

September 10, 2018

RDML Tim Gallaudet, Ph.D., USN Ret.  
Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and  
Acting Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere  
United States Department of Commerce  
Herbert C. Hoover Building, Room 6811  
14<sup>th</sup> & Constitution Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Dr. Gallaudet:

We, the undersigned, are elected and appointed officials, commercial fishermen and other business leaders affiliated with, or in support of the Port of New Bedford, America's highest grossing commercial fishing port. We write to follow up on a letter many of us signed, dated March 7, 2016, in which we recommended to then-NOAA Administrator Kathryn Sullivan that the Administration select New Bedford as the site of the new Northeast Fisheries Science Center, which is now located in Woods Hole, Massachusetts. We firmly believe that on the merits, New Bedford is hands-down the best location for the new facility. We write today in the hope that the new management team at NOAA will take a fresh look at the matter.

As we argued more fully in the original letter (which is attached), we believe that by siting the facility in the undisputed center of the commercial fishing industry on the East Coast, the Administration could at last begin to break down barriers to communication, and repair the distrust that has plagued the relationship between the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the fishing industry in the Northeast for decades. As we noted in the letter, the pressing need to replace the antiquated facility in Woods Hole presents a rare opportunity to improve regulatory outcomes and *build public confidence* in government decision making:

A major factor in this history of ineffective engagement with the industry is the simple fact that in the Northeast, government scientists operate in places that are physically remote from active fishing communities. Nowhere is this more true than in Woods Hole, where there is virtually no industry presence nearby. Establishing the center in Woods Hole may have made sense in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, but its continued operation today, far removed from those who actually fish, perpetuates an ivory tower problem that has bred resentment and distrust among members of one of the country's oldest industries.

As the letter further explained, if the science center were located in New Bedford, the Administration could be assured that its personnel would have considerably greater opportunity for

formal and informal interaction with industry stakeholders, and each side would get to know one another in ways and to a degree that have long eluded both.

Administrator Sullivan promptly responded to the letter with a brief note that the Administration was engaged in a "Business Case Analysis" of locations in the Northeast, including New Bedford and Woods Hole. Months later, a NOAA spokesperson informed media outlets on Cape Cod that the analysis had ruled out every possible location except for Woods Hole.

To our knowledge, the final report has not been made available outside the Administration. We are therefore unable to offer at this time a point-by-point response to its findings. Nevertheless, based on discussions with NMFS personnel, it is apparent that the analysis was deeply flawed. Consider the following:

First, officials in New Bedford were not approached about the availability of suitable sites, and there has never been any indication from the Administration that it considered any *specific* New Bedford site (there are in fact several suitable locations).

Second, insofar as the Agency may have considered New Bedford generally, at no point was the New Bedford Port Authority approached about the availability of docking space for NOAA research vessels (which is far more ample in New Bedford than Woods Hole).

Third, in evaluating the costs of constructing the new facility, at no point were New Bedford or state officials asked about the extent to which the City or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts could offer direct or in-kind support to offset the project's cost to the federal government.

Fourth, no public meetings were held in New Bedford (or anywhere else to our knowledge) to receive industry input into the analysis.

Fifth, and perhaps most troubling, NMFS officials acknowledge that the analysis did not consider the benefits of constructing the facility in a major commercial fishing port.

In light of these critical gaps in the analysis, we believe that the feasibility study lacks the credibility to support a facility's siting decision that will affect the regulation of the commercial fishing industry for decades to come.

Fortunately, it is not too late to revisit this analysis, as the design and planning of the new facility has not begun. We submit that with a new management team in place at NOAA that is taking a fresh look at existing policies and practices, a new feasibility study should be undertaken that properly incorporates into its analysis the elements outlined above, and perhaps others. In addition, to promote transparency and encourage public and stakeholder input into the process, the Administration should release the original report.

We hope that the Administration recognizes this matter for what it really is, namely, a once-in-a-generation opportunity to further the mission of the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, rebuild the Administration's relationship with the fishing industry in the Northeast, and to create conditions for a new era of respect, trust and cooperation. Likewise, an insistence on grounding the siting of the science center in a plainly inadequate study will only serve to further erode the fishing industry's confidence in NMFS's ability to fulfill its mission. Among those who have witnessed the interaction between NMFS and the fishing industry in this part of the country, no one can deny that something has to change.

