



ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS
SENATOR DAN SULLIVAN, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, COCHAIR

July 14, 2026

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your commitment to restoring American seafood competitiveness. Your April 2025 Executive Order (EO 14276) rightly recognizes the United States' position—and its potential—to be the world's leading seafood nation. At the same time, the EO acknowledges central challenges to our economy and security posed by illegal fishing and forced labor in seafood supply chains.

China is the most immediate test of your policy, leveraging its vast fishing fleets and processing plants to cheat American fishermen, exploit vulnerable workers, and project power at sea. The United States should not help pay for these egregious behaviors. We urge you to use your authority to make our country the least hospitable market in the world for Chinese harvested seafood.

We encourage you to consider issuing a new Executive Order that would ban seafood caught by Chinese-linked vessels or processed in China from entering the United States.

The reason is simple. Chinese seafood is too often produced through forced labor and enters our market at prices honest American fishermen cannot match. That is not competition. It is abuse shipped into the United States.

Congressional testimony and public investigations document extensive forced labor across China's seafood sector. Workers face debt bondage, passport seizure, violent abuse, trafficked labor, avoidable deaths, and coercive labor transfers into seafood processing. The problem reaches fishing vessels, processing plants, and aquaculture tied to Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) and Tibet.

Federal agencies have already recognized the seriousness of this risk. The U.S. Department of Labor has identified fish harvested by Chinese distant-water vessels as a forced-labor concern, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has made seafood a high-priority

sector under the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA). Those steps were right. The United States market is awash in criminally tainted seafood from China.

The food-safety and inspection record underscores the same concerns. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has imposed import controls on certain seafood from China and Hong Kong because of unsafe drug and additive risks, including products farmed and harvested outside China but processed there. Industry submissions identify more than 100 Chinese seafood exporters shipping to the United States with no record of FDA facility inspections.

The national security risk is just as clear. China's distant-water fleet is not only a commercial fleet. It is a subsidized maritime force that takes resources, pressures coastal states, and expands Beijing's influence. Former Coast Guard leadership has warned that illegal fishing fuels conflict, human trafficking, forced labor, organized crime, corruption, and instability, with the PRC as the principal driver.

This matters in the Western Pacific, Latin America, Africa and the Arctic. Our allies and partners face Chinese fleets that crowd their waters, drain their resources, and challenge the rules at sea. When those products enter the U.S. market, American consumers help finance conduct we oppose and undermine U.S. fisherman who play by the rules.

A ban would also defend American producers. The U.S. International Trade Commission found that removing IUU-associated imports from the U.S. market would increase U.S. commercial fishing operating income by an estimated \$60.8 million and increase U.S. landings by about 70.5 million kilograms. When illegal seafood loses access to our market, lawful fishermen win.

Your Administration already has a workable precedent and expertise already in place to conduct such a ban. The Russian seafood import prohibition covers seafood even when it is routed through third countries or substantially transformed elsewhere. China should face the same anti-evasion rule. Seafood harvested by Chinese-linked vessels should not be washed clean through relabeling, repacking, transshipment, or third-country processing.

I encourage you to issue an Executive Order declaring China's forced-labor and illegal seafood system an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States and banning its import.

The United States cannot inspect every vessel or police every agreement the Chinese routinely break, but we can decide what enters our market. If you engage in illegal fishing and use slave labor, you should not have access to the American market.

Banning Chinese seafood from the United States would back American fishermen, protect American consumers, support our allies, and cut off profits from a system built on abuse and coercion.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dan Sullivan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dan" being more prominent.

Senator Dan Sullivan
Chairman
Congressional-Executive Commission on China

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Smith". The signature is cursive and somewhat compact.

Representative Christopher Smith
Cochairman
Congressional-Executive Commission on China

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dale Strong". The signature is cursive, with the first name "Dale" being more prominent.

Representative Dale Strong
Commissioner
Congressional-Executive Commission on China

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas R. Suozzi". The signature is cursive and somewhat compact.

Representative Tom Suozzi
Commissioner
Congressional-Executive Commission on China