

2/4/26

To Whom It May Concern:

Please consider this letter in support of reauthorizing the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative. As a harvester, business owner and a Marketing Collaborative board member, I can honestly say we need the Collaborative. The lobster industry is the lifeblood of Maine's coastal communities. It is imperative that we do everything we can as a State to ensure a sustainable future for this iconic fishery. Effective marketing is a key component of this successful future. We have seen landings come off their historic highs over the last few years. If we are going to continue to grow as an industry, we must focus on increasing the value of what we harvest.

This is what the Marketing Collaborative does best. By promoting Maine lobster around the country and around the world, the Collaborative has helped our industry maintain current markets and penetrate new ones. I have seen firsthand how effective marketing campaigns which highlight how Maine lobster is harvested sustainably and how delicious Maine lobster is have directly resulted in new customers.

Playing defense from a PR perspective is another key role that the Marketing Collaborative plays. From my personal experience, the most valuable work the Collaborative has done over the last five years was defending our industry in the face of negative publicity around the right whale issue. At a time when many of our most important customers were very close to dropping Maine lobster due to concerns around right whales, the Marketing Collaborative put together a series of webinars that effectively informed them of everything Maine's lobster industry has done to protect right whales. I know this campaign worked because I was part of it. Other than Whole Foods, we did not lose one customer as a result of this team effort. In another three years, we will be up against new right whale regulations and we will need the Collaborative in our corner to remind our customers that we are on the right side of this issue.

The bottom line is that we need the Marketing Collaborative to maintain current markets and develop new ones. Our markets are facing serious headwinds. Global uncertainty is growing by the day, international markets are shrinking due to regulation and tariffs, and price conscious domestic consumers are thinking twice about expensive protein. In the face of these challenges, the Marketing Collaborative's work is more important than ever. When times are tough, it can be difficult to quantify the value of marketing, making it hard to justify the cost. Very simply, challenging times are when investing in marketing is most important.

Sincerely,



Curt Brown
President
Bold Coast Seafood
F/V Lil' More Tail

Curtis Brown
Bold Coast Seafood
LD 2002

Testimony is attached as a pdf.