



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

KELLY A. AYOTTE
Governor

January 21, 2025

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Overregulation of New England lobster fishing industry

Dear Commissioners:

As Governor of New Hampshire, it is my responsibility to advocate for the hardworking men and women who help propel our economy, especially our historic industries. Recent guidelines from this Commission increasing the minimum size of lobsters caught in the Gulf of Maine are unnecessary and disruptive to an industry that has already been impacted by increasing costs of doing business and already-burdensome rules and regulations.

I write to you today to notify you that New Hampshire will not adopt these new guidelines. New Hampshire's commercial fishing industry is a proud part of our heritage, and I have heard loud and clear from our lobstermen, commercial fishermen, and concerned legislators and citizens from our Seacoast that this minimum size increase will have a negative impact on an industry already strained by existing regulations.

Complying with these guidelines could lead to a loss of a third of lobstermen's catch this year at a time when lobstermen are already facing declining yields. Moreover, our lobster industry helps drive summer tourism, with visitors flocking from all over to visit New Hampshire's historic lobster pounds.

In addition to negatively impacting a proud local industry, this minimum size increase puts us at a competitive disadvantage in international trade, since Canadian lobstermen are not subject to the same regulations.

To ensure the survival of an iconic and historic industry in our state and our region, and to ensure our nation remains competitive in global trade, I ask you today to rescind these new guidelines. In the meantime, New Hampshire will comply with the previous minimum size for lobster in an effort to preserve this proud industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kelly A. Ayotte".

Kelly A. Ayotte
Governor