

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 23, 2012

Mr. David F. Hogan
Deputy Director
Office of Marine Conservation
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

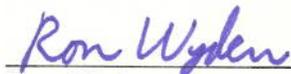
Dear Mr. Hogan:

We are writing regarding the reciprocal fishing regime under the U.S.-Canada Albacore Treaty. As you know, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) recently recommended suspension of the Treaty's reciprocal fishing regime for 2012, and possibly longer, as PFMC seeks adequate time to gather and evaluate information on the impacts on the U.S. fishery. We urge you to consider the PFMC's recommendation or other avenues to address their concerns.

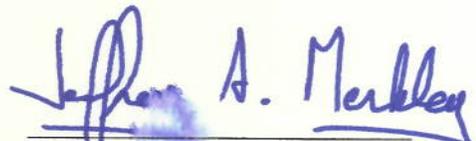
We have heard from a number of our constituents who make their living as commercial albacore fishermen, and they are expressing frustration with the current dynamic in the U.S. Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ), where an increasingly aggressive Canadian fleet, continually growing in overall capacity, is competing with our fishermen for finite natural resources. These fishermen are small businesses in our states, and their livelihood is being threatened as a result of the terms of this treaty. Past amendments to the Treaty, including amendments in 2003 and 2008, attempted to rectify the growing inequities in the Treaty's benefits, which have increasingly been flowing northward to Canada. Unfortunately, these past efforts have not worked. In 1997, there were 1200 vessels in the U.S. albacore fleet. In 2010, there were only a little over 600 vessels in the U.S. fleet. The fish taken by the Canadian fleet represent an export of jobs and dollars from the U.S. economy at a time when both are desperately needed.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act recognizes the need to protect and promote our domestic commercial fisheries and provide management programs responsive to the needs of affected U.S. citizens, particularly with respect to foreign fleets operating in the U.S. EEZ. The PFMC's recommendation to suspend the fishing regime for a minimum of 2012, in order to conduct a thorough study of the Treaty's impacts on the U.S. fishery, is a prudent next step. We hope you will give it all due consideration.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator