

## Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association, Inc.

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August 10, 2016

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

RE: National Marine Monuments in the Atlantic Ocean Cashes Ledge, Canyons and Seamount Area

Dear Mr. President,

On behalf of its 1800 members, the Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association (MLA) respectfully submits our letter of opposition to any National Marine Monument in the Atlantic Ocean Cashes Ledge, Canyons and Seamount Area in depths less than 900 meters. The MLA in conjunction with eighteen or more commercial fishing organizations, representing over 10,000 small business and commercial fishermen alike have written multiple letters to you all in opposition of this potential designation as it will create devastating economic hardships on them individually and collectively as a community. *(Letters enclosed)* Thank you for acknowledging our earlier letters as we continue to struggle with the reasoning and location of this potential designation.

Established in 1963, the MLA is a member-driven organization that accepts and supports the interdependence of species conservation and the members' collective economic interests. The MLA membership is comprised of many disciplines of commercial fishing and species harvested. The MLA continues to work conscientiously through the management process with the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, the Massachusetts Marine Fisheries Commission, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries, and the New England Fisheries Management Council, the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team along with participating in the ocean planning process for many years.

Within the proposed designation area, there are currently hundreds of commercial fishermen earning their living harvesting a variety of species from the sea such as: lobster, crab, monk fish, squid, butterfish and mackerel to name a few. The combined annual value of these species to the commercial fishermen is an estimated sixty-two million dollars, employing hundreds of fishermen and crew and landing an estimated seventy two million pounds of the world's best, harvested sustainably, seafood. Whilst, we are only highlighting a few of the species harvested from with in these areas there are many more and are looking further into this as we speak.

Furthermore, we are extremely concerned about the negative economic impacts this designation will have on the shoreside businesses the commercial fishing industry depends upon such as marinas, seafood dealers and processors, fuel companies and more as the fishing industry is further restricted and unable to keep up demand for their services these companies leave the area and the fishermen left are no longer able to receive services due to the low volume of need for these services. The estimated loss of income to the shoreside businesses is one hundred and eighty million dollars. While the MLA continues to fight for these businesses as well to keep the infrastructure in place as many of the shoreside business are squeezed out by gentrification and further restrictions on the commercial fishing industry here in the United States of America.

Mr. President, we invite you to come and meet with the fishermen and hear directly from them their concerns. The commercial fishing industry is working together raising awareness on exactly how important these areas are to our local and global economy here in the Northeast. You have heard from us and many other groups in support and in opposition of this designation, now is time to put the fishermen's mind at ease and move the designation line out to the a depth of 900 meters or greater as there is currently nobody fishing at these depths.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our position on the potential designation of a National Marine Monument in the Atlantic Ocean. We look forward to hearing from you soon as you enter your final months as President of the Untied States of America.

Kind regards,

*Beth Casoni*

Executive Director

cc.

Christy Goldfus, White House CEQ  
Whitley Saumweber, White House CEQ  
Senator Elizabeth Warren  
Senator Edward Markey  
Congressman Bill Keating  
Congressman Seth Moulton  
Congressman Stephen Lynch  
Senator Susan Collins  
Senator Angus King  
Congresswoman Chellie Pingree  
Congressman Bruce Poliquin  
Senator Jeanne Shaheen  
Senator Kelly Ayotte  
Congressman Frank Guinta  
Senator Sheldon Whitehouse  
Congressman David Cicilline  
Congressman James Langevin

Senator Robert Menendez  
Senator Cory Booker  
Congressman Frank LoBiondo  
Governor Charlie Baker  
Matt Beaton, Secretary EEA  
George Peterson, Commissioner FWE  
Dr. David Pierce, Director, DMF  
John Bullard, NOAA NMFS GARFO  
Robert Beal, ASMFC  
Thomas Nies, NEFMC  
Atlantic Offshore Lobstermen's Assoc  
Maine Lobstermen's Assoc  
Rhode Island Lobstermen's Assoc  
Boston Globe  
Commercial Fisheries News

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