

July 26, 2018

United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Member of Congress,

With this letter, we ask that you become an **original co-sponsor** of the “*Advancing the Quality and Understanding of American Aquaculture Act*” or the “*AQUAA Act*” being circulated by Rep. Steven Palazzo (R-MS). This draft legislation reflects a comprehensive effort to increase U.S. production of healthful, sustainable and affordable seafood and we strongly encourage your support.

Offshore Aquaculture is one of the fastest growing, sustainable forms of food production in the world and has the unique potential to improve American food security and nutrition, enhance coastal resiliency, create quality jobs, help restore species and habitats, and ensure that seafood (both wild-caught and farmed) continues to be an important part of the global food supply. By growing domestic production of seafood through aquaculture, we can benefit the American economy, our public health, the environment and create jobs in our rural and coastal communities.

Unfortunately, U.S. aquaculture is currently constrained by disjointed federal leadership and numerous regulatory hurdles, including overlapping jurisdiction of federal, state and local governments, and the absence of an efficient and affordable permitting process, particularly in U.S. federal waters.

To overcome these regulatory hurdles and lay the groundwork for a viable U.S. offshore aquaculture industry, the AQUAA Act provides a comprehensive, nationwide permitting system for, and management of, marine aquaculture facilities in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). It authorizes the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to facilitate responsible aquaculture development in federal waters through a streamlined regulatory process and increased interagency coordination that preserves existing environmental standards. A more robust domestic aquaculture industry will stimulate the economies of our coastal communities, expand opportunities for US-based feed producers and increase consumption of healthy seafood by American consumers.

To ensure the final AQUAA Act reflects the needs of American businesses, communities and ecosystems, the undersigned organizations commit to working closely with Rep. Palazzo, the House Natural Resources Committee and the AQUAA Act’s co-sponsors throughout the legislative process to fine-tune the bill so that it addresses any outstanding challenges, of which we do not anticipate many.

With your leadership on federal aquaculture policy, our nation’s potential to become a pioneer in sustainable, marine seafood production will become a reality. As that new reality unfolds, markets for increasingly efficient American fish feeds will expand exponentially, marine-based job creation will abound, and a consistent supply of 100% traceable, local, healthful seafood will be made available to American consumers.

On behalf of the organizations listed below, we ask you to become an original co-sponsor of the AQUAA Act so that we may see the development of commercial-scale, responsibly-managed, affordable aquaculture become a reality for the betterment of American businesses and of our citizens.

Sincerely,

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Cargill  
Wayzata, MN

Tony Dal Ponte  
Pacific Seafoods  
Clackamas, OR

Max Holtzman  
Pontos Aqua Advisors  
Washington, DC

Eric Buckner  
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Horace Dawson  
Red Lobster  
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Bill DiMento  
High Liner Foods  
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Todd Madsen  
Blue Ocean Mariculture  
Kona, HI

Michael Kelly  
Woods Hole Group  
Lanham, MD

Matt Kimball  
Pentair  
Minneapolis, MN

David Kelly  
InnovaSea  
Boston, MA

Sean O'Scannlain  
Fortune International, LLC  
Bensenville, IL

Randy Rhodes  
Harvest Select  
Northport, AL

Bill Taylor  
Taylor Shellfish  
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Jeff Gay  
Protein Products, Inc.  
Gainesville, GA

Mark Frisch  
Beaver Street Fisheries, Inc./Sea Best Corp  
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Jonathan Eisen  
International Foodservice Distributors Association  
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Tim Charters  
National Ocean Industries Association  
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Roger Bowgen  
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