

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 28, 2016

The Honorable John F. Kerry
Secretary
Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Michael Froman
Office of the United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dr. Kathryn Sullivan
Administrator
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Silver Spring, MD 20815

Dear Secretary Kerry, Ambassador Froman, and Administrator Sullivan:

We are writing to share our deep concern with efforts by the Swedish government to classify the American lobster, *Homarus americanus*, as an invasive species and to ultimately ban the import of live American lobsters from the United States to the European Union (EU). This letter serves to request and encourage the continued engagement with your European counterparts to ensure the continued transatlantic trade of live American lobster.

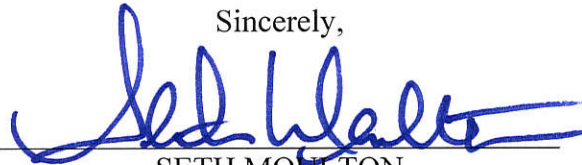
Under the EU's new alien species regulation, the European Commission (Commission) has the authority to permanently ban the importation of species that they determine to be "invasive." This classification is based on a risk assessment study submitted to the Commission that must include scientific evidence that the identified species is capable of establishing a viable population and has an adverse impact on the native biodiversity and ecosystem of the 28-member union. Given the low number of American lobsters found in Swedish waters, the petition to add American lobster to the Commission's list of invasive species is not consistent with the EU's standards, and does not appear to be the correct method to resolving Sweden's current concerns. Moreover, studies conducted by New England's leading marine scientists refute Sweden's assertions that American lobster carry contagious shell disease and that hybrids of the European and American lobster are viable in the wild.

The EU, one of the largest markets for American lobster, accounts for one-fifth of all United States lobster exports. A permanent ban on the importation of American lobster to the EU could therefore have devastating consequences for the Massachusetts lobster industry and the New England maritime economy. Our lobster fishery is the second-largest in the nation, with lobstermen hauling in more than 15 million pounds every year. There are 1,169 permitted commercial lobster boats in the state, and in 2014 their landings generated approximately \$68.4

million. The positive economic effects of the lobster industry are far reaching, providing a source of income and jobs for lobstermen, lobster dealers, vessel and trap manufacturers, restaurants, and other shore side businesses across the United States.

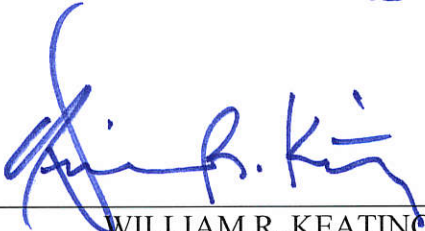
While we share a commitment to protecting the environment and mitigating the effects of invasive species, it is crucial any decision by the Commission to ban the importation of live American lobster be based on scientific principles that are consistent with the EU's World Trade Organization requirements. We appreciate the work your agencies have done thus far to address this important matter. Our offices stand ready to assist you in any way possible to ensure the continued import of live American lobsters to the European Union.

Sincerely,



SETH MOULTON

United States Representative



WILLIAM R. KEATING

United States Representative



STEPHEN F. LYNCH

United States Representative



EDWARD J. MARKEY

United States Senator



ELIZABETH WARREN

United States Senator



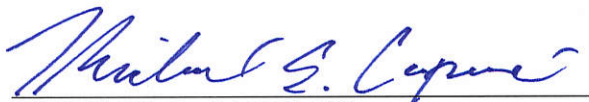
RICHARD E. NEAL

United States Representative




JAMES P. McGOVERN

United States Representative



MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

United States Representative



NIKI TSONGAS

United States Representative



JOSEPH P. KENNEDY, III
United States Representative



KATHERINE CLARK
United States Representative

CC: Azita Raji, United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Sweden