

May 15, 2012

The Honorable Charles Boustany
1431 Longworth House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515-1807

Dear Congressman Boustany,

Louisiana's abundant fisheries and natural resources allow this state to provide the nation with high quality seafood that is safe for consumption, without fear of being tainted with antibiotics, chemicals and other contaminants that are harmful to human health. In fact, the Louisiana seafood industry contributed almost \$1 billion to the economy.

As you may be aware, the Louisiana seafood industry is facing a serious economic crisis due to the increased volume of imported seafood. Additionally, the number of domestic processors of our seafood, and corresponding jobs related to this industry, has decreased significantly due to the flood of lower priced imports. Many of these products are being diverted to this country because Canada and the European Union have banned the import of these products due to the presence of banned antibiotics.

According to the 2009 report from President Obama's Food Safety Working Group, more than 75% of this nation's seafood comes from non-U.S. waters. We have been made aware that none of these products are being tested for antibiotics banned by the United States Food and Drug Administration, chemicals and other contaminants. While we do support global trade and economic development, we would like to see responsible trade that assures a safe food supply. Our citizens deserve the same protection that citizens of Canada and the European Union are receiving in terms of a safe supply of seafood.

Over the last few months, several recommendations have been made to help preserve our Louisiana seafood industry. I firmly believe that the Preventing Recurring Trade Evasion and Circumvention (PROTECT) Act that you have authored will help to accomplish this. I strongly support this legislation and your efforts to increase communication between agencies within the federal government and give them new tools to combat the evasion of import duties.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Mike Strain, DVM
Commissioner