

November 17, 2022

The Honorable Gina Raimondo
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Raimondo,

We, the undersigned individuals and organizations are fishermen, small and mid-scale seafood producers, family-owned businesses, food sovereignty advocates, Indigenous leaders, and coastal community stakeholders from across the nation. Collectively, we represent all 50 states and 94 individual communities around the nation. We write to you today to urge you to commit a meaningful portion of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) \$2.6 billion appropriation in the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) to support and strengthen coastal, fishery-dependent communities and prioritize small- and medium-scale, independent fishing livelihoods and sustainable, values-driven seafood systems.

U.S. fishing communities are at a critical juncture – facing consolidation within the seafood and fishing industry, environmental impacts and biological variability due to climate change, inflationary pressures affecting our businesses through higher fuel, labor, and equipment costs, and a lack of institutional support from the federal government despite the importance of localized, sustainable fisheries to our national food system.

Fishermen around the nation are engaged and ready to help tackle these challenges, whether through clean energy conversions for fishing vessels, advocating for financial and technical support for young fishermen to build the next generation of fishing businesses, or building strong working relationships with our brothers and sisters in the farming sector to support small-scale, climate-resilient, and sustainable food production. Our values align with the values that informed the Inflation Reduction Act – a piece of legislation that grew out of a transformative vision to build a sustainable future and better the lives of hardworking Americans.

For America's fishermen to help shepherd the vision behind the IRA into transformative policy action, we need NOAA's support to tackle the challenges of climate change, fishery access, and sustainable livelihoods.

Specifically, we urge NOAA to prioritize the following efforts as it prepares to allocate the \$2.6 billion appropriation included in the Inflation Reduction Act:

1. \$100 million for Young Fishermen's Development Grants to support the next generation of climate-resilient fishing livelihoods in coastal communities, subsistence-dependent communities, and communities that are bearing the brunt of consolidation and corporatization within federal fisheries.

2. \$100 million for Saltonstall-Kennedy Grants targeted toward small- and medium-scale, independent fishing and seafood businesses to help them build, promote, and develop their climate-resilient businesses and the sustainability of their fisheries. This funding must be made available through community organizations, Tribes, and trusted partners that have the interests of our local fleet at heart, rather than academic institutions. It cannot be used to subsidize the development of the offshore finfish farming industry, which will undercut our livelihoods and erode the economic foundation of our communities.
3. \$100 million to support and/or finance clean energy opportunities for the nation's small-boat fishing fleet, including vessel retrofits and electric conversions, pilot projects demonstrating new technologies, and outreach and education.
4. \$100 million to support low-interest loans to beginning fishermen for vessel improvements, quota purchases, and gear purchases.
5. \$100 million to fund implementation of recommendations from the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee, specifically the creation and operation of a National Seafood Council, for which MAFAC recommends \$25 million annually. This amount will ensure the operability of the National Seafood Council for the next 4 fiscal years until Congress can approve funding through the Appropriations process.
6. Rapid-response funding to support fishing communities affected by recent extreme weather and climate impacts, including communities in Florida and Western Alaska. We urge NOAA to consider how non-commercial losses are affecting Indigenous fishing communities and undermining food security and cultural expression. NOAA should dedicate funding to support communities' disaster recovery efforts immediately while Congress works to appropriate additional disaster dollars through the legislative process.

For too long, the well-being of small, independent seafood harvesters and fishing communities has received less attention and investment than internal NOAA priorities and funding needs. NOAA has received a monumental allocation of new resources during this Administration through the IRA and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. This historic appropriation included in the IRA is a crucial opportunity for NOAA to demonstrate its dedication to and support independent fishing livelihoods and sustainable seafood production. Transformative change envisioned by the Biden Administration is accomplished from the ground up. Our communities stand ready to help your agency invest in the long-term health of sustainable small-scale fisheries and associated coastal economies nationwide.

We urge you to dedicate a meaningful portion of these funds to the priorities laid out above, alongside any other programs that serve independent fishing livelihoods and small-to-medium-scale coastal economies.