We thank you for your consideration, and respectfully request that your office respond directly to the Executive Director of the Port of New Bedford, Edward Anthes-Washburn.

Sincerely,

**Elected Officials**

Jon Mitchell, Mayor, City of New Bedford  
Mark Montigny, State Senator  
Antonio F.D. Cabral, State Representative  
Robert Koczera, State Representative  
Christopher Markey, State Representative  
Paul Schmid, State Representative  
William Straus, State Representative  
Linda Morad, City Council President  
Brad Markey, Councillor, Ward One  
Maria Giesta, Councillor, Ward Two  
Hugh Dunn, Councillor, Ward Three  
Dana Rebeiro, Councillor, Ward Four  
Scott Lima, Councillor, Ward Five  
Joseph Lopes, Councillor, Ward Six  
Ian Abreu, At-large Councillor  
Naomi Carney, At-large Councillor  
Debora Coelho, At-large Councillor  
Brian K. Gomes, At-large Councillor

**New Bedford Port Authority**

Dr. Brian Rothschild, Vice Chairman  
Joseph Tavares, Treasurer  
Davis Sullivan, Clerk  
Richard Canastra  
James Dwyer  
Patricia Lareau  
Edward Anthes-Washburn, Executive Director

**Members of the Fishing Industry**

Mass Fabricating, New Bedford, MA

Mass Contracting and Construction, New Bedford, MA  
W. Trading, New Bedford, MA  
Bergie's Seafood, New Bedford, MA  
Cape Quality Seafood, Inc., New Bedford, MA  
BASE New England, New Bedford, MA  
Whaling City Seafood Display Auction, New Bedford, MA  
Atlantic Red Crab Company, New Bedford, MA  
North Carolina Fisheries Association  
O'Hara Corp., Rockland, ME  
Nordic Fisheries, Inc., New Bedford, MA  
Dockside Repairs, Inc., New Bedford, MA  
Marine Hydraulics USA, Inc., New Bedford, MA  
Maintenance Solutions, Inc., New Bedford, MA  
RCP Realty, LLC, New Bedford, MA  
MAE Realty, LLC, New Bedford, MA  
M & B Sea Products Inc., New Bedford, MA  
Pier Oil, New Bedford, MA  
Luzo Fuel, New Bedford, MA  
Quinn Fisheries Inc., New Bedford, MA  
Standard Marine Outfitters LLC, New Bedford, MA  
Light House Marine, New Bedford, MA  
East Coast Fabrication Inc., New Bedford, MA  
Shoreline Resources LLC, New Bedford, MA  
Herman Melville LLC, New Bedford, MA  
Challenge Fisheries LLC, New Bedford, MA  
Patience Fisheries LLC, New Bedford, MA  
Harvester Fisheries LLC, New Bedford, MA  
Incentive Fisheries LLC, New Bedford, MA  
Socatean LLC, New Bedford, MA  
Celtic Fisheries LLC, New Bedford, MA  
Tempest Fisheries, Inc., New Bedford, MA

**Homeport: New Bedford, Massachusetts**

F/V Freedom  
F/V Venture  
F/V Liberty  
F/V Justice  
F/V Edgartown  
F/V Beiningen  
F/V Huntress  
F/V Vantage  
F/V Vanquish  
F/V Debbie Ann  
F/V Fair Wind  
F/V Ann M.  
F/V Kathy & Jackie  
F/V Canyon Express  
F/V Eagle

F/V Explorer  
F/V Freedom  
F/V Growler  
F/V Kodiak  
F/V Liberty  
F/V Pacer  
F/V Seven Seas  
F/V Ambition  
F/V Expectation  
F/V Fjord  
F/V Frontier  
F/V Generation  
F/V Horizon  
F/V Maelstrom  
F/V Neskone  
F/V Nordic Pride  
F/V Norseman  
F/V Perception  
F/V Reflection  
F/V Rost  
F/V Tradition  
F/V Wisdom  
F/V Friendship  
F/V Nashira  
F/V Polaris  
F/V Pyxis  
F/V Orion  
F/V Reliance  
F/V Resolution  
F/V Weatherly  
F/V Ocean Cat  
F/V Sovereign Star  
F/V Capt. Jeff  
F/V Viking Power  
F/V Mirage  
F/V Miss Leslie  
F/V Miss Shauna  
F/V Blue Delta  
F/V Blue Eastern  
F/V Monomoy  
F/V Blue Lagoon  
F/V Blue North  
F/V Blue Pacific  
F/V Miss Freya  
F/V Blue South  
F/V Miss Ella  
F/V Temptress  
F/V Luzo America I

