



**City of New Bedford**  
**Jon Mitchell, Mayor**

## **Mayor Mitchell Attends Magnuson-Stevens Listening Session on Improvement to Federal Fisheries Management Regulations**

**New Bedford, Massachusetts** - On November 4, 2013 Mayor Jon Mitchell attended the Magnuson-Stevens Listening Session which was hosted by US Senator Elizabeth Warren, at the Massachusetts State House. Members of the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation and Alaska Senator Mark Begich joined Warren in the listening session to hear from representatives from the fishing and scientific communities on ways to improve federal fisheries management regulations.

Two panels composed of prominent fishermen, scientists, and commercial fishing organizations voiced their opinions and concerns about fishing regulations of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The first panel consisted of:

- John Quinn, Former State Rep and Vice-Chair of the New England Fisheries Management Council
- Vito Giacalone, Policy Director for the Northeast Seafood Coalition
- Angela Sanfilippo, Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Association
- Tom Dempsey, Cape Cod Fishing Alliance (formerly Cape Cod Hook)
- Bill Gerencer, Foley Fish
- Eric Hansen, a Scallop Fisherman from New Bedford
- Drew Minkiewicz, representative from the Scallop Survival Fund

The second panel of speakers included:

- Dr. Kevin Stokesbury, School for Marine Science and Technology (SMAST) at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
- Rob Moir, Ocean River Institute based in Cambridge
- Dr. Brian Rothschild, Center For Sustainable Fisheries
- Peter Shelly, Conservation Law Foundation
- Steve Long, Government Relations Director, Massachusetts Chapter of the Nature Conservancy

Members of the panel discussed the impact of uncertain science on the industry, and its role in increasing instability within the fishing and scalloping industries. Other topics included the need for greater flexibility in fisheries management, advocating for access to

closed fishing areas, and suggesting that the science driving regulation policies be based on fish mortality rates instead of fish biomass.

Mayor Mitchell was one of six elected officials who had the opportunity to speak on behalf of the City of New Bedford and its fishing community. He asserted that “the Magnuson-Stevens reauthorization is an opportunity for the fishing industry to hit the reset button. For years the industry has been fighting an unfair fight with NOAA regulations and it’s time for Congress to step in and level the playing field.” The Mayor emphasized the need to make fish stock rebuilding requirements more flexible to avoid burdening boat owners with the cost of government observers and to increase funding for fishing research.

He also added that “the problem with regulations stems in part from an inadequate understanding of the industry on the part of government policy makers, and better communication between regulators and industry can be improved by increasing NOAA’s presence in key fishing ports. Presently there are no NOAA policy makers or scientists located in New Bedford even though the Port of New Bedford accounts for 34% of all fish landings in New England.”

Mayor Mitchell will continue his advocacy for local fishing families as the Magnuson-Stevens reauthorization process moves forward.

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