

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-3902**

October 27, 2025

Dr. Cate O'Keefe  
Executive Director  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 Water Street, Mill 2  
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear Dr. O'Keefe:

Earlier this year, the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) responded to my inquiry outlining the impacts of reductions of personnel and funding at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on our nation's fisheries. The CCC noted that the reduction in NOAA resources and uncertainties about near-term and sustained funding caused disruptions to Council activities.

As the impacts of these cuts have unfolded, I would like to further understand how the New England Fishery Management Council's (NEFMC) ability to sustainably manage fisheries has changed. Specifically:

1. Given that the 2025 stock assessment schedule was altered in response to staffing and budget constraints at NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Center, how has this shift changed the timeline for fishers on the water and their ability to harvest on a routine schedule?
2. How have cuts to NOAA impacted your ability to implement Executive Order 14276, entitled "Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness?"
3. Are there any specific NOAA programs or public data that NEFMC relies on that no longer operate or function in an optimal manner?
4. Do you anticipate that the science, policy, and implementation of fisheries management will continue to be influenced by the cuts to NOAA?

Since September of 2024, NOAA has lost over 1,000 employees from its workforce, in part due to layoffs and early retirements. Given the NEFMC's reliance on sound science to balance competing interests, we in Congress and the public rely on your expertise to understand how our nation's fisheries will be impacted by these changes.

I appreciate your time and attention to these questions.

Yours,



Seth Magaziner  
Member of Congress