

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA
95814

January 25, 2016

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Request for Declaration of Disaster for California Crab Fishery

Dear Governor Brown:

We are writing to encourage you to advance a disaster declaration to the United States Secretary of Commerce for the California crab fishery and allied sectors. As you know, the elevated levels of domoic acid in Dungeness and rock crab caused devastating closures during this current crab season. This record setting delay has had significant negative impacts on thousands of California residents, and their livelihoods are now at risk. The current situation is unprecedented in duration and magnitude.

We had hoped the fishery would commence in time to recover a significant portion of economic loss suffered during this record delay. Unfortunately, because the acid levels have persisted, we have now missed the peak of the season: Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years and Chinese New Year. These holiday celebrations have historically represented the time when the most California crab is consumed. And thousands of crab feeds that take place across the Golden State throughout the winter are now sourcing their supply from the Northwest, repurposing their events, or cancelling all together.

While we remain hopeful a limited season will commence in the next several weeks, and do not believe that disaster relief and a limited season are mutually exclusive, we are now beyond where any fishery expert thought we would be. The continued delays have created unprecedented damage to the crab market, and irreparable harm to the thousands who depend on a healthy harvest for their living. We believe it's time to declare a fishery disaster declaration.

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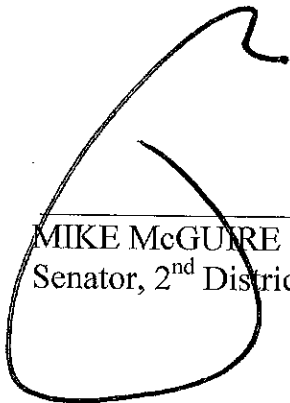
The annual crab landings in California average \$60 million with the peak season exceeding \$95 million in direct revenue in 2011. While domoic acid test results have recently started trending in a positive direction, the current season is unlikely to open until mid-February or later.

To add insult to injury, we are coming off of one of the worst salmon seasons we've had. Crabbers turn to salmon for their livelihood in the summer and fall months and having both the fall salmon season collapse, due to the state's historic drought, and now this unprecedented crab season delay taking hold, families are in crisis.

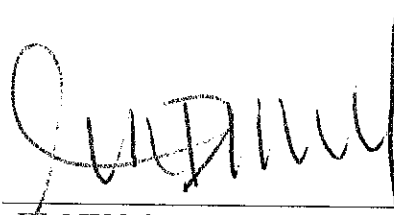
Crabbers throughout the Golden State have made large investments that cannot be recouped. This unforeseen disaster has forced individuals to sell equipment and assets, further mortgage their future and seek low wage employment to put food on the table during holiday seasons when the crab market is typically robust. Without immediate assistance, we may see thousands of hard working families with no choice but to leave the crab fishing sector causing damage to our economy for years to come.

We urge you to move forward with a request to the Secretary of Commerce for a fishery disaster as soon as possible. Time is of the essence. We greatly appreciate your consideration of this request and for all of your support of the California Fishing and Aquaculture industries.

Warmest Regards,



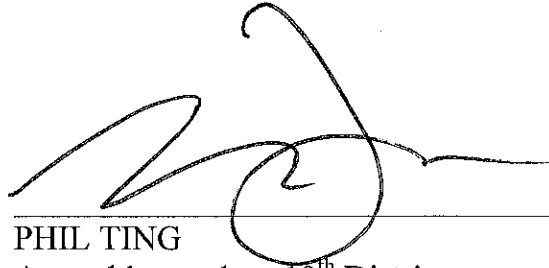
MIKE McGUIRE
Senator, 2nd District



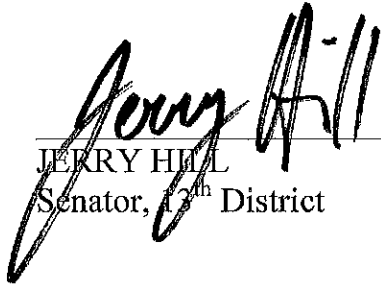
JIM WOOD
Assemblymember, 2nd District



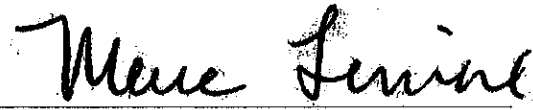
BILL MONNING
Senator, 17th District



PHIL TING
Assemblymember, 19th District



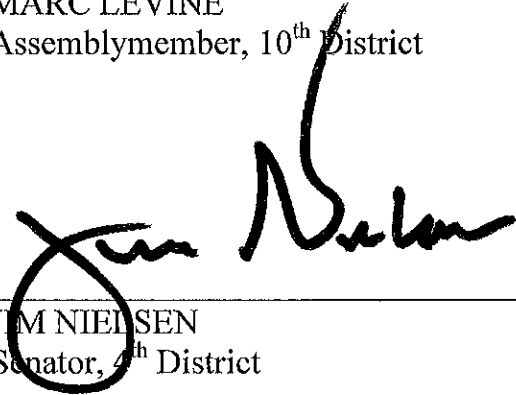
JERRY HILL
Senator, 13th District



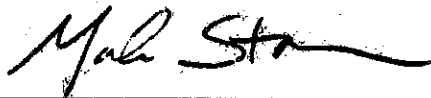
MARC LEVINE
Assemblymember, 10th District



FRAN PAVLEY
Senator, 27th District



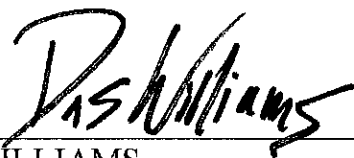
JIM NIELSEN
Senator, 4th District



MARK STONE
Assemblymember, 29th District



KATCHO ACHADJIAN
Assemblymember, 35th District



DAS WILLIAMS
Assemblymember, 37th District

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PS: Please let us know if we can be of assistance and pass on our sincere thanks to Fish and Wildlife Director, Chuck Bonham, for all of his efforts during this closure.