



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

SENATE MINORITY LEADER

STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

SENATOR BRUCE E. TARR
1ST ESSEX AND MIDDLESEX
ROOM 308
(617) 722-1600

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**CONTACT: Troy Wall or
Michael Smith**
Senator Tarr's office
617-722-1600
troy.wall@masenate.gov
michael.smith@masenate.gov

Senator Tarr files MA Seafood Marketing Program bill

BOSTON – In the face of serious threats to the survival of the groundfish industry in Massachusetts and major challenges to the viability of other commercial fishing sectors, Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester) has filed legislation to bring the force of state government to the marketing of seafood products to aid in the survival and ongoing sustainability of one of the Commonwealth's oldest industries.

The bill, which calls for the establishment of a Massachusetts Seafood Marketing Program within the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF), has drawn the support of 23 co-sponsors in the House of Representatives and the Senate. It calls for the establishment of a coordinated program within DMF to market seafood landed in the Commonwealth and to take actions to increase consumer demand and preference for the local seafood products and support for the Commonwealth's fishing and seafood industry.

“Reduced catch shares imposed under new federal regulations that went into effect May 1 have pushed our commercial groundfishing industry to the verge of extinction,” said Senator Tarr. “This proposal is just one of many avenues we can and should pursue to help save the industry and ensure that commercial fishing remains viable in Massachusetts.”

The legislation reflects the recommendations made by the Special Commission on Seafood Marketing in its July 2013 report. Senator Tarr served on the commission, along with Representative James Cantwell (D-Marshfield), Senator Mark Montigny (D-New Bedford) and Representative George Peterson (R-Grafton), all of whom are co-sponsoring the new bill.

The objectives of the proposed marketing program include but are not limited to:

- Increasing the public's knowledge about the health benefits of eating seafood and the economic importance of the Commonwealth's fishing industry;
- Educating the public on fisheries resources, management and commercial fishing to build consumer confidence;

- Creating name recognition and increasing consumer demand and preference for Commonwealth seafood products;
- Stabilizing market prices through the promotion of the Commonwealth seafood products in low consumer demand or when the supply of said products is high;
- Developing a variety of promotional and educational tools and strategies to achieve the program's purpose and objectives; and
- Identifying a range of sources and mechanisms to fund program activities and to increase the scope of program outreach to the public and other stakeholders.

The legislation also creates a permanent steering committee to assist DMF in the administration of the seafood marketing program. This committee will include representatives of wholesale seafood dealers, seafood retail businesses, seafood restaurant businesses, fishing industry advocacy organizations, and the commercial fishing/harvesting industry, including representatives of the lobster, scallop and wild caught shellfish industries.

In addition, the bill establishes the Massachusetts Seafood Marketing Program Fund to be administered by the DMF. This fund will be used to help provide ongoing financial support for the administration of the Massachusetts Seafood Marketing Program.

The following is a complete list of co-sponsors on the seafood marketing program bill and a copy of the bill text:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Bruce E. Tarr</i>	<i>First Essex and Middlesex</i>
<i>James M. Cantwell</i>	<i>4th Plymouth</i>
<i>Matthew A. Beaton</i>	<i>11th Worcester</i>
<i>Antonio F. D. Cabral</i>	<i>13th Bristol</i>
<i>Eileen M. Donoghue</i>	<i>First Middlesex</i>
<i>Ann-Margaret Ferrante</i>	<i>5th Essex</i>
<i>Lori A. Ehrlich</i>	<i>8th Essex</i>
<i>Linda Dorcena Forry</i>	<i>First Suffolk</i>
<i>Donald F. Humason, Jr.</i>	<i>Second Hampden and Hampshire</i>
<i>Susan Williams Gifford</i>	<i>2nd Plymouth</i>
<i>Steven S. Howitt</i>	<i>4th Bristol</i>
<i>Robert M. Koczera</i>	<i>11th Bristol</i>
<i>Joan B. Lovely</i>	<i>Second Essex</i>
<i>Mark C. Montigny</i>	<i>Second Bristol and Plymouth</i>
<i>Frank A. Moran</i>	<i>17th Essex</i>
<i>Sarah K. Peake</i>	<i>4th Barnstable</i>
<i>George N. Peterson, Jr.</i>	<i>9th Worcester</i>
<i>Michael J. Rodrigues</i>	<i>First Bristol and Plymouth</i>
<i>Theodore C. Speliotis</i>	<i>13th Essex</i>
<i>Paul McMurtry</i>	<i>11th Norfolk</i>
<i>Shaunna O'Connell</i>	<i>3rd Bristol</i>
<i>David T. Vieira</i>	<i>3rd Barnstable</i>
<i>Daniel A. Wolf</i>	<i>Cape and Islands</i>
<i>Jerald A. Parisella</i>	<i>6th Essex</i>

SENATE No.

