



April 13, 2017

The Honorable Michael R. Pence
 Vice President of the United States of America
 c/o Trump-Pence Transition Team
 Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Wilbur L. Ross, Jr.
 Secretary of Commerce
 c/o Trump-Pence Transition Team
 Washington, D.C.

Dear Vice President Pence and Secretary Ross,

On behalf of the Gulf of Mexico seafood and fishing communities, including commercial fishermen, charter boat operators, seafood processors, distributors, retailers, restaurants and the millions of consumers we serve each year, **we are writing to enthusiastically endorse Chris Oliver for Assistant Administrator of Commerce for NOAA Fisheries.**

As Executive Director of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC), Chris Oliver has proven to be a motivated and talented leader with a passion for bridging divides among diverse fishing interest in the Pacific Northwest and beyond. Federal fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico are notoriously complex and involve a host of competing user groups, including our hardworking commercial harvesters, professional charter boat operators, a growing private angling community, and of course, a skyrocketing tourism and consumer economy dependent on the long-term health of them all. It is imperative that NOAA Fisheries be guided by an experienced Administrator with a solid track record of uniting these varying interests with a spirit of positivity and mutual respect.

Among his many qualifications, Mr. Oliver's breadth of experience managing U.S. fisheries should speak for itself. For over thirty years, he has worked to promote economic prosperity in our country's most productive commercial fishery in Alaska. Under his 12-year tenure as Executive Director, the NPFMC balanced competing interests to become the most sustainably managed and productive fishery in the world, accounting for more than half of all seafood landed in the United States and two-thirds of America's seafood exports. As a leader on the Council Coordination Committee (CCC), Mr. Oliver has worked closely with all eight regional councils to effectively push back against regulations that needlessly restricted the efficiency of the commercial seafood community. Mr. Oliver has fully supported regional fisheries management that is guided by national standards and authorized by the Magnuson Stevens Act. And importantly, Mr. Oliver has successfully balanced the needs of both commercial and recreational fishermen in an effective and fair manner – experience that will be critical to resolving the ongoing challenges facing management of red snapper in the Gulf of Mexico.

For all the above reasons and more, we the undersigned organizations wholeheartedly support Chris Oliver's appointment as the next Assistant Administrator for NOAA Fisheries.

Sincerely,

The Gulf Seafood Institute
 Alabama Charter Fishermen's Association
 Charter Fishermen's Association
 Clearwater Marine Association

Louisiana Restaurant Association
 Southeastern Fisheries Association
 Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders' Alliance