



**RESOLUTION
OPPOSING ANY CHANGE**

IN THE DEFINITION OF A COMMERCIAL FISHING OPERATION

WHEREAS, commercial fishing is a vital part of North Carolina's history, heritage, and culture and represents a crucial component of the economy of the Outer Banks region including Dare County, Currituck County, Ocracoke Island and other coastal communities; and

WHEREAS, according to the NC Division of Marine Fisheries, the sales impact of the harvesting and sale of commercial seafood is \$388,325,000 and the income impact of employed commercial fishermen is \$166,066,000; and

WHEREAS, the definition of what constitutes commercial fishing in North Carolina has been determined by the General Assembly and has long been established in section 113-168 of North Carolina's General Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) is now undertaking an action to consider changes in the definition of a commercial fisherman; and

WHEREAS, among the items that the MFC proposes to consider is a requirement that those holding Commercial Fishing licenses must have 50 percent of their earned income from the Trip Ticket Program, generate 36 Trip Tickets per year, and require those who do not have Trip Tickets to show proof of \$10,000 or more income per year; and

WHEREAS, no other professional license issued by the State dictates a percentage of income or minimum income requirement or level of participation in order to qualify; and

WHEREAS, the requirements that are being considered by MFC, or any other adverse change they may propose to the definition of Commercial Fishing, would have a harmful effect on many of the hard working North Carolinians who now engage in commercial fishing and already suffer because of government overregulation that imposes severe quotas and unnecessary restrictions on fishing seasons, limits, and gear forcing many to take on additional jobs and engage in part-time businesses in order to responsibly support their families; and

WHEREAS, this latest attempt to redefine commercial fishing is not the first time that the Marine Fisheries Commission has looked at this matter; and

WHEREAS, over seven years ago, in October of 2010, the Marine Fisheries Commission empaneled a Fishing License Review Taskforce, which examined in detail the requirements for holding a commercial fishing license and concluded that the definition contained in the General Statutes was adequate and therefore there was no real need to modify the definition of what constitutes a commercial fisherman; and

WHEREAS, furthermore, the Final Report from the Fishing License Review Taskforce clearly stated its recommendation that “no changes are needed to the existing definition.”

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce supports the definition of commercial fishing that has been determined by the duly elected members of the North Carolina General Assembly and reflected in the North Carolina General Statutes.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce strongly opposes the unnecessary effort that is now underway by the Marine Fisheries Commission to reexamine the definition of commercial fishing, and urges all coastal communities to adopt similar resolutions, and encourages all residents to vigorously voice their concerns about the latest attempt by the Marine Fisheries Commission to once again redefine commercial fishing.

Adopted this the 31st day of January 2018.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen S. Brown". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Karen S. Brown, President & CEO