

The Honorable Howard Lutnick
Secretary of Commerce
United States Department of Commerce
Washington, DC

May 29, 2025

Dear Secretary Lutnick,

As a coalition of commercial fishermen, charter/for-hire fishermen, industry organizations, and seafood businesses committed to the viability of our fisheries in the Gulf of America, the long-term competitiveness of the American seafood industry, and the economic vitality of our coastal communities, we write to express our strong and unified support for the appointment of Dr. Mike Allen from the University of Florida to the Gulf Fishery Management Council (Gulf Council). This position, a critical Florida seat, is currently held by Dr. Tom Frazer of the University of South Florida.

Dr. Allen brings to this role a rare combination of integrity, scientific rigor, practical experience, and deep understanding of the challenges facing commercial fisheries in the Gulf. Bringing this to the Gulf Council will ensure that requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) are carried forward, in addition to the priorities for commercial seafood production set forth by President Trump in Executive Order 14276, *Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness*.

Support from the Commercial, Charter/For-Hire, and Seafood Industry for Dr. Mike Allen.

The commercial fishing and seafood industry strongly supports the appointment of Dr. Allen to represent Florida on the Gulf Council. While Dr. Allen brings a wide range of strengths to this role, our endorsement is based on the following key qualifications:

- Scientific Expertise and Credibility.
Dr. Allen is a nationally-respected fisheries scientist and professor at the University of Florida. As Chair of the Gulf Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee, he has shown strong leadership in science-based management, skillfully guiding complex discussions to practical outcomes. He is also known for translating complex science into clear, accessible language, empowering fishermen and the public to engage more effectively in the Gulf Council's work.
- Continuity of Scientific Perspective.
The Florida other/at-large seat that Dr. Allen seeks has been held by a Florida-based scientist for the past decade, and by a strong scientific voice for the decade before that. Dr. Allen is the only scientist recommended for this seat in 2025, and preserving this important perspective will help further the Gulf Council's efforts to improve the accuracy and timeliness of fisheries data and modernize data collection.

- Hands-on Industry Insight.

Dr. Allen's experience extends beyond academia. He and his family live in the fishing community of Cedar Key, Florida, where they operate a small seafood business that sources directly from local fishermen. This firsthand connection to the commercial fishing industry gives him a unique, practical understanding of the challenges facing small businesses.

- Commitment to American Seafood Competitiveness.

Dr. Allen's track record aligns closely with the goals of the President's Executive Order 14276 Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness. His work supports the improvement of fisheries data, implementation of responsible harvest levels, and economic vitality of domestic seafood production, ensuring that American seafood remains a cornerstone of the nation's food security and coastal economies.

Gulf Council Representation Imbalance.

The Gulf Council has a long history of a recreational-to-commercial membership imbalance that fails to reflect the actual makeup of fisheries in the Gulf of America. While recent steps have been taken to start to address this problem, the imbalance remains significant: the recreational sector (including private recreational anglers and charter/for-hire operators) currently holds twice as many seats as the commercial fishing sector and 50% more than the scientific community. To ensure fair, science-based management that supports the long-term viability of commercial fishing businesses, it is essential to maintain a strong scientific voice on the Gulf Council. Adding another recreational representative would only further tilt the scales against commercial fishermen and scientific participation.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, our commercial fishing, charter/for-hire fishing, and affiliated businesses are best supported by strong, science-driven leadership on the Gulf Council, and Dr. Allen's appointment to this Florida seat is critical to achieving that goal. His blend of scientific expertise, practical industry insight, and commitment to responsible science-based fisheries management makes him squarely qualified to address the challenges facing the Gulf of America's commercial fishermen, ensuring strong, common-sense fishery management policies are in place to support our generation of businesses and the next.

