



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE GENERAL COURT

STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

July 23rd, 2020

The Honorable Neil Jacobs, Ph.D.
Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Environmental Observation and Prediction
Acting Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room 5128
Washington, DC 20230

Mr. Chris Oliver
Assistant Administrator for NOAA Fisheries
Director of National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA Fisheries
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Mr. Michael Pentony
Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service, Greater Atlantic Region
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

Dr. Jon Hare
Science and Research Director
Northeast Fisheries Science Center
166 Water Street
Woods Hole, MA 0254

Dear Under Secretary Jacobs, Mr. Oliver, Mr. Pentony, and Dr. Hare:

Thank you for extending the waiver for the requirement of At-Sea Monitoring (ASM) in the Northeast groundfishery through July 31, 2020. This action was critical to protecting the health and safety of the men and women in the Massachusetts commercial fishing industry.

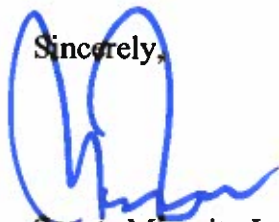
While COVID-19 trends in the Northeast have been generally positive, many coastal areas continue to see cases rising, including Suffolk, Bristol, and Barnstable counties here in Massachusetts, all of Rhode Island, and Virginia Beach County, Virginia. As Senator Tarr's June 30, 2020 letter to you, the commercial fishing industry remains among the most vulnerable to COVID-19 due to the inherent conditions of their working environment at sea. Furthermore, the

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has warned that this fall and winter will likely see a secondary outbreak of COVID-19.

Despite the initial extension of ASM waivers in the Northeast groundfishery, the issues outlined in Senator Tarr's letter of June 30, 2020 persist today. Therefore, in the interest of protecting our commercial fishing communities and to prevent exacerbating the spread of COVID-19, we strongly urge you to extend the ASM requirement waiver until a time when it is safe to resume this form of monitoring.

Thank you for your attention to this request, and please do not hesitate to contact me if I may be of further assistance.

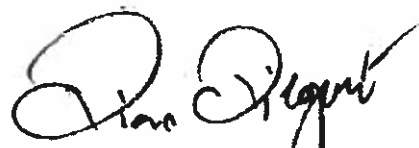
Sincerely,



Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr



Senator Mark Montigny



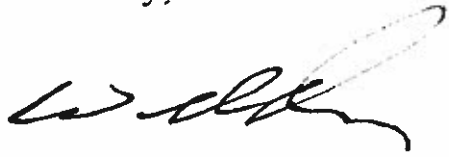
Senator Diana DiZoglio




Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante



Representative Susan Gifford



Representative Will Crocker



Representative Angelo Scaccia



Representative Theodore Speliotis



Representative Lenny Mirra



Representative Steven Howitt

- CC: Governor Baker
Senator Warren
Senator Markey
Massachusetts Congressional Delegation
Massachusetts Coastal Caucus
Mayor Theken
Mayor Walsh
Gloucester City Council
New England Fishery Management Council
Massachusetts Director of Marine Fisheries McKiernan

Massachusetts Fisherman's Partnership

Northeast Seafood Coalition