**ADVOCATES FOR FAIRNESS IN KING MACKEREL ALLOCATIONS**

December 26, 2013

Mr. Doug Boyd, Chairman & Council Members Mr. Ben Hartig, Chairman & Council Members

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

2203 N. Lois Ave, Suite 1100 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201

Tampa, FL 33607 N. Charleston, SC 29405

210-710-8752 772-546-1541

Re: Joint Mackerel Amendment 20B – Increase in hook and line trip limits in the Southern Sub-Zone

Messrs. Boyd, Hartig & Council Members,

I am a hook and line mackerel fishermen operating in the Southern Sub-Zone of the Gulf of Mexico. For 18 years commercial fishermen like me have been struggling under an antiquated daily trip limit of 1250 pounds with a step-down to 500 pounds at 75% of quota. We patiently waited for king mackerel stocks to rebuild over the past 20 years anticipating a greater role in harvesting one of the most under-utilized stocks in the Gulf of Mexico only to see others in the Northern Gulf and along the East Coast of Florida reap the benefits of higher trip limits while we remain the same.

In September of 2013 the SAFMC and their Mackerel Committee voted to approve an increase to 2000 pounds with no step-down. The Gulf Council’s Mackerel Committee also voted to approve an increase to 2000 pounds at their October meeting in New Orleans only to be over-ruled by the full Council. 20B was remanded to the SAFMC for their December 2013 meeting at which time both the Council and the Mackerel Committee reversed their previous decisions and concurred with the Gulf Council to keep the limit at 1250 pounds.

This is a gross injustice to the hardworking men and women of Monroe County that have contributed as much, if not more, to the rebuilding of both the Gulf and Atlantic stocks of king mackerel. All of this perpetrated at the behest of several small, special interest groups of mackerel fishermen from the Southwest and Northeast regions of Florida reaping the rewards of the rebuilding effort.

I hereby petition both the Gulf and South Atlantic Fishery management Councils to reconsider this grossly unfair trip limitation in the Southern Sub-Zone and ask you to approve an increase in the daily hook and line trip limit to 2000 pounds with no step-down.

Respectfully,

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City\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_State\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Zip Code\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_E-Mail\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Vessel Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Docked at\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_