We therefore urge you to appoint Dr. Allen to the Gulf Council.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
The Undersigned



Adrienne Johnson

Florida Shellfish Aquaculture
Association

Fishing Industry Trade Association
Tallahassee, FL



Alexis Meschelle

Organized Fishermen of Florida
Commercial Fisherman
Cortez, FL

Alicia Paul

Libra's Love Charters LLC
F/V Long Shot & F/V Big Shot
Commercial Fisherman
Panama City Beach, FL

Allen Staples
F/V 100 Proof
Charter/For-Hire
Destin, FL



Amy Wirtz

Pelican Point Seafood
Fish House
Tarpon Springs, FL

Andrew G. Gude

Retired, U.S. Fish and Wildlife
Service
Cedar Key, FL

Andy Lynn
Lynn Brothers Seafood
Fish House
St. Marks, FL

Anita Hisler

Commercial Fishing Family
Anahuac, TX

Anna Woods

Woody's Fisheries
Commercial Fisherman
Perry, FL



Anthony Colletti
Almost There Commercial Fishing
LLC
F/V Almost There
Commercial Fisherman
Leeville, LA

Benjamin J Barbee
Stelluna LLC
F/V Stelluna & F/V Sweet Jody
Charter/For-Hire
Santa Rosa Beach, FL

Bill Tucker
F/V Broad Creek LLC
Commercial Fisherman
Dunedin, FL

Billy Archer
F/V Seminole Wind
Charter/For-Hire
Panama City, FL

Billy Wright
F/V Brand-X
Vessel Owner and Fish House
Galveston, TX



Bob Zales
Southeastern Fisheries
Association
Fishing Industry Trade
Organization
Panama City, FL

Brad Gorst
Gulfstream Fishing Vessels
Charter/For-Hire
Palm Harbor, FL

Brad Kenyon
Florida Family Fisheries
F/V Dawn Mari
Vessel Owner
Satellite Beach, FL

Brantley Galloway
Hiliner Charters
F/V Full Draw
Charter/For-Hire
Destin, FL

Brian Lewis
F/V Trip Limit
Vessel Owner
Clearwater, FL

Casey Floyd
Commercial Fisherman
Pascagoula, MS

Chance Adams
F/V Relentless
Commercial Fisherman,
Charter/For-Hire, Wholesale
Freeport, TX

Charles Stone F/V Respite Charter/For-Hire Fort Walton Beach, FL	 Chris Ruyan Brotulas Seafood House Restaurateur Destin, FL	Christopher Guindon F/V Black Jack IV Commercial Fisherman Galveston, TX
Clifford Atwell Reel Grace Fishing Charters F/V Reel Grace Charter Boat Owner/Operator Destin, FL	Cynthia Renee Geir Fisheries Vessel Owner Panama City, FL	Darryll Mills Destin Coast Charters F/V Reel Blessed Charter/For-Hire Destin, FL
David Dewberry Pelican Adventures F/V Vera Marie, F/V Good Times, F/V Deep Obsession Charter/For-Hire Destin, FL	David Walker Walker Fishing Fleet, Inc. F/V June Sue & F/V La Bella Commercial Fisherman Andalusia, AL	Dennis Parker Commercial Fisherman Rockport, TX
Douglas "Kyle" Lowe Charter Boat Special K F/V Special K Charter/For-Hire Fort Walton Beach, FL	 Captain Dylan Hubbard Hubbard's Marina Charter/For-Hire Madeira Beach, FL	Ed Pitre F/V Louisiana Charter/For-Hire Galliano, LA



Eric Brazier

Eric Brazier
Gulf of America Reef Fish
Shareholders' Alliance
Fishing Industry Trade
Organization
Galveston, TX

Eric J Westbrook
New Florida Girl, Inc
F/V American Spirit
Charter/For-Hire
Destin, FL

Eric Woods
Woody's Fisheries
Commercial Fisherman
Perry, FL

Garrett Kruger
Florida Shellfish Aquaculture
Association
Commercial Fisherman
Panacea, FL

Gary Jarvis
Jarvis Restaurant LLC
Restaurateur
Destin, FL

George W. Hisler

George Hisler
Commercial Fisherman
Anahuac, TX

George Hisler, II
F/V Edna Hisler
Commercial Fisherman
Anahuac, TX



Glenhart Brooks, III
Brooks Dockside Seafood
Commercial Fisherman, Fish
House
Inglis, FL



Glenhart Brooks, III, President
Gulf Fishermen's Association
Fishing Industry Trade
Organization
Inglis, FL



