

May 5, 2021

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the nation's diverse seafood community, we respectfully request your support for \$25 million in the FY22 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) FY22 Appropriations Act for a comprehensive, nationwide seafood marketing and public education campaign as recommended [by NOAA's Marine Fisheries Advisory Council \(MAFAC\) in July 2020](#).

Seafood is the healthiest, most environmentally sustainable form of animal protein production on the planet, but Americans are not eating nearly enough for optimal health as outlined in the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#). An unprecedented public education campaign, with initial support from the federal government, is needed to inspire a shift in consumer behavior and to measurably increase American seafood consumption from 16 to 26 lbs. per capita. This is where the **National Seafood Council** comes in.

As recommended by MAFAC, an industry-led, federally-supported **National Seafood Council** will develop and execute a holistic seafood marketing and education campaign to build a more resilient seafood sector, improve public health, and foster a healthier planet. A broad-reaching, unified National Seafood Council will provide the scale needed to complement and amplify efforts of existing seafood marketing organizations and will focus on increasing seafood consumption as a whole and not at the species-specific level. The National Seafood Council will establish one unified voice for the seafood industry and will remain positively focused on the areas of greatest agreement among the diverse seafood sector: public health. Recognizing the urgent need for Americans to eat more seafood for overall wellness, the initial focus of the National Seafood Council will be to promote the immense health benefits of consuming sustainable seafood, which includes U.S. wild-caught fisheries and aquaculture.

The U.S. seafood community strongly supports a National Seafood Council. In 2020, MAFAC conducted interviews with over 50 seafood industry leaders from across the country and reported that there was national support for the concept. The Seafood Nutrition Partnership (SNP) has received a similar favorable response to the concept and has formed an industry represented National Seafood Council Task Force to lay a foundation for the Council's future work.

It is important that federal funding for the Council comes from the recent increase in revenues generated from tariffs on marine resource imports, and not compromise funds NOAA has long depended on from tariffs to support mission critical work, including the Saltonstall-Kennedy grant program; fisheries data collections, surveys, and assessments; fisheries management programs and services; and interjurisdictional fisheries grants.

With an initial influx of federal funds and strong industry leadership, a National Seafood Council can build a stronger more resilient seafood sector - one that supports our fishermen, our environment, and Americans' health.

Sincerely,

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