

JON RUNYAN
3RD DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
CHAIRMAN
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DISABILITY ASSISTANCE
AND MEMORIAL AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH



COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
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TACTICAL AIR AND LAND FORCES
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COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FISHERIES, WILDLIFE,
OCEANS AND INSULAR AFFAIRS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3003

October 6, 2011

President Barack Obama
President
United States of America
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500-0003

Dear President Obama,

We write today to draw your attention to a government regulation, known as catch share programs, which are costing thousands of small fishermen their jobs, and express our concern about their impact on employment and the economy. During your joint address to Congress on September 8, 2011 you reiterated your commitment to thoroughly reviewing all federal regulations stating, "We should have no more regulation than the health, safety and security of the American people require. Every rule should meet that common-sense test." It is our belief that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's catch share programs have failed this test.

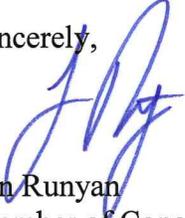
In the past catch share programs, or as they are sometimes called "sectors", have proven to reduce the size of the fishing fleet and cost small fishermen their jobs. The non-partisan consumer watchdog, *Food & Water Watch* estimates that every time a boat stops fishing, an estimated three to six jobs are lost. In fact, they've found in 2010 after a New England program was implemented the number of boats in the water went from 500-253 costing thousands of fishermen their jobs.

The commercial and recreational fishing industries play a critical role in maintaining vibrant coastal communities. When fishermen lose their jobs it has a ripple effect. *Food and Water Watch* has said if new catch share programs are implemented that, "many traditional fishermen will be forced out of work, economies of their communities will crumble, there will be increased risk of harm to our oceans, and consumers will probably end up with lower quality seafood." Any regulation that directly leads to all of these negative consequences needs to be addressed.

We are not advocating abandoning responsible fisheries management and conservation practices, we are simply objecting to the use of one type of regulation which we feel is harmful to coastal communities and our economy. Fisheries managers have many other tools at their disposal which have been used successfully to maintain healthy sustainable fisheries.

We applaud your initiative to review all government regulations. However, we feel that catch share programs do not improve the health, safety, or security of the American people and thus do not pass the common sense test. We respectfully urge you to re-consider this regulation. Thank you for taking the time to consider our request.

Sincerely,



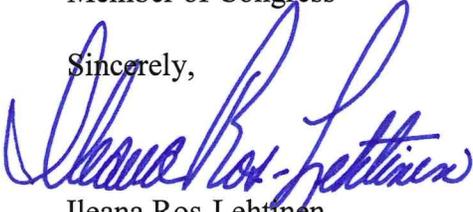
Jon Runyan
Member of Congress

Sincerely,



Frank LoBiondo
Member of Congress

Sincerely,



Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Member of Congress

Sincerely,



Frank Guinta
Member of Congress

Sincerely,



Sandy Adams
Member of Congress