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CHAIRMAN, SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3704

August 2, 2005

Mr. Donald Hansen
Chairman
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place
Suite 200
Portland, OR 97220

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PFC

Dear Mr. Hansen:

Last week, I introduced S. 1549, a bill which would rationalize the shore-based Pacific whiting fishery by providing cooperative shares to fishermen and processors who have historically participated in that fishery.

I believe that when enacted, S. 1549 will complement the efforts being made by the Council to conserve and manage the Pacific groundfish fishery through a trawl quota program and restrictions on bycatch. Further, a whiting cooperative plan holds great promise for our coastal communities by improving the economics of the fishery. Most recently, the need for such a plan was highlighted by the unexpected change in salmon bycatch patterns that resulted in new restrictions on the whiting fleet.

In order to ensure that the Council's views on this bill are brought to the attention of the Senate, I ask that you have the Council review the legislation during its September 2005 meeting and provide my staff with any substantive comments on the text. If you have any questions or need further information on the bill, please contact Betsy McDonnell at 202-224-3753.

I look forward to continuing to work with you and the Council as we consider important fisheries legislation in the 109th Congress.

Sincerely,



Gordon H. Smith
United States Senate