Sincerely,



Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association



Alaska Marine Conservation Council



Alaska Trollers Association



American Albacore Fishing Association



Ashley's Seafood
Eureka, CA



Baileys Harbor Fish Co.
Baileys Harbor, WI



California FarmLink



C&G's Wild Alaska Salmon
Boise, ID



Carmo
New Orleans, LA



Copper River Fish Market
Cordova, AK



Deep Roots Farmers Market
Glen Cove, NY



Don't Cage Our Oceans



Eating With The Ecosystem



Food & Water Watch



Fishadelphia
Philadelphia, PA



Food For Maine's Future



Food Roots
Tillamook, OR



Get Hooked Seafood CSF
Santa Barbara, CA



Gloucester SaLT
Gloucester, MA



GreenJustice
New Orleans, LA



Inland Ocean Coalition



Ivanoff Seafood
Kodiak, AK



Kenai Red Fish Co.



Kitchen Sync Strategies
Seattle, WA



Local Ocean Seafoods Inc.
Newport, OR



Louisiana Shrimp Association



Marine Fish Conservation
Network



Monterey Bay Fisheries Trust



Morro Bay Commercial
Fishermen's Organization



National Family Farm Coalition



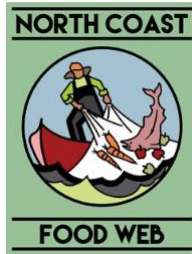
NC Catch
Gloucester, NC



New England Young
Fishermen's Alliance



North American Marine Alliance
Gloucester, MA



North Coast Food Web
Astoria, OR



Ocean Harvesters Operative



Oregon Coast Visitors
Association



Pacific Coast Federation of
Fishermen's Associations



Pure Alaska Salmon Co.
Bellingham, WA



Recirculating Farms
New Orleans, LA



Fishermen Direct Seafood
Gold Beach, OR



SalmonState



Santa Barbara Sportfishing



Scoma's Restaurant Inc.
San Francisco, CA



Sea Alis Seafood Company
Long Beach, MS



Sitka Salmon Shares



Slow Food USA



Slow Food Vegas

**stepwell
strategies**

Stepwell Strategies
Baltimore, MD



Sustainable Business Network
of Massachusetts



Sustainable Food & Culture Inc.
Cambridge, MA



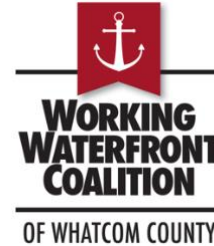
Taproot Earth
Slidell, LA



The Williams Agency
Cambridge, MA



Tre Fin Day Boat Seafood
Ilwaco, WA



Whatcom Working Waterfront
Coalition
Bellingham, WA

Airfresh, LLC
BNS Fisheries
Businesses for Conservation and Climate Action
Drayton Harbor Oyster Co., LLC
Fresh Harvest Kitchen
Friends of the Earth
FV *Daybreak*
Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Association
Legoe Bay Fisheries
LOCAL I'A
Millennium Institute
Noble Ocean Farms
Northeast Organic Farming Association
R&R Marine
San Francisco Crab Boat Owners Association

