



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

MARGARET WOOD HASSAN
Governor

April 24, 2014

Mr. John Bullard, Regional Administrator
Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
NOAA Fisheries Service
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

Dear Mr. Bullard:

On behalf of the State of New Hampshire, I am writing to express my support for allocating the Northeast Groundfish Disaster funds directly to the states impacted by the disaster.

The Northeast Groundfish Disaster has had a significant impact on New Hampshire's treasured fishing industry, and the economic consequences continue to ripple across the Seacoast and New Hampshire's business community. To date, our industry has suffered losses exceeding \$2 million, a significant figure given the relatively small scale of our groundfishing fleet. In addition, the consequences of the groundfish disaster go beyond the most recent monetary losses our industry has suffered.

In the past ten years, stringent regulation has resulted in the reduction of our state's fishing infrastructure, and the drastic reductions in catch limits that caused the Northeast Groundfish Disaster have added additional pressure. Our last remaining shoreside facilities are struggling to stay afloat and are in desperate need of financial assistance. A direct assistance plan would help bring stability to our fishing infrastructure and ensure that our fishermen continue to have access to these crucial facilities.

The groundfish disaster also puts the diversity of our groundfish fleet at risk. A diverse fleet is beneficial for both New Hampshire and the region. Fleet diversity helps provide greater local economic benefits and improved conservation outcomes. In order to ensure fleet diversity, the state needs to have direct access to the disaster funds. Under a direct assistance plan, state officials would have the ability to direct funds to those who need it most – ensuring a diverse groundfish fleet with both small and large vessels.

The fishing industry in our region is varied and diverse. And there is no one-size-fits-all plan that can adequately address the needs of each state's fishing industry. The right solution for New Hampshire may not be the right solution for our neighbors. The best approach is to ensure that each state can develop a plan that reflects the unique needs of its fishing industry.

Thank you for taking the time to carefully consider the benefits of a direct assistance plan. I look forward to working with you to bring stability to the fishing industry in New Hampshire and the region.

With every good wish,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maggie" followed by a stylized flourish.

Margaret Wood Hassan
Governor

cc: The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen, US Senator
The Honorable Kelly Ayotte, US Senator
The Honorable Carol Shea-Porter, US Representative
The Honorable Ann McLane Kuster, US Representative
Doug Grout, Chief of Marine Fisheries, NH Fish and Game Department
Eileen Sobeck, Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA Fisheries
Dr. Kathryn Sullivan, Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans & Atmosphere and
NOAA Administrator