encourage the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to take critical and balanced actions during this time of regional and national fishery crisis. As you are well aware, New England fishermen, as well as those in the Gulf Coast and Pacific Northwest, are facing near catastrophic economic conditions. Despite the Department of Commerce's emergency declaration last year, sufficient relief still has not been provided.

In your letter to me last September, you stated that you were deeply concerned about the potential impacts of the 2013 catch limits and that you would continue to work with NOAA, the New England Fisheries Management Council, and the fishing industry to explore all possible options to mitigate these impacts. While I continue to work with our Congressional partners to secure the emergency funding that our fishermen need and deserve, I ask that you honor this commitment and urge NOAA to take all actions at its disposal to provide immediate assistance in advance of the May 1<sup>st</sup> cuts.

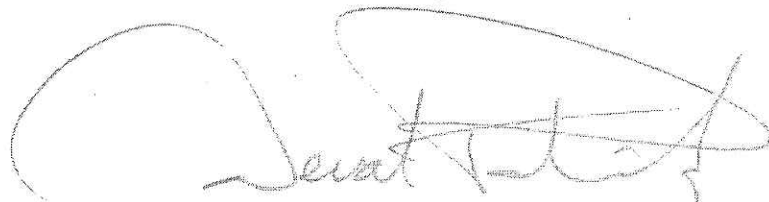
Specifically, I ask that you approve and implement the request for interim measures submitted by the New England Fishery Management

Council to NOAA fisheries in December to allow for a more gradual approach on Gulf of Maine cod and haddock that would maintain both the short and long term viability of our fishing industry. I agree with the New England Fishery Management Council that there is sufficient flexibility in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to implement a second interim action on Gulf of Maine cod. Therefore, I do not believe a change of circumstances creating a new emergency situation is necessary for you to take this action. This is an ongoing emergency situation and should be treated as such. While ending overfishing is important, reducing overfishing for another year is a far better and more equitable alternative for our fishermen as they attempt to adjust to this dire situation for which they are not at fault. Our Congressional delegation, Attorney General, and over sixty Massachusetts legislators agree that an interim measure is the most appropriate course of action at this time.

NOAA should also invest immediately in the safety and sustainability of our fishing fleet, provide job training for fishermen to help them adjust to changes in fishery management, provide support for sector operating and at-sea monitoring costs, and promote cooperative research focused on improving stock assessments and data collection systems. In addition, with the livelihood of our fishing communities at stake, I encourage NOAA to support much needed improvements in fisheries science. While we wait for Congress to act, NOAA can and should take these steps to alleviate the impact of this crisis.

Thank you in advance for working with NOAA to take immediate action on these targeted steps that will allow the groundfish fleet to survive and become more sustainable in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Scott Blumenthal", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
The Secretary of Commerce  
Washington, D.C. 20230

September 13, 2012

The Honorable Deval L. Patrick  
Governor of Massachusetts  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Patrick:

The Department of Commerce has received a number of requests and letters of support for a commercial fishery failure for the Northeast Multispecies Groundfish Fishery from various elected officials in the region. I have determined that a commercial fishery failure due to a fishery resource disaster will exist for the Northeast Multispecies Groundfish Fishery for the 2013 fishing year under Section 308(b) of the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act of 1986 (IFA) and Section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 (MSA).

After reviewing the information available on the potential catch limits for the 2013 fishing year, I am deeply concerned about the potential impacts to Northeast fishermen and fishing communities. The Department of Commerce and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will continue to engage with the New England Fishery Management Council and the fishing industry in advance of the 2013 fishing year to explore all possible options to mitigate these impacts. However, it seems unlikely that all economic impacts can be mitigated solely through fisheries management measures.

Despite fishermen's adherence to catch limits over the past few years, recent data shows that several key fish stocks are not rebuilding. While the precise cause of these stock declines is unclear, "undetermined causes" is an allowable cause under the MSA. Low levels of these stocks are causing a significant loss of access to fishery resources with anticipated revenue declines that will greatly affect the commercial fishery. This determination provides a basis for Congress to appropriate disaster relief funding under the IFA and the MSA, and for NOAA to use these funds to provide assistance to affected communities. Should Congress appropriate funds for disaster assistance, the National Marine Fisheries Service will work with your state to develop an effective program for an economically robust and sustainable fishery.

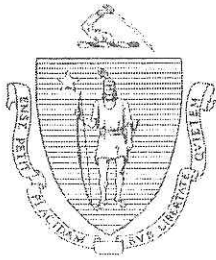
I previously received your request for a disaster declaration for the 2010 Northeast Multispecies Groundfish Fishery. This determination for the 2013 fishing season supersedes these requests.

If you have any questions, please contact Jim Stowers, Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs at (202) 482-3663.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rebecca M. Blank". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized.

Rebecca M. Blank  
Acting Secretary of Commerce



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DEVAL L. PATRICK  
GOVERNOR

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

April 22, 2013

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Chair, House Budget Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chair, Senate Budget Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Ryan and Chairwoman Murray:

I am writing to request your leadership and assistance during a time of regional and national fishery crisis. It is well documented that in New England, the Gulf Coast and the Pacific Northwest, fishermen in numerous states are facing near catastrophic economic situations. Indeed, last September, the Department of Commerce issued a fishery resource disaster for the Northeast groundfish fishery, authorizing Congress to appropriate assistance for these communities in need. As you finalize the fiscal year 2014 budget, I ask that you include this crucial and overdue aid for our fishing communities.

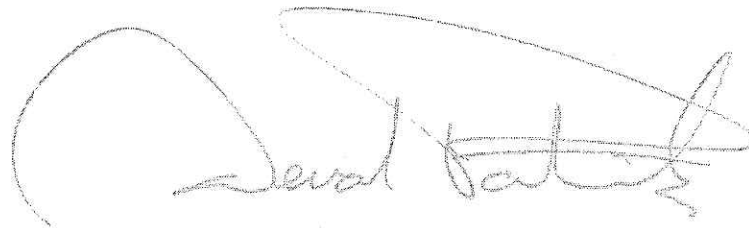
Here in New England the resource disaster has already taken its toll on our fishing community. Now, although our fishermen have adhered to catch limits over the past few years, stocks are not rebuilding and they are bracing for even steeper cuts to be implemented on May 1<sup>st</sup>, which I have asked NOAA to reconsider. This is threatening not only the livelihoods of our commercial fleet, but the fabric of our fishing communities. In the historic Port of Gloucester, for example, our agencies continue to receive reports that fishing families are relying on food donations and are grappling with the stress of the current groundfish disaster. This is not just a regional

issue. In addition to the impact on our fishing communities in the Northeast, this disaster is impacting communities and consumers throughout the nation.

The recently passed Senate 2014 budget resolution included an amendment that allows appropriations in the federal budget to provide this much needed disaster assistance to our fishing community in Massachusetts and across the region. This bipartisan amendment, which was sponsored by Senators Elizabeth Warren and Lisa Murkowski, passed by unanimous consent and is an important step toward providing the assistance our fishing industry both in Massachusetts and throughout the country needs and deserves.

As I continue to work with all stakeholders and federal partners to obtain more immediate financial assistance, I ask that you include this long overdue disaster aid in your final budget for fiscal year 2014. I hope you share my concern about the struggles of our fishing industry and the men and women who devote their lives to it. Including the disaster assistance in your budget will send a strong, bipartisan message of support to our fishing communities during this difficult economic time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Ryan", with a large, sweeping flourish above the name.