



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

State House  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-1196  
401-222-2080

Gina M. Raimondo  
Governor

December 28, 2015

Senator Jack Reed  
726 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Sheldon Whitehouse  
717 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Congressman James R. Langevin  
109 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman David N. Cicilline  
128 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Reed and Whitehouse and Congressmen Langevin and Cicilline:

I write to lend my strong support to your ongoing efforts to secure seats for Rhode Island on the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council ("MAFMC"). I know that you have been working hard on this issue for some time, and that you have introduced legislation in the Senate and the House of Representatives to address the matter.

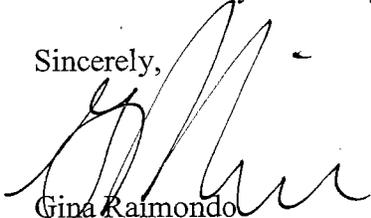
This is a high-priority issue for Rhode Island's marine fishing industry. Janet Coit, Director of the RI Department of Environmental Management, has written to you separately, highlighting the many reasons why Rhode Island should be represented on the MAFMC. Among the most compelling is that the majority of Rhode Island's commercial and recreational fisheries are comprised of stocks managed by the MAFMC. Given the tremendous importance of our marine fisheries to our State's economy, it is critical for us to be part of the decision-making process that determines how our fisheries are managed.

I know we share a common desire to protect and support the interests of our fishermen, as well as a commitment to good governance. The Magnuson-Stevens Act – the primary federal law governing marine fisheries – is intended to provide a fair and reasonable system whereby major state fishing interests are reflected in the voting memberships of the Regional Councils, but that is not the case with regard to the current membership of the MAFMC.

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The rationale for including RI on the MAFMC is strong and convincing. Director Coit and I stand ready to assist you and your staff in any way that we can.

Sincerely,



Gina Raimondo  
Governor

cc: Janet I. Coit, Director  
RI Department of Environmental Management