

THE GENERAL COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

April 14, 2016

Dr. William A. Karp
NEFSC Science and Research Director, NOAA
166 Water Street
Woods Hole, MA 02543-1026

Re: Combined High Resolution Video and Dredge Survey of
Georges Bank Access Areas (16-SCA-22)

Dear Dr. Karp:

We are writing to express our profound concern over the rejection of the UMass Dartmouth research proposal which was communicated to the University on March 29, 2016 by the Cooperative Research Program Director John J. Hoey. As you know, the proposed research project by the University was generated from the School for Marine Science & Technology (SMAST) and reflects their many years of providing high quality, peer reviewed ocean research.

The panel comments which were shared with the University after the review are, in our view, of limited scope and frankly miss the point of the research program itself, which derives substantial monies from the commercial fishing industry itself. That factor is the need for independent reviews of the available scallop biomass in Georges Bank. The funded research efforts are more associated with the historic approach of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in evaluating the resource. We have seen over the years, since the 1990's how SMAST research has been able to document scallop resources which the Federal agencies had not been able to identify.

Whatever the reason for these differences in results, the SMAST studies have stood the test of time and have positively helped the Council in its regulatory function under Magnuson. Cutting out the independent approach provided by the University of Massachusetts is not only scientifically questionable, but undercuts the ability of the

Federal government to make sound assessments, formulate plans and explain those actions in the very complicated area of fisheries management.

We believe you need to take steps to right this wrong and appreciate your renewed efforts toward that end.

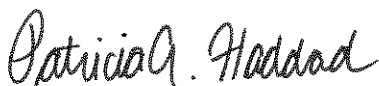
Sincerely,



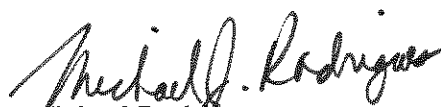
William M. Straus
State Representative



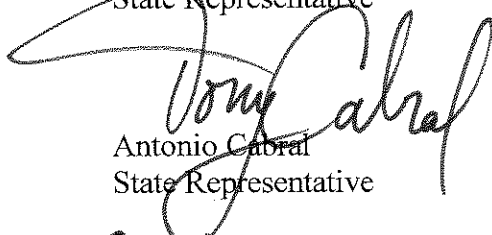
Mark Montigny
State Senator



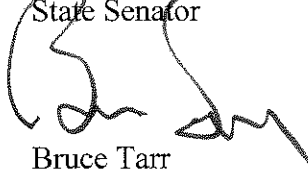
Patricia Haddad
State Representative



Michael Rodriguez
State Senator



Antonio Cabral
State Representative



Bruce Tarr
State Senator



Christopher Markey
State Representative



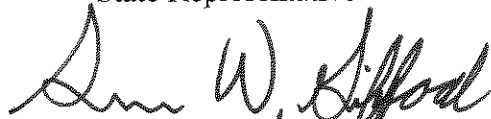
Robert Koczera
State Representative



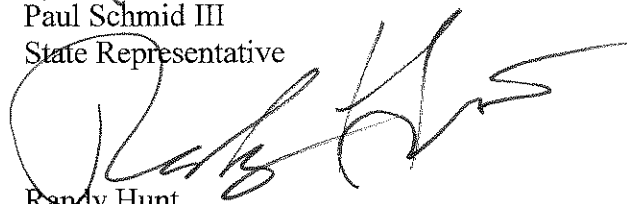
Ann-Margaret Ferrante
State Representative



Paul Schmid III
State Representative



Susan Williams Gifford
State Representative



Randy Hunt
State Representative



Frank Moran
State Representative



Timothy Madden
State Representative



Timothy Whelan
State Representative



Daniel Ryan
State Representative



Elizabeth Poirier
State Representative