Saraspe Seafoods
Schoolhouse Fish Co
South Bay Wild Inc.
Sustainable Agriculture of Louisville
Terra Advocati
Volk Fisheries, Inc.
Water Alliance
Yennicott Oysters LLC
Alanna Kieffer, Garibaldi OR
Alexus Kwachka, Kodiak AK
Annie Nehmer, Fisherman, Smith River CA
Anthony Sheppard, Alaska
Anthony Sheppard, Fisherman, Alaska
Arthur Demmert Jr., Captain, Craig AK
Barbara D. Jacobsen, Sonoma CA
Bob Maharry, Los Osos CA
Brenda Biddle, Professor of Anthropology, Brooklyn NY
Brian Trotter, Rockaway OR
Buck Jones, Co-Chair of Tribal Food Sovereignty Subcommittee of Affiliated Tribes of the
Northwest Indians, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
Camilla C. Lombard, Executive Vice President at Sea Forager, San Francisco CA
Captain Tony Vultaggio, Vultaggio Seafood, Santa Barbara CA
Cari Chan, Bellingham Dockside Market Coordinator, Bellingham WA
Carl Wassilie, Yupik Biologist with Salmonberry Tribal Associates, Anchorage AK
Caryn Graves, Berkeley CA
Chelsea Keutmann, Co-owner of Sea to Shore Seafood, Washington and Alaska
Cheryl Call, Sitka AK
Chris Merl, Wellfleet MA
Cynthia Fuller Quinonez, San Diego CA
Cynthia Hicks, Phoenix AZ
Darius Kasprzak, Chair of the Alaska Jig Association, Kodiak AK
David Branshaw, Captain & Owner/Operator of F/V Hero, Cordova AK
David Hays, Commercial Fisherman, Ketchikan AK
David T. Goethel, Retired Commercial Fisherman, Hampton NH
Debra Rehn, Portland OR
Denice Lapierre, Commercial Fisherman, Wellfleet MA
Dion Dante, Owner/Operator, Santa Barbara CA
Dr. Eleanor Wiseman, Maine
Dr. Ron Faich, Albuquerque NM
Dr. Stephanie Webb, Santa Cruz CA
Dustin Connor, Owner/Operator of Connor Enterprise, Petersburg AK
Dwight Barton, Owner of Barton Fisheries Inc, Bellingham WA
Elaine Becker
Emma Hileman, Rutland VT

Emma Kramer, Co-owner of Straight to the Plate, Girdwood AK
Eric Hodge, Commercial Fisherman, Oak View CA
Gary Jackinsky, Fisherman, Ninilchik AK
George Castagnola, Owner & Operator of F/V Sandy Ann and F/V Lady Viking, Bodega Bay CA
Gerry Milliken, Cottonwood AZ
Gina Fuller, District Manager at Southern Rhode Island Conservation District, Rhode Island
Giulia Cardoso, Commercial Fisherman, Bar Harbor ME
Hank Baumgart, President of Icy Strait Seafoods, Juneau AK
Harold Tipping, San Jose CA
J.P. Muhly, Peripatetic Imagineer, Maryland
Jamey Lionette, Director of Sustainable Seafood, Boston MA
Janice Cosentino, Littleton MA
Jason Jarvis, Captain, Westerly RI
Jeanette Carlson, Environmental Coordinator & Healthcare Advocate, Chignik Bay Tribal Council, Chignik AK
Jhana Young, Honolulu HI
Joe Stensgar, Owner of Airfresh Seafoods, Gig Harbor WA
Joe Thornburgh, Commercial Boat Owner, Bodega Bay CA
John Alto, Commercial Fisherman, Oregon
John Keiser, New York
Joshua Kane, Commercial Fisherman, Bar Harbor ME
Kelly Collins Geiser, Petaluma CA
Kendra Zamzow, Former Gillnetter, Chickaloon AK
Kevin Scribner, Owner of Forever Wild Salmon, Walla Walla WA
Kevin Tritt, Anchorage AK
Kris Cooper, Kasilof AK
Kristen Penner, Commercial Fisher, Oregon
Kristin Mahlen, Homer AK
Kristine Hitchin, Eagle River AK
Kurtis Kramer, Captain of F/V Emma Grace, Girdwood AK
Larry Collins, Owner of F/V Autumn Gale, San Francisco CA
Laura Brown, Owner of Fox Point Oysters LLC, Little Bay NH
Laura Steiger, Bellingham WA
Lee Ulshoffer, Colorado
Linda Alstad, Oregon
Lori French, Fish Wife, California
Louisa Siracusa, Vista CA
Lynn Killam, Almond NC
Lynn Steyaart, Co-owner of Honeywilya Fish, Petersburg AK and Duxbury VT
Lynn Wilbur, Juneau AK
Maria B. Steyaart, Co-owner of Honeywilya Fish, Petersburg AK and Duxbury VT
Meghan Haslam, Massachusetts
Michael Dunn, Captain of F/V Radio, Sitka AK
Michael Schwab, Portland & Alaska

