

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

September 16, 2019

The Honorable Robert Lighthizer  
United States Trade Representative  
600 17th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer,

We write urging you to explore new markets for American lobster exports to compensate for the impact of China's 25 percent tariffs on imported American lobsters.<sup>1</sup> As indicated in a June 29, 2018 letter by Senator Warren, these tariffs continue to have material impacts on the Massachusetts lobster industry.<sup>2,3</sup>

U.S. lobster exports to China are down more than 80 percent since June 2018, which is reflected in the losses reported by local Massachusetts lobster companies.<sup>4</sup> At least two businesses have been forced to cease operations, leaving more than 250 employees out of work, and the U.S. lobster industry more vulnerable to long-term decline and competition from Canada.<sup>5</sup>

While Massachusetts state legislators are exploring solutions for economic relief at the state level, it is imperative that there be federal resolve to assist the Massachusetts lobstermen whose livelihoods heavily relied on exports to China.

In your written response letter to Senator Warren's letter, you acknowledged concerns about the impacts the Chinese tariffs would have on Massachusetts families that work in the lobster industry.<sup>6</sup> In that same response, you indicated that the trade agreements with countries in Africa

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<sup>1</sup> New York Times, "Lobsters, Small-Batch Whiskey, and Trump's Trade War," Alan Rappeport, June 22, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/22/us/politics/donald-trump-tariffs-trade-war.html>

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Senator Elizabeth Warren to U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, June 29, 2018, [on file with Senator Warren's office]

<sup>3</sup> WGBH, "Gloucester Lobster Industry Feeling The Pinch From China Trade War," Stephanie Leydon, July 10, 2019, <https://www.wgbh.org/news/local-news/2019/07/10/gloucester-lobster-industry-feeling-the-pinch-from-china-trade-war>.

<sup>4</sup> AP News, "US exports to lobster-loving China go off cliff amid tariffs," Patrick Whittle, August 26, 2019, <https://www.apnews.com/6482bb8522ef427c8dba0d117327f1b2>.


<sup>5</sup> State House News Service, "State House hearing on tariffs, lobster industry will wait 'til September," July 8, 2019, <https://gloucester.wickedlocal.com/news/20190708/state-house-hearing-on-tariffs-lobster-industry-will-wait-til-september>

<sup>6</sup> Letter from United States Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer to Senator Elizabeth Warren, July 3, 2018, [on file with Senator Warren's office]

and South East Asia and the U.S. Department of Commerce's Foreign Commercial Service could be avenues of mitigation to replace the loss of the Chinese market.<sup>7</sup> We would like to highlight that the Canadian-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement provides tariff-free access for Canadian lobster products being sold in the European Union,<sup>8</sup> putting American lobster products at a serious disadvantage.


We urge you to work with the Massachusetts lobster industry to provide specific solutions and resources to end the dire losses to the Massachusetts economy. We thank you for your prompt attention to this issue and request a response by September 30, 2019.

Sincerely,



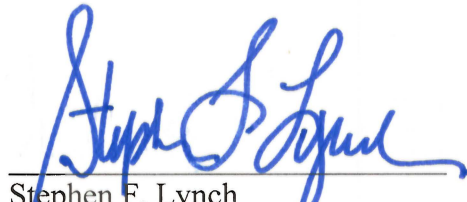
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Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



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Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



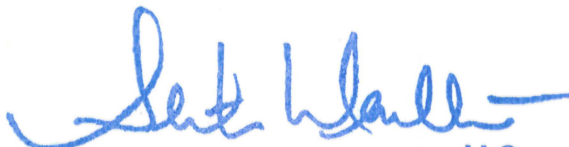
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Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress




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William R. Keating  
Member of Congress



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Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress



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Joseph P. Kennedy III  
Member of Congress

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<sup>7</sup> Letter from United States Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer to Senator Elizabeth Warren, July 3, 2018, [on file with Senator Warren's office]

<sup>8</sup> Lobster Council Canada. "Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)." <http://lobstercouncilcanada.ca/market-access/canada-european-union-comprehensive-economic-and-trade-agreement-ceta/>