

The logo features a circular emblem with a lighthouse and a fishing boat. To the right of the emblem, the text "National Coalition for Fishing Communities" is written in a large, blue, sans-serif font.

National Coalition for Fishing Communities

September 11, 2018

RDML Tim Gallaudet, Ph.D., USN Ret.
Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and
Acting Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere
United States Department of Commerce
Herbert C. Hoover Building, Room 6811
14th & Constitution Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Dr. Gallaudet:

We, the undersigned, are elected and appointed officials, commercial fishermen and other business leaders affiliated with, or in support of the Port of New Bedford, America's highest grossing commercial fishing port. We write to follow up on a letter many of us signed, dated March 7, 2016, in which we recommended to then-NOAA Administrator Kathryn Sullivan that the Administration select New Bedford as the site of the new Northeast Fisheries Science Center, which is now located in Woods Hole, Massachusetts. We firmly believe that on the merits, New Bedford is hands-down the best location for the new facility. We write today in the hope that the new management team at NOAA will take a fresh look at the matter.

As we argued more fully in the original letter, we believe that by siting the facility in the undisputed center of the commercial fishing industry on the East Coast, the Administration could at last begin to break down barriers to communication, and repair the distrust that has plagued the relationship between the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the fishing industry in the Northeast for decades. As we noted in the letter, the pressing need to replace the antiquated facility in Woods Hole presents a rare opportunity to improve regulatory outcomes and build public confidence in government decision making:

A major factor in this history of ineffective engagement with the industry is the simple fact that in the Northeast, government scientists operate in places that are physically remote from active fishing communities. Nowhere is this more true than in Woods Hole, where there is virtually no industry presence nearby. Establishing the center in Woods Hole may have made sense in the late 19th Century, but its continued operation today, far removed from those who actually fish, perpetuates an ivory

tower problem that has bred resentment and distrust among members of one of the country's oldest industries.

As the letter further explained, if the science center were located in New Bedford, the Administration could be assured that its personnel would have considerably greater opportunity for formal and informal interaction with industry stakeholders, and each side would get to know one another in ways and to a degree that have long eluded both.

Administrator Sullivan promptly responded to the letter with a brief note that the Administration was engaged in a "Business Case Analysis" of locations in the Northeast, including New Bedford and Woods Hole. Months later, a NOAA spokesperson informed media outlets on Cape Cod that the analysis had ruled out every possible location except for Woods Hole.

To our knowledge, the final report has not been made available outside the Administration. We are therefore unable to offer at this time a point-by-point response to its findings. Nevertheless, based on discussions with NMFS personnel, it is apparent that the analysis was deeply flawed. Consider the following:

First, officials in New Bedford were not approached about the availability of suitable sites, and there has never been any indication from the Administration that it considered any *specific* New Bedford site (there are in fact several suitable locations).

Second, insofar as the Agency may have considered New Bedford generally, at no point was the New Bedford Port Authority approached about the availability of docking space for NOAA research vessels (which is far more ample in New Bedford than Woods Hole).

Third, in evaluating the costs of constructing the new facility, at no point were New Bedford or state officials asked about the extent to which the City or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts could offer direct or in-kind support to offset the project's cost to the federal government.

Fourth, no public meetings were held in New Bedford (or anywhere else to our knowledge) to receive industry input into the analysis.

Fifth, and perhaps most troubling, NMFS officials acknowledge that the analysis did not consider the benefits of constructing the facility in a major commercial fishing port.

In light of these critical gaps in the analysis, we believe that the feasibility study lacks the credibility to support a facility's siting decision that will affect the regulation of the commercial fishing industry for decades to come.

Fortunately, it is not too late to revisit this analysis, as the design and planning of the new facility has not begun. We submit that with a new management team in place at NOAA that is taking a fresh look at existing policies and practices, a new feasibility study should be undertaken that properly incorporates into its analysis the elements outlined above, and perhaps others. In addition, to promote transparency and encourage public and stakeholder input into the process, the Administration should release the original report.

We hope that the Administration recognizes this matter for what it really is, namely, a once-in-a-generation opportunity to further the mission of the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, rebuild the Administration's relationship with the fishing industry in the Northeast, and to create conditions for a new era of respect, trust and cooperation. Likewise, an insistence on grounding the siting of the science center in a plainly inadequate study will only serve to further erode the fishing industry's confidence in NMFS's ability to fulfill its mission. Among those who have witnessed the interaction between NMFS and the fishing industry in this part of the country, no one can deny that something has to change.

