

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 24, 2015

The Honorable Jerry Brown
Governor of California
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor Brown,

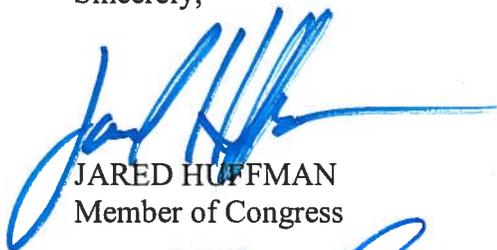
We write to express our concern about the high levels of domoic acid in Dungeness crab, which is linked to a massive toxic bloom of the marine diatom *Pseudo-nitzschia*. The elevated levels of domoic acid have caused delays in the opening of the 2015/2016 recreational and commercial Dungeness crab fishing seasons. While we are hopeful that the situation will turn around and the fisheries can be opened safely and promptly, we remain concerