



April 10, 2020

Mr. Chris Oliver
Assistant Administrator for NOAA Fisheries
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Administrator Oliver,

On behalf of the Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders' Alliance (Shareholders' Alliance), we want to extend our appreciation for the leadership shown by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in response to the COVID-19 global health crisis. Because of the impacts of this extraordinary global pandemic on our nation's food supply, we write to urge you to promptly release the funds Congress provided in the CARES Act to support fishery businesses.

We know that NOAA understands that the ramifications of this crisis are far reaching and that the economic impacts may be felt for years to come. We are facing uncharted waters as our nation's seafood supply chain has been severely curtailed and much of the commercial fishing in the Gulf of Mexico - which generated nearly \$800 million worth of seafood in 2018 - has come to a grinding halt. We welcome the opportunity to work with you and your team to identify a meaningful path forward for this industry and the millions of seafood consumers who depend on us for their protein needs.

To that end, we need NOAA to rapidly distribute the \$300 million in fisheries assistance established by Congress. It is our understanding that guidance, which is an important step to getting the funds out the door, was supposed to be made available last week, yet it still has not been delivered. We urge NOAA to expedite this guidance and to move quickly to release these critical funds to fishing and related businesses.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric Brazer".

Eric Brazer, Deputy Director
Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders' Alliance

cc: Mr. Sam Rauch, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NOAA Fisheries
Dr. Roy Crabtree, Regional Administrator, Southeast Regional Office, NOAA Fisheries