Captain Greg Ball
Wave Dancer Charters
F/V Wave Dancer 2
Charter/For-Hire
Galveston, TX

Gregory Guindon
Black Jack IV LLC
F/V Black Jack IV
Commercial Fisherman
Galveston, TX

Heather Ordaz
IFQ Shareholder
Anahuac, TX

Harry Baumgartner
Katie's Seafood Market
F/V Bottom Line
Commercial Fisherman
Galveston, TX

J.T. Mckissack
Evans Meats and Seafood
Wholsaler/Distributor
Birmingham, AL

Jack Payne
Retired, University of Florida
Fisheries Researcher
Gainesville, FL

James Clements
Commercial Fisherman
Carabelle, FL

James Zurbrick
Tides Up Fisheries, LLC
F/V Jolly Rogers II
Commercial Fisherman
Steinhatchee, FL



James Zurbrick
Fish For America USA, Inc
Fishing Industry Trade
Organization
Steinhatchee, FL

Jamie Gaspard F/V Pure Adrenalin Commercial Fisherman Grand Isle, LA	Jane Black-Lee Wholesaler/Distributor Lucedale, MS	 Jason DeLaCruz Wild Seafood Co. Fish House Madeira Beach, FL
 Jason DeLaCruz, Executive Director Gulf Wild™ Fishing Industry Trade Organization Largo, FL	Jason Kreese Capt. Marks Seafood F/V Cap'n Jax & F/V Southern Gale Vessel Owner Freeport, TX	 Captain Jason Lowe J. Lowe's Guide Services Charter/For-Hire Cedar Key, FL
Jason Mikel Finest Kind Charters F/V Finest Kind Charter/For-Hire Destin, FL	Jeff Antonelli Shrimp N Stuff Downtown Restaurateur Galveston, TX	 Jerome Young Florida Keys Commercial Fishermen's Association Fishing Industry Trade Association Marathon, FL

Jesse Baughman Sexton Fisheries F/V Bubbalou Commercial Fisherman Naples, FL	Jessica Berthelot Pure Adrenalin Fishing Charters F/V Pure Adrenalin Commercial Fisherman Grand Isle, LA	 Charter Fishermen's Association Captain Jim Green, President Charter Fishermen's Association Fishing Industry Trade Organization Destin, FL
 Captain Jim Green Destin Charter Boat Association Fishing Industry Trade Organization Destin, FL	John Coulter F/V Pirate Diver Commercial Fisherman St. Marks, FL	John "Tom" Harris, Jr. F/V St. Andrew Bay Challenger Fisheries, Inc. Vessel Owner Panama City, FL
John Erik Brown Seafood Wholesalers LTD Wholesale/Distributor Houston, TX	John Fradella Cedar Key Aquaculture Association Commercial Fisherman Cedar Key, FL	Johnathan David Floyd Commercial Fisherman Pascagoula, MS
Joseph L. Cannon Cedar Key Aquaculture Association Clam Farmer and Industry Representative Cedar Key, FL	Justin Brantley Charter Boat Phoenix, LLC F/V Phoenix Fishing Industry Trade Organization Destin, FL	Justin Hall F/V Maximus Charter/For-Hire Destin, FL

Justin Hisler IFQ Shareholder Anahuac, TX	Justin Thomas Harris F/V St Andrew Bay Challenger Fisheries Inc Vessel Owner Panama City, FL	Katie Anderson F/V Shock'n Y'all Charter/For-Hire Destin, FL
 Keith "Buddy" Guindon Katie's Seafood Market Commercial Fisherman, Fish House, Restaurateur Galveston, TX	 Kelly Kirk Florida Stone Crabbers Association Fishing Industry Trade Association Marco Island, FL	Leroy Gandy F/V Destiny Commercial Fisherman Galveston, TX
Lewis T. Bessinger Blue Dolphin Fishing, Inc. F/V Scat Cat Commercial Fisherman Inglis, FL	Linda Dolfi Milt's Seafood Plant, Inc. Wholesaler/Distributor Port Bolivar, TX	Linda Seyfert Cedar Key Aquaculture Association Wholesale/Distributor Cedar Key, FL
 Lindley Ward Mighty Fine Charters F/V Mighty Fine Charter/For-Hire Destin, FL	Lisa Schmidt IFQ Shareholder Crystal River, FL	Mark Tryon Commercial Fisherman Gulf Breeze, FL

