



October 22, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

America's fishermen and seafood workers thank you for your leadership in putting American jobs, families, and industries first through your recent Executive Order to Restore American Seafood Competitiveness. We are very concerned, however, that a draft Executive Order for managing the Atlantic and Gulf of America menhaden stocks would, if issued, undermine the U.S. fisheries management system, have negative unintended consequences for other fisheries, and detract from your broad and compelling Executive Order to Restore American Seafood Competitiveness.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act, and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (authorized under Public Law 81-66) established the U.S. Fisheries Management Councils and State Fisheries Commissions. These entities administer a science-based and transparent process for managing interstate and Federal fisheries. This process ensures all stakeholders including states, federal agencies, fishing industry and non-governmental organizations have an opportunity to provide input into the management of the U.S. fisheries. The U.S. fisheries management process, which has led to 2.3 million jobs and over \$300 billion in sales every year has become the gold standard around the world and provides U.S. seafood producers with a source of competitive advantage in global markets.

Proposals for an Executive Order that would directly manage the Gulf and Atlantic menhaden fisheries, bypassing the Atlantic and Gulf State Fisheries Commissions, would undermine this gold standard fisheries management system. The implications of this proposal go far beyond the menhaden fishery and could adversely impact other U.S. fisheries in the domestic and international marketplace. If enacted, this proposal would undermine the efforts of the Administration to improve the competitiveness of U.S. seafood producers.

You have already shown tremendous leadership through your Executive Order to Restore American Seafood Competitiveness. That order reaffirmed the foundation of the U.S. fisheries management success — science-based, transparent, and accountable. An Executive Order on menhaden would go in the opposite direction: it would bypass the well-established, effective, and well-regarded processes that permit regional, collaborative and science-based management of our national fisheries resources. The draft Executive Order, while apparently focused solely on the menhaden fishery, would create a precedent that could be used in other fisheries to circumvent regional fisheries management decisions. Sweeping declarations such as labeling forage fish “in crisis” or banning entire gear categories could be applied far beyond the Atlantic and Gulf. That puts at risk America’s largest and most successful fisheries.

We respectfully urge you not to issue the draft Executive Order on the menhaden fishery, as doing so would undermine the U.S. fisheries management system that is the foundation for your Executive Order to Restore American Seafood Competitiveness.

Respectfully,

Julie Bonney
Executive Director
Alaska Groundfish Data Bank

Julie Decker
President
Pacific Seafood Processors Association

Matt Tinning
Chief Executive Officer
At-sea Processors Association

Sydney Cook
Interim Executive Director
Seafood Harvesters of America

Chris Woodley
Executive Director
Groundfish Forum

John Williams
Executive Director
Southern Shrimp Alliance

Heather Munro Mann
Executive Director
Midwater Trawlers Cooperative

Andrea Keikkala
Executive Director
United Catcher Boats

Lisa Damrosch
Executive Director
Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen’s Associations

Lori Steele
Executive Director
West Coast Seafood Processors Association

cc: The Honorable Howard Lutnick, Secretary of Commerce
The Honorable Eugenio Piñero Soler, NOAA Fisheries Assistant Administrator