

WAYNE T. GILCHREST
1st District, Maryland

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

COAST GUARD AND
MARITIME TRANSPORTATION

WATER RESOURCES

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE
July 8, 2003



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES
CHAIRMAN, FISHERIES CONSERVATION,
WILDLIFE AND OCEANS

NATIONAL PARKS, RECREATION
AND PUBLIC LANDS

CHAIRMAN, CHESAPEAKE BAY
WATERSHED TASK FORCE

Dr. Hans Radtke
Chairman, Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Pl, Suite 200
Portland, OR 97220

Dear Dr. Radtke:

As you know, one of the most difficult and divisive debates during last year's consideration of Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act (the Act) reauthorization was over the creation of workable guidelines for the councils to use when developing and implementing Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) systems. I think we came very close to a comprehensive and workable, yet flexible, set of guidelines last Congress. Unfortunately, the bill was not enacted before the moratorium on IFQ programs expired. However, one of my top priorities in this Congress is to reauthorize the Act and, once again, we will work on a fair statutory framework for IFQ and other quota systems. In light of this, I respectfully request that the Council postpone any final decisions on such programs and assist in the development of this framework first.

The reauthorization of the Act is a difficult task and one we must all share. I believe the Sustainable Fisheries Act (SFA) took fisheries management in a direction it needed to go and I understand that the implementation of the SFA's provisions has not been easy. In crafting the new reauthorization, I have been aware of the need to move forward toward ecosystem-based management and to incorporate our current level of scientific awareness, as well as the economic implications of fisheries management. I have tried to strike the appropriate balance and worked hard with you to get H.R. 4749 through the House Committee on Resources during the 107th Congress. Once again, we need to shoulder this burden together.

I appreciate all of the hard work that the Councils - both the staffs and the members - put into making the difficult decisions that determine the management of our nation's fishery resources. I have been impressed with the dedication of both time and effort that is made to create the delicate balance between the environmental needs of the resource and the economic needs of the fishermen and the fishing communities and look forward to working with you on reauthorization of the Act. It is my intention to develop and distribute a discussion draft by the end of this summer, looking toward introduction of a reauthorization bill in the fall.

Let's stay the course! We will be able to effectively address conservation, economic, and administrative issues for the full term of the reauthorized Act if we work together on the statutory framework first. Please let me know if I can answer any questions or concerns you may have about this effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wayne T. Gilchrest".

Wayne T. Gilchrest
Member of Congress

WTG/et