



Republican National Committee

Counsel's Office

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE NORTHEAST COMMERCIAL FISHING INDUSTRY

WHEREAS, the Northeast commercial fishing industry is America's oldest industry in the nation's oldest ports, is an invaluable food source for our nation, is a renewable resource, and provides thousands of jobs both at sea and on land; and

WHEREAS, Many commercial fishing vessels are a small corporation; and

WHEREAS, under the Obama Administration the number of these small corporations from Maine to North Carolina declined from 5,522 in 2008 to 4,621 in 2016, a loss of nearly 20%, due to anti-commercial fishing government policies, also leading to loss of shoreside infrastructure and associated jobs; and

WHEREAS, Marine Monuments via President Obama Executive Order have been placed on historic commercial fishing grounds, thereby banning historic commercial fishing in this area; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Obama Administration policy, offshore wind farms are being sited on historic commercial fishing grounds with little consideration for the economic impact to commercial fisheries, jobs, and U.S. seafood production; and

WHEREAS, the Obama Administration prevented the passage of the "Strengthening Fishing Communities and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act" by threatening to veto, which Act was designed to address the economic sustainability of the fishing industry while providing fish for future generations; and

WHEREAS, during the Obama Administration, an Inspector General report found wide ranging federal fisheries enforcement abuse in the Northeast region, with fines up to 500% higher than other regions, abuse of funds, inappropriate and corrupt behavior by federal officials, the National Marine Fisheries Service National Law Enforcement Director shredding documents while under investigation, NOAA personnel lying to the Inspector General while under investigation, and other abuses; and

WHEREAS, under the Obama Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service was staffed by former environmental non-governmental group personnel which enforced an anti-commercial fishing policy and management agenda that has wreaked havoc on commercial fishing industry jobs; and

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WHEREAS, job killing policies, such as industry funded monitoring, which requires individual fishing vessels, i.e. small businesses, to pay for on board federal fisheries enforcement agents even at a net loss or threat of bankruptcy, continue to move forward in the Northeast and allow regulatory bodies to create regulations they do not have the funds to enforce; and

WHEREAS, a lack of cooperative/collaborative fisheries research in the Northeast has led to inaccurate and untimely data being used for fisheries management and setting quotas; and

WHEREAS, overregulation and debilitating fishery management contributes to the domestic seafood trade deficit and increases U.S. reliance on imported seafood products; and

WHEREAS, nearly 90% of federally managed marine fisheries are not being allowed to harvest at maximum sustainable levels, leading to over 90% of current U.S. seafood consumption being imported as compared with less than 50% in 1980 and only 56% in 1990; and

WHEREAS, the FDA lists imported fishery and seafood products as the most commonly rejected imported food product, for reasons of filthiness, pathogens and toxins, and chemical adulterations, which are not healthy for Americans to eat; and

WHEREAS, Northeast fish stocks depleted by foreign fishing fleets in the past have been rebuilt on the backs of U.S. commercial fishermen; and

WHEREAS, Many U.S. fisheries are sustainable and are subject to high environmental standards compared to those of many other nations; and

WHEREAS, production based jobs, including commercial fishing jobs, have been under attack nationwide through overregulation by the previous Administration; and

WHEREAS, the Northeast commercial fishing industry is part of the foundation of all industry in our nation, is symbolic historically as well as contemporarily, and has fed Americans for nearly 400 years.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT:

RESOLVED, that the Republican National Committee supports the Northeast commercial fishing industry, recognizes the jobs it creates, recognizes commercial fishing as an important food source for our nation, and therefore recommends the removal of oppressive government regulations and overreaching environmental restrictions hindering this historical industry, and supports policy which will lead to its economic stability and strength for the future.