

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee,

My name is Jack Colbourne, owner of Colbourne Seafood, Inc. and the fishing vessel Mt. Vernon. My understanding of the Fisheries Management Plan was to regulate the fisheries - not to regulate the fishermen and seafood dealers out of business.

My small business in Maryland suffered a loss of 40.3% from 1996-1997 because of regulations. From 1997 to present we have lost 60% of the remaining 60% because of new regulations. I hope your intent is not to eliminate the American Fisheries, if so you are doing an excellent job. We are currently losing our markets to imported products. We cannot compete with South America, Central America and third world countries who are saturating U.S. markets with cheap seafood. Seafood that is caught, processed, and shipped by people making less than the U.S. minimum wage per hour.

Without product we will lose our customers. We are also in danger of losing our dockside packing facilities. We cannot take another 60% loss of income and survive. I'm sure none of you would like a 60% cut in your salary. Please reconsider your Seabass, Scup, Fluke, Squid, and all other seafood management regulations. Let the American fisherman make a living so he can support his family and pay his bills as you do. Give us the same protection the United States gives the American farmer- a Right to Survive.

Thank You for your consideration.

Jack C. Colbourne

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