F/V Catherine Lane

**Homeport: Fairhaven, Massachusetts**

F/V Hear No Evil

F/V Bountiful II

F/V Diligence

F/V Max & Emma

F/V Miss Emma

F/V Independence

**Homeport: Rockland, Maine**

F/V Araho

F/V Arcturus

F/V Ranger

**Homeport: Westport Island, Maine**

F/V Benthic Mariner

F/V Hannah Boden

F/V Benthic Lady

F/V William Bowe

F/V Heddie Boden

**Homeport: Newport, Rhode Island**

F/V Revolution

**Homeport: Tiverton, Rhode Island**

F/V Diamond girl

**Homeport: Point Judith, Rhode Island**

F/V Timberwolf

**Homeport: Cape May, New Jersey**

F/V Amber Nicole

F/V Andrea A.

F/V Determination

F/V Hawk

F/V John & Nicholas

F/V Karen Nicole

F/V Leader

F/V Master James

F/V Nadia Lee

F/V Ocean Blue

F/V Ocean Boy

F/V Ocean Gold

F/V Ocean Pride

F/V Ocean Princess

F/V Ocean Prowler

F/V Ocean Wave

F/V Princess Scarlett  
F/V Stacy Lee  
F/V Collin & Warren III

**Homeport: Hampton, Virginia**

F/V North Cape  
F/V Sea King

**Homeport: Seaford, Virginia**

F/V Alaska  
F/V Italian Princess

**Homeport: Newport News, Virginia**

F/V Ocean Lady  
F/V Ocean Leader  
F/V Ocean Prowler  
F/V Ocean Scout  
F/V Ocean Pursuit  
F/V Miss Mildred  
F/V Cove  
F/V Blue Canyon  
F/V Blue Cove  
F/V Blue Harbor  
F/V Blue Harvest  
F/V Ocean Hunter  
F/V Ocean Fox  
F/V Blue Water  
F/V Blue Ocean,  
F/V Blue Sea  
F/V Blue Stream  
F/V Blue Wave  
F/V Blue Western

**Homeport: Grantsboro, North Carolina**

F/V Cameron Scott

**Homeport New Bern, North Carolina**

F/V Gaston's Legacy  
F/V Capt. Carl  
F/V Micah Bell  
F/V Capt. Gaston  
F/V Miss Caroline  
F/V Colten Scott  
F/V Miss Tyler  
F/V Jonathan Ryan  
F/V Jeffrey Scott  
F/V Ashton Matthew  
F/V Sassy Girl

### **New Bedford Regeneration Committee**

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Gerry Kavanaugh, Co-Chair, President, LStar Investments  
Liz Isherwood, Chair, Greater New Bedford Industrial Foundation  
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Adam Cove, CEO, Edson International  
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Patrick Murray, President and CEO, Bristol County Savings Bank  
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Nicholas Christ, President and CEO, BayCoast Bank  
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James O'Brien, Superintendent, Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School  
Rosemary Gill, Executive Director, Zeiterion Performing Arts Center  
Derek Santos, Executive Director, New Bedford Economic Development Council

### **cc:**

Senator Elizabeth Warren  
Senator Edward J. Markey  
Congressman William Keating (Massachusetts, 9<sup>th</sup>)

Wilbur Ross, Secretary of Commerce  
Mike Platt, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs

Stuart Levenbach, Chief of Staff, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration  
Chris Oliver, NOAA Assistant Administrator for Fisheries  
Jon Hare, Director, NOAA Northeast Science Center

Governor Charlie Baker, Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito, Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Matthew Beaton, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Dr. David Pierce, Director of the Division of Marine Fisheries, Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Jay Ash, Secretary of Housing and Economic Development, Commonwealth of Massachusetts



Carolyn Kirk, Deputy Secretary of Housing and Economic Development , Commonwealth of  
Massachusetts