

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 7, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy,

We write to urge the inclusion of support for the American seafood industry in the next coronavirus relief measure. Our seafood processors and fishermen have been dealt a significant economic blow as a result of coronavirus and are in desperate need of federal assistance.

The seafood industry is critical to local and regional economies across the country. In 2016, the industry supported over one million good-paying jobs and generated more than \$144 billion in sales, adding an estimated \$61 billion to the nation's GDP. In addition to the jobs, families, and communities it supports along every part of our country's coastlines, the seafood industry fuels jobs throughout the country in processing and distribution.

Due to efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19, which has led to a near total shutdown of restaurants and other outlets serving fresh seafood, the supply chain of fishermen and seafood processors has been decimated. Notably, more than 68% of the \$102.2 billion that consumers paid for U.S. fishery products in 2017 was spent at food service establishments. It has been reported that many of the nation's fisheries have suffered sales declines as high as 95 percent. In addition, while many other agricultural sectors have seen a significant increase in grocery sales, seafood has been left out of that economic upside, as stores have cut back on offerings.

We strongly urge you to include in the next coronavirus stimulus package at least \$2 billion for the U.S. Department of Agriculture to purchase domestically harvested and processed seafood products and distribute them to local, state, and national non-profits providing food to hungry Americans. Given that few seafood producers have historically participated in USDA commodity purchasing programs, we request that \$1 billion be set aside to finance the purchase by USDA of seafood products that have not typically been purchased and that have experienced economic impacts as a result of coronavirus.

We also ask that you include an additional \$1.5 billion for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration under the terms of section 12005 of the CARES Act (P.L. 116-136) in order to provide direct relief to Tribal, subsistence, commercial, and charter fishery participants impacted by coronavirus. We request that Congress appropriate and permit the Secretary to make funding available as soon as practicable to all fishery participants, including commercial and recreational fishing and seafood businesses that have been impacted by declines in tourism and the closure of restaurants and other food services industries.

The seafood industry is currently facing an unprecedented collapse in demand because of the novel coronavirus. We urge you to facilitate the government purchase of seafood products that would both ensure stability in this key sector and provide healthy, domestically produced food for Americans.

Thank you for your attention to this critical request, and for your continued support of America's seafood industry.

Sincerely,



Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress

Garret Graves  
Member of Congress

Steven M. Palazzo  
Member of Congress

Kurt Schrader  
Member of Congress

/s/ David Rouzer  
Member of Congress

/s/ Derek Kilmer  
Member of Congress

/s/ Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress

/s/ Lisa Blunt Rochester  
Member of Congress

/s/ Robert J. Wittman  
Member of Congress

/s/ Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress

/s/ Debbie Mucarsel-Powell  
Member of Congress

/s/ Randy K. Weber  
Member of Congress

/s/ William R. Keating  
Member of Congress

/s/ Don Young  
Member of Congress

/s/ Peter A. DeFazio  
Member of Congress

/s/ Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress

/s/ Elaine G. Luria  
Member of Congress

/s/ Andy Harris, M.D.  
Member of Congress

/s/ Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress

/s/ Ed Case  
Member of Congress

/s/ Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress

/s/ Joe Cunningham  
Member of Congress

/s/ Donna E. Shalala  
Member of Congress

/s/ Suzan K. DelBene  
Member of Congress

/s/ W. Gregory Steube  
Member of Congress

/s/ Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress

/s/ Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress

/s/ Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress

/s/ Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress

/s/ Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress

/s/ Lee Zeldin  
Member of Congress

/s/ Jared Golden  
Member of Congress

/s/ Ted S. Yoho, D.V.M.  
Member of Congress

/s/ G. K. Butterfield  
Member of Congress

/s/ Matt Gaetz  
Member of Congress

/s/ Stephanie Murphy  
Member of Congress

/s/ Alcee L. Hastings  
Member of Congress

/s/ David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress

/s/ Gregory F. Murphy, M.D.  
Member of Congress

/s/ Jaime Herrera Beutler  
Member of Congress

/s/ Thomas R. Suozzi  
Member of Congress

/s/ Charlie Crist  
Member of Congress

/s/ Joseph P. Kennedy, III  
Member of Congress

/s/ Filemon Vela  
Member of Congress

/s/ Darren Soto  
Member of Congress

/s/ Jackie Speier  
Member of Congress

/s/ Jenniffer González-Colón  
Member of Congress

/s/ Christopher H. Smith  
Member of Congress

/s/ Denny Heck  
Member of Congress