

CHARLES E. SCHUMER
NEW YORK

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3203

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November 16, 2010

Honorable Gary F. Locke
Secretary
United States Department of Commerce
Herbert Clark Hoover Building
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Locke:

Thank you for your recent commitment to an additional \$15 million in cooperative fisheries research as a follow-up to recent meetings with New York and New England delegation members representing America's fishermen. Today, we are writing to urge your support for sustained, annual funding for the Northeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (NEAMAP) Inshore Ocean Trawl Survey. The information provided through this survey will ensure that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the states have the data needed for coastal fishery stock assessments. While a total of \$5 million is urgently needed now, over the long term we strongly encourage you to make NEAMAP funding part of NOAA's base budget so that this critical initiative can be sustained well into the future.

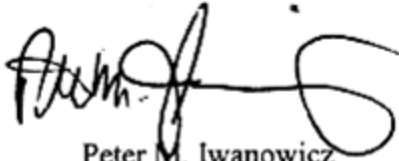
Fisheries management is a complex process with exceptional data demands. The more robust and sound fisheries data is, the more effective fisheries management programs will be. NEAMAP, an integrated, cooperative state/federal data collection program, ensures that this robust data is available by facilitating the collection and dissemination of fishery-independent information obtained in the Northeast for use by state and federal fisheries management agencies, the commercial and recreational fishing industry, researchers, and others requesting such information. The Inshore Ocean Trawl Survey also is a model of cooperative research because it involves a university and commercial fishermen as well as government. The intent of NEAMAP is to coordinate and standardize procedures and improve data quality and accessibility. Along with New York, NEAMAP surveys will benefit all of the Atlantic coast states north of South Carolina.

NEAMAP grew out of an Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission resolution in October 1997 to begin development of a coordinated fisheries-independent sampling program in the Northeast region. The NEAMAP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was approved on March 28, 2003, with all partner agencies signing by October 2004. Thus, NEAMAP's ability to deliver the comprehensive data that fisheries managers need is well-assured.

Since the amount of data necessary to properly conduct fisheries management is often very extensive, no single fishery management agency has the fiscal, personnel, or physical capabilities to meet the objectives of state, interstate, and federal fishery management plans currently in place, nor those planned for the future. To overcome the problems associated with insufficient funding and similar limitations, DEC and other fisheries agencies often combine resources and share responsibilities to gather information that we might not have been able to accomplish on our own. The benefits of cooperative sampling efforts include more cost efficient and time efficient sampling, the ability to sample over a larger geographic area or longer period of time, and more consistent sampling protocols within that area or time.

The data which the NEAMAP Inshore Ocean Trawl Survey would provide is critically needed by New York and other northeastern states. With your support, we can make sustained funding for the Survey a reality. We look forward to working with you on this essential initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter M. Iwanowicz".

Peter M. Iwanowicz
Acting Commissioner
NYS DEC

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charles E. Schumer".

Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator