



The Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce

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December 20, 2010

VIA U.S. MAIL and ELECTRONIC MAIL TO: jane.lubchenco@noaa.gov

Dr. Jane Lubchenco

NOAA Administrator and Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

1401 Constitution Avenue, NW

Room 5128

Washington, DC 20230

VIA U.S. MAIL and ELECTRONIC MAIL TO: eric.schwaab@noaa.gov

Eric C. Schwaab

Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Fisheries Services

1315 East West Highway

Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: Opposition to Implementation of Catch Shares Program

Dear Dr. Lubchenco:

I am the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce (the "Chamber") which has over 1000 business members in Dare, Currituck and Hyde County North Carolina. On behalf of the Chamber and its members, I am writing to express the Chamber's opposition to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ("NOAA") adopting and implementing the National Catch Shares Program in any manner which affects the fishermen and families of the Outer Banks. Please find enclosed a resolution adopted by the Chamber's Board of Directors in that regard.

The foundations of the economy, culture and heritage of the Outer Banks were built upon the backs of the working watermen of the Outer Banks. For generations, these hard working fishermen have made their living and supported their families through commercial fishing. Years of regulatory restrictions, operational cost increases and other issues have made it increasingly difficult for the working watermen of the Outer Banks to live here and keep their families safe and comfortable.

According to your own policies, the primary purposes of the Catch Shares Program are to "help maintain or rebuild fisheries, and sustain fishermen, communities and vibrant working waterfronts, including the cultural and resource access traditions that have been part of this

country since its founding.” There is limited, if any, scientific support that implementation of a Catch Shares Program will maintain or rebuild the fisheries present off of the Outer Banks. In fact, there are examples, e.g. the fisheries of New Zealand and Iceland, where implementation of a catch shares program has either been inconclusive or has been shown not to maintain or rebuild fisheries. Correspondingly, there are also examples, e.g. the Alaskan crab fishery, of the damages to individual fishermen, small fishing communities and working waterfronts which have been caused by the typical consolidation of fishing resources in a select few larger businesses when catch shares programs are implemented. Not to mention the fact that consolidation of fishing resources into larger businesses will cause higher prices for everyone of us who enjoy eating fresh locally caught seafood as well as reduce the localities that have such seafood available.

The commercial fishermen of the Outer Banks are people just like you and me. They are individuals who have put their lives and welfare on the line for the job they love as they run the lines, nets and decks of commercial fishing vessels operating in Atlantic Ocean out of Oregon, Hatteras and Ocracoke Inlets. The implementation of the Catch Shares Program will effectively add the commercial fishing industry of the Outer Banks to the long list of wrecks shown on the maps of the Graveyard of the Atlantic. Rather than destroy an industry and the families that survive via that industry, we ask that you follow your own policies and develop practices that actually increase fisheries resources and increase the vibrancy of small working waterfront communities.

The citizens, visitors and businesses of the Outer Banks, particularly the families of the working watermen of the Outer Banks, and the Chamber appreciate you taking the time to read this correspondence and to carefully consider the detrimental social and economic effects of implementing the Catch Shares Program. We certainly hope you will reconsider implementing the Catch Shares Program before you take action which will adversely affect many of the fishermen and families on the Outer Banks. If you have any questions regarding the position of the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce on this issue, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours,



Robin Mann
Chair of the Board of Directors
Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce

Enclosure

Cc: U.S. Senator Kay Hagan
U.S. Senator Richard Burr
U.S. Congressman Walter B. Jones
N.C. Governor Beverly Perdue
N.C. Senator Marc Basnight
N.C. Representative Tim Spear
Dare County Board of Commissioners
Currituck County Board of Commissioners
Hyde County Board of Commissioners
North Carolina Watermen United



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**RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION OF
CATCH SHARES PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) seeks to expand the use of catch shares programs into fisheries in which fishermen from the Outer Banks of North Carolina participate;

WHEREAS, Catch share programs threaten the North Carolina and Outer Banks commercial fishing industries by granting arbitrary shares of the total allowable catch for a given fishery to particular fishermen or groups;

WHEREAS, Catch share programs are only one of many options for managing fisheries, and fisheries resources can be better managed and protected in other ways;

WHEREAS, Catch share programs create unnecessary regulations for fishery species protection and threaten to put more North Carolina and Outer Banks fishermen out of work in an already declining economy;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce opposes catch share programs, and like the Dare County Board of Commissioners, supports the efforts of Congressman Walter B. Jones, Senator Richard Burr, and Senator Kay Hagan in seeking to stop NOAA funding for these arbitrary and capricious programs that threaten the future of commercial fishing along on the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

This the 15th day of December, 2010.

Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce

By: _____

Robin A. Mann

Chairman of the Board of Directors