

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 5, 2011

The Honorable Gary Locke
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Locke:

We thank you again for demonstrating a thorough understanding of the economic difficulties facing fishermen throughout the state of Massachusetts. Your decision to deploy Economic Development and Assessment Teams to New England fishing communities will undoubtedly reveal the urgent need to provide our fishermen with tangible economic recovery solutions. We eagerly await your response to our March 17th letter requesting high-level interagency coordination to assess and evaluate all options to provide assistance to our struggling fishing communities.


The groundfish fishery in Massachusetts has struggled to adapt to strict regulations, and it was only until recently that many of our sectors developed an organized system to trade fishing stocks. As the end of the fishing season draws to a close, it is evident that several individual fishing stocks quotas remain to be filled. For example, only 67% of the total allocation of George's Bank Cod has been caught and only 16.5% of the George's Bank Haddock. Under Amendment 16, sectors are allowed to carry over up to 10 percent of unused quota for each stock into the next fishing year, with the exception of Georges Bank yellowtail flounder. In order to maximize the economic development of our local fisheries, we respectfully request that you consider increasing the percentage of unmet quota that can be rolled-over into the 2011-2012 fishing year. Adding unmet allocations of fishing stocks to the assigned quota for the coming year will allow the Massachusetts fleet to fish within the current fishing year allocations, and set reasonable limits for next year to provide the fleet with an opportunity to profit.

Again, we thank you for your attention to this matter and look forward to your prompt response.

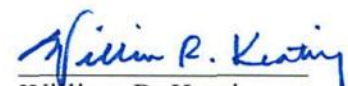
Sincerely,



John F. Kerry
U.S. Senator



Barney Frank
Member of Congress



William R. Keating
Member of Congress