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Congress of the United States
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December 16, 2004

Mr. Philip C. Spiller, Director
Office of Seafood Safety
Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition
Food and Drug Administration
Room 3D-006 Harvey W. Wiley Federal Bldg.
5100 Paint Branch Parkway
College Park, MD 20740-3835

RE: [DOCKET NO. 2004D-0510]

Dear Mr. Spiller:

I am writing in support of the lobster export industry's request for a 90-day extension of the comment period on your proposed transfer of the EU Health Certificate Program to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

The export of live lobsters to Europe is a multi-million dollar business and one of the leading exporters in the U.S. is located in my district. The proposed referral program could create severe economic hardship for the citizens of my district and the state of Maine. The ability to obtain the necessary EU health certificates when needed is critical to the success of this business.

We are now in one of the busiest times for the lobster industry. Because of the potential economic impact and timing of this proposal, I believe a 90-day extension of the comment period is appropriate. This extension would provide the industry with an opportunity to carefully review the legal basis and practical implications of this proposal and submit appropriate comments.

I want to thank you in advance for your careful consideration of this request. Please feel free to contact my office or me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,



Michael Michaud
Member of Congress

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