Matt Pless F/V The Raft Commercial Fisherman Ft. Myers Beach, FL	Matt Thompson F/V Pirate diver Commercial Fisherman St. Marks, FL	Matthew Champion F/V Championship Offshore Charter/For-Hire Destin, FL
Matthew Wheeler F/V Swoop II Charter/For-Hire Destin, FL	Michael Jennings F/V Hustler Commercial Fisherman Freeport, TX	 Captain Mike Graef Huntress Fishing Charters F/V Huntress Charter/For-Hire Destin, FL
MJ Gimbar Wholesaler/Distributor Chicago, IL	Nicholas Gutierrez Katie's Seafood Market Fish Dealer Galveston, TX	Nick Ruland The Fishmonger Restaurateur Ft. Myers Beach, FL
Paul Bertell Leebe Fish, Inc. F/V Father and Son Commercial Fisherman Marco Island, FL	Paul Reeves Reeves Fishing, Inc. F/V Renegade Vessel Owner Steinhatchee, FL	Peter Floyd, Jr. Commercial Fisherman Pascagoula, MS
Phillip Blackburn F/V Backdown2 Vessel Owner Destin, FL	Preston Muller Gulf-Angler LLC F/V Home Grown Charter/For-Hire Freeport, FL	Rachal Hisler F/V Edna Hisler Commercial Fisherman Double Bayou, TX

Raymond Scott Childress G&S Fishing, LLC F/V Affinity2 Commercial Fisherman New Port Richey, FL	Rick Turner Island Skipper Fishing, Inc. Commercial Fisherman Marathon, FL	 Robert Gill Retired Fish House Dealer/ Processor Crystal River, FL
Robert Psenka Fishing Industry Trade Organization Rosenberg, TX	Robert Reeves Supporter of the Commercial Fishing Industry Galveston, TX	Robin Perlman University of South Florida St. Petersburg, FL
Rory Cantwell Clam Farmer Cedar Key, FL	Roseanne Cantwell Dog Island Blues Clam Co. Inc Wholesale/Distributor Cedar Key, FL	 Scott Buff Fish Peddler F/V Amy B Vessel Owner Naples, FL
Scott Hickman F/V Catch Share Charter/For-Hire Galveston, TX	Shan Roper Off the Clock Fisheries F/V Snapper Slapper Commercial Fisherman Steinhatchee, FL	Steve Maisel Commercial Fisherman Palm Harbor, FL
Steve Tomeny F/V Louisiana Vessel Owner Pass Christian, MS	Steven Rash Water Street Seafood, Inc Fish House Apalachicola, FL	Taylor Waterfield F/V Charter Boat Twilight Charter/For-Hire Destin, FL

Terry Bessinger Blue Dolphin Fishing, Inc. F/V Scat Cat Commercial Fisherman Inglis, FL	Tim Adams Double Time Charters F/V Double Time Charter/For-Hire Destin, FL	 Timothy Solano Secretary of Cedar Key Aquaculture Association Wholesale/Distributor Cedar Key, FL
Travis Ream F/V Lady Em Vessel Owner Destin, FL	Trey Acosta Galveston Party Boats, Inc. Charter/For-Hire Galveston, TX	Trey Windes F/V Outta Line Charter/For-Hire Destin, FL
Tu Giang TH Seafood Grocery/Retail Market Seabrook, TX	 Tyler Brielmayer F/V First Light Charter/For-Hire Destin, FL	 Tyler Jarvis Restaurateur Destin, FL
Tyler Massey F/V Hot Spots 2 Charter/For-Hire Gulf Breeze, FL	William Cochrane, Sr. Southern Seafood, LLC F/V Chelsea Ann Commercial Fisherman Galveston, TX	William Osteen Chums Guide Service Charter/For-Hire Cedar Key, FL