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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-3303

July 27, 2012

Mr. Paul J. Diodati  
Chairman  
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission  
1050 North Highland St., Suite 200A-N  
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Chairman Diodati and Fellow Commissioners:

One of our republic's basic principles is that government decision making should be open and transparent. Doing so encourages the accountability the public expects from those who regulate them. It has come to my attention that the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) conducts its business in a way that falls short of this principle in two important ways. First, while public bodies across the country routinely broadcast their meetings over the Internet, the ASMFC does not. Second, while it is standard practice for public institutions ranging from local school boards to the U.S. Congress to release roll call votes, the Commission does not publicly release how each individual member of the Commission votes on agenda items.

On behalf of the North Carolina fishermen I am privileged to represent, I encourage the ASMFC to rectify these problems by taking action on the following two proposals, both of which could be implemented at minimal cost.

First, the Commission should broadcast all meetings live over the Internet. In addition, video recordings should be freely available to the public through the ASMFC website for a reasonable period of time after the meeting. This change is needed to give fishermen – many of whom do not have the time or the resources to leave their jobs and travel to distant locations for meetings – the opportunity to keep tabs on a regulatory body that impacts their livelihood.

Second, the Commission should post on its website how each Commissioner from each state votes on agenda items. Fishermen and the public have a fundamental right to know how individual Commissioners are voting.

I trust the Commission will see the benefit of these common sense proposals, and I encourage you to implement them as soon as possible. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Walter B. Jones  
Member of Congress

Cc: Robert E. Beal, Acting Executive Director  
Members of the Commission



# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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*Paul J. Diodati, (MA), Chair*

*Dr. Louis B. Daniel, III, (NC), Vice-Chair*

*Robert E. Beal, Acting Executive Director*

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*Healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015*

July 30, 2012

The Honorable Walter B. Jones  
United States House of Representatives  
2333 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Jones:

This responds to your letter of July 27, 2012 regarding broadcasting of Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Meetings via the internet and conducting roll call votes. Your letter was addressed to our Chairman, Paul Diodati, and I am responding on his behalf.

A copy of your letter has been distributed to our Commissioners and this issue will be discussed at the ASMFC Summer Meeting scheduled for August 7-9, 2012 in Alexandria, Virginia. Chairman Diodati or I will provide a written summary of the Commission's response to your recommendations following the Summer Meeting.

Thank you for your continued interest in the management of Atlantic Coastal Marine Resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. Beal", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Robert E. Beal

cc: ASMFC Commissioners