

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 9, 2009

The Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington DC 20240

The Honorable Gary Locke
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretaries Salazar and Locke:

We are writing to strongly urge you to direct your agencies to oppose the listing of spiny dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*) under Appendix II to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (“CITES”) at the upcoming 15th regular meeting of Conference of the Parties. As you are aware, the domestic dogfish industry along the East Coast has been operating under a restrictive catch cap, with the directed fishery closed for nearly a decade. As a result of this sacrifice, the female dogfish population has fully recovered, and the male population is four times larger than that of the females.

The supposed purpose of this listing relates to the fact that the primary market for U.S.-harvested dogfish, the European Union, has been unable to show the same level of discipline as the U.S. in managing its stocks. As a result, we understand that Northeast Atlantic and Mediterranean spiny dogfish stocks may be depleted. Whether or not this is the case, CITES listing is reserved for greatly threatened or endangered species that have become so *due to trade*. By contrast, export of U.S. dogfish has *not* prevented the National Marine Fisheries Service from implementing a stringent and ultimately effective program to rebuild our fishery. Listing of the world’s most abundant shark species would only water down the purposes behind CITES.

We also note that the Atlantic coastal states, acting through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the two federal fishery management councils that cover the species’ range (i.e. the New England and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council) have all officially opposed this listing. Likewise, an unusual and broad coalition of recreational and charter and party boat groups, commercial fishery organizations, processors, exporters, and buyers have all come together to pass along the same message. States and fishermen alike have daily experience with the problems associated with this very abundant stock.

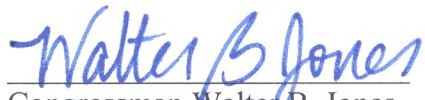
Catch and trade data from the National Marine Fisheries Service show the U.S. industry is almost entirely dependent on the export market. The United States should not take a position in the upcoming negotiations that would hamstring the domestic industry simply because other nations cannot get their own houses in order.

Such a listing would be bad policy for the United States, it would break faith with those who have sacrificed to rebuild the stock, and it would depress a sustainable fishery on an abundant stock of predatory fish.

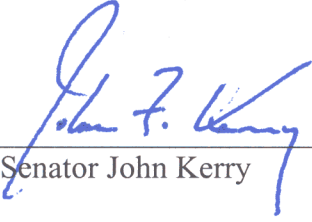
Sincerely,



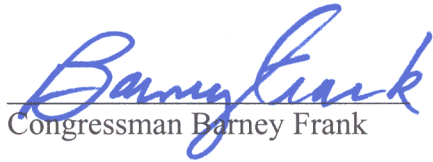
Senator Olympia Snowe



Congressman Walter B. Jones



Senator John Kerry



Congressman Barney Frank



Senator Susan Collins



Congressman Bill Delahunt



Senator Jeanne Shaheen



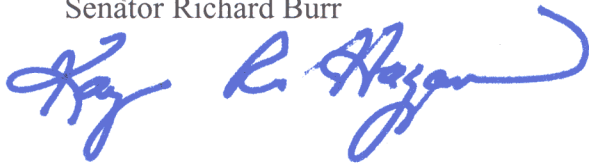
Congressman Robert Wittman



Senator Richard Burr



Congressman Frank Pallone



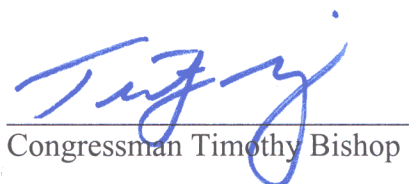
Senator Kay Hagan



Congressman Frank LoBiondo



Senator Paul Kirk



Congressman Timothy Bishop



Senator Judd Gregg



Congresswoman Chellie Pingree



Senator Mark Warner



Congressman Mike McIntyre



Congressman John Adler

Carol Shea-Porter
Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter

John F. Tierney
Congressman John Tierney