We thank you for your consideration, and respectfully request that your office respond directly to the Executive Director of the Port of New Bedford, Edward Anthes-Washburn.

Sincerely,

Elected Officials

Jon Mitchell, Mayor, City of New Bedford
Mark Montigny, State Senator
Antonio F.D. Cabral, State Representative
Robert Koczera, State Representative
Christopher Markey, State Representative
Paul Schmid, State Representative
William Straus, State Representative
Linda Morad, City Council President
Brad Markey, Councillor, Ward One
Maria Giesta, Councillor, Ward Two
Hugh Dunn, Councillor, Ward Three
Dana Rebeiro, Councillor, Ward Four
Scott Lima, Councillor, Ward Five
Joseph Lopes, Councillor, Ward Six
Ian Abreu, At-large Councillor
Naomi Carney, At-large Councillor
Debora Coelho, At-large Councillor
Brian K. Gomes, At-large Councillor

New Bedford Port Authority

Dr. Brian Rothschild, Vice Chairman
Joseph Tavares, Treasurer
Davis Sullivan, Clerk
Richard Canastra
James Dwyer
Patricia Lareau
Edward Anthes-Washburn, Executive Director

Members of the Fishing Industry

Mass Fabricating, New Bedford, MA
Mass Contracting and Construction, New Bedford, MA
W. Trading, New Bedford, MA
Bergie's Seafood, New Bedford, MA
Cape Quality Seafood, Inc., New Bedford, MA
BASE New England, New Bedford, MA
Whaling City Seafood Display Auction, New Bedford, MA
Atlantic Red Crab Company, New Bedford, MA
North Carolina Fisheries Association
O'Hara Corp., Rockland, ME
Nordic Fisheries, Inc., New Bedford, MA
Dockside Repairs, Inc., New Bedford, MA
Marine Hydraulics USA, Inc., New Bedford, MA
Maintenance Solutions, Inc., New Bedford, MA
RCP Realty, LLC, New Bedford, MA
MAE Realty, LLC, New Bedford, MA
M & B Sea Products Inc., New Bedford, MA
Pier Oil, New Bedford, MA
Luzo Fuel, New Bedford, MA
Quinn Fisheries Inc., New Bedford, MA
Standard Marine Outfitters LLC, New Bedford, MA
Light House Marine, New Bedford, MA
East Coast Fabrication Inc., New Bedford, MA
Shoreline Resources LLC, New Bedford, MA
Herman Melville LLC, New Bedford, MA
Challenge Fisheries LLC, New Bedford, MA
Patience Fisheries LLC, New Bedford, MA
Harvester Fisheries LLC, New Bedford, MA
Incentive Fisheries LLC, New Bedford, MA
Socatean LLC, New Bedford, MA
Celtic Fisheries LLC, New Bedford, MA
Tempest Fisheries, Inc., New Bedford, MA

Homeport: New Bedford, Massachusetts

F/V Freedom
F/V Venture
F/V Liberty

F/V Justice
F/V Edgartown
F/V Beiningen
F/V Huntress
F/V Vantage
F/V Vanquish
F/V Debbie Ann
F/V Fair Wind
F/V Ann M.
F/V Kathy & Jackie
F/V Canyon Express
F/V Eagle
F/V Explorer
F/V Freedom
F/V Growler
F/V Kodiak
F/V Liberty
F/V Pacer
F/V Seven Seas
F/V Ambition
F/V Expectation
F/V Fjord
F/V Frontier
F/V Generation
F/V Horizon
F/V Maelstrom
F/V Neskone
F/V Nordic Pride
F/V Norseman
F/V Perception
F/V Reflection
F/V Rost
F/V Tradition
F/V Wisdom
F/V Friendship
F/V Nashira
F/V Polaris
F/V Pyxis
F/V Orion
F/V Reliance
F/V Resolution
F/V Weatherly
F/V Ocean Cat
F/V Sovereign Star
F/V Capt. Jeff
F/V Viking Power
F/V Mirage
F/V Miss Leslie

F/V Miss Shauna
F/V Blue Delta
F/V Blue Eastern
F/V Monomoy
F/V Blue Lagoon
F/V Blue North
F/V Blue Pacific
F/V Miss Freya
F/V Blue South
F/V Miss Ella
F/V Temptress
F/V Luzo America I
F/V Catherine Lane

Homeport: Fairhaven, Massachusetts

F/V Hear No Evil
F/V Bountiful II
F/V Diligence
F/V Max & Emma
F/V Miss Emma
F/V Independence