By Mr. Tarr, a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Bruce E. Tarr, James M. Cantwell, Matthew A. Beaton, Antonio F. D. Cabral and other members of the General Court for legislation to establish a Massachusetts Seafood Marketing Program. Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Thirteen

An Act establishing a Massachusetts Seafood Marketing Program.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 21A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2012 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following new section:-

Section 24. (a) There shall be established within the division of marine fisheries (DMF) a coordinated program to market seafood landed in the commonwealth and to take other actions to increase consumer demand and preference for the said local seafood products and support for the commonwealth’s fishing and seafood industry and the residents and communities that benefit from these activities. More specifically, the objectives of said program may include, but are not limited to:

- (i) Increasing the public’s knowledge about the health benefits of consuming seafood and the economic importance of the commonwealth’s fishing industry to the local economy and communities;
- (ii) Educating the public on fisheries resources, fisheries management and commercial fishing to build consumer confidence in the sustainable basis for commercial fishing in the commonwealth;
- (iii) Creating name recognition and increasing consumer demand and preference for commonwealth seafood products, including through the use of brand name, logo or other actions to differentiate them from other seafood products;
- (iv) Stabilizing market prices through the promotion of the commonwealth seafood products in low consumer demand or when the supply of said products is high;
- (v) Developing a variety of promotional and educational tools and strategies to achieve the program’s purpose and objectives, including employing market research and social media; and
- (vi) Identifying a range of sources and mechanisms to fund program activities and to increase the scope of program outreach to the public and other stakeholders.

(b) The director of dmf shall appoint a permanent steering committee to assist DMF in the administration of its seafood marketing program, including in the areas of strategic planning, financial management, prioritization of programmatic initiatives, and in pursuing funding for program activates from outside sources such governments, non-governmental organizations, and industry stakeholders and other private parties. The membership of said steering committee shall be composed of 2 members of the senate, one of whom shall be appointed by the senate minority leader; 2 members from the house of representatives, 1 of whom shall be appointed by the house minority leader; 1 representative of wholesale seafood dealers; 1 representative of seafood retail businesses; 1 representative of seafood restaurant businesses; 2 representatives of fishing industry advocacy organizations; 4 representatives of the commercial fishing/harvesting industry, 1 of whom shall be a representative of the lobster industry, 1 of whom shall be a representative of the scallop industry, and 1 of whom shall be a representative of the wild caught shellfish industry; the director of the division of the marine fisheries

or his designee; the commissioner of the department of the fish and game or her designee; and the commissioner of the department of agricultural resources or his designee.

SECTION 2. Chapter 29 of the General Laws as appearing in the 2012 official edition is hereby amended by inserting after section 2XXXX the following section:

2XXXX. There shall be established and set up on the books of the Commonwealth a separate fund to be administered by the division of marine fisheries (DMF), and to be known as the Massachusetts Seafood Marketing Program Fund. The following monies shall be credited to the fund: notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, a portion of the monies collected from the sale of commercial harvester and dealer permits issued by the division of marine fisheries pursuant to chapter 130 not to exceed \$250,000 per fiscal year; any appropriations, grants, gifts, or other monies authorized by the general court or other parties and specifically designed to be credited to the fund; and any income derived from the investment of amounts credited to the fund. All amounts credited to the fund shall be used, without further appropriation, for the purpose of developing and administering the Massachusetts Seafood Marketing Program established pursuant to section 23 of Chapter 21A, provided that said program expenditures shall be made in consultation with the department of fish and game and its division of marine fisheries and are consistent with any program priorities identified by the steering committee established pursuant to said section 23 of chapter 21a. No expenditure from the fund shall cause the fund to be in deficiency at the close of a fiscal year. Monies deposited in the fund that are unexpended at the end of the fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund and shall be available for expenditure in the subsequent year. The fund shall be exempt from the indirect and fringe benefits that would otherwise be assessed by the commonwealth pursuant to chapter 29.

SECTION 3 Section 1 of said chapter 29 of the General Laws as appearing in the 2012 official edition is hereby amended by inserting at the end of the definition of “Consolidated net surplus in the budgetary funds” in line 54 the following words :- “and section 2XXXX of chapter 29.”

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