Homeport: Rockland, Maine

F/V Araho
F/V Arcturus
F/V Ranger

Homeport: Westport Island, Maine

F/V Benthic Mariner
F/V Hannah Boden
F/V Benthic Lady
F/V William Bowe
F/V Heddie Boden

Homeport: Newport, Rhode Island

F/V Revolution

Homeport: Tiverton, Rhode Island

F/V Diamond girl

Homeport: Point Judith, Rhode Island

F/V Timberwolf

Homeport: Cape May, New Jersey

F/V Amber Nicole
F/V Andrea A.
F/V Determination
F/V Hawk

F/V John & Nicholas
F/V Karen Nicole
F/V Leader
F/V Master James
F/V Nadia Lee
F/V Ocean Blue
F/V Ocean Boy
F/V Ocean Gold
F/V Ocean Pride
F/V Ocean Princess
F/V Ocean Prowler
F/V Ocean Wave
F/V Princess Scarlett
F/V Stacy Lee
F/V Collin & Warren III

Homeport: Hampton, Virginia

F/V North Cape
F/V Sea King

Homeport: Seaford, Virginia

F/V Alaska
F/V Italian Princess

Homeport: Newport News, Virginia

F/V Ocean Lady
F/V Ocean Leader
F/V Ocean Prowler
F/V Ocean Scout
F/V Ocean Pursuit
F/V Miss Mildred
F/V Cove
F/V Blue Canyon
F/V Blue Cove
F/V Blue Harbor
F/V Blue Harvest
F/V Ocean Hunter
F/V Ocean Fox
F/V Blue Water
F/V Blue Ocean,
F/V Blue Sea
F/V Blue Stream
F/V Blue Wave
F/V Blue Western

Homeport: Grantsboro, North Carolina

F/V Cameron Scott

Homeport New Bern, North Carolina

F/V Gaston's Legacy
F/V Capt. Carl
F/V Micah Bell
F/V Capt. Gaston
F/V Miss Caroline
F/V Colten Scott
F/V Miss Tyler
F/V Jonathan Ryan
F/V Jeffrey Scott
F/V Ashton Matthew
F/V Sassy Girl

New Bedford Regeneration Committee

Anthony Sapienza, Co-Chair, President, New Bedford Economic Development Council
Gerry Kavanaugh, Co-Chair, President, LStar Investments
Liz Isherwood, Chair, Greater New Bedford Industrial Foundation
Helena DaSilva Hughes, Executive Director, Immigrants' Assistance Center
Adam Cove, CEO, Edson International
David Wechsler, President and CEO, Maritime International
Dr. Laura Douglas, President, Bristol Community College
Chris Rezendes, Founder and President, INEX Adviors
Scott Dubois, Co-Founder, Pidalia
John Vasconcellos, President, Community Foundation of Southeastern Mass
Maureen Sylvia Armstrong, President, CEO and Owner, Sylvia Group Insurance
Jennifer Downing, Executive Director, Leadership Southcoast
Quentin Ricciardi, CEO, Acorn Management
Bob Unger, Chairman, Leadership Southcoast
Sarah Athanas, Co-Founder, Groundwork!
Patrick Murray, President and CEO, Bristol County Savings Bank
James Lopes, New Bedford Historical Commission
Anne Broholm, CEO, Ahead, LLC
Jeff Glassman, President, Darnit! Inc.
Nicholas Christ, President and CEO, BayCoast Bank
Rick Kidder, President and CEO, Southcoast Chamber of Commerce
David Slutz, Managing Director, Potentia Business Solutions
James O'Brien, Superintendent, Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School
Rosemary Gill, Executive Director, Zeiterion Performing Arts Center
Derek Santos, Executive Director, New Bedford Economic Development Council

cc:

Senator Elizabeth Warren
Senator Edward J. Markey
Congressman William Keating (Massachusetts, 9th)

Wilbur Ross, Secretary of Commerce

Mike Platt, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs

Stuart Levenbach, Chief of Staff, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration

Chris Oliver, NOAA Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

Jon Hare, Director, NOAA Northeast Science Center

Governor Charlie Baker, Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito, Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Matthew Beaton, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Commonwealth of
Massachusetts

Dr. David Pierce, Director of the Division of Marine Fisheries, Commonwealth of
Massachusetts

Jay Ash, Secretary of Housing and Economic Development , Commonwealth of
Massachusetts

Carolyn Kirk, Deputy Secretary of Housing and Economic Development , Commonwealth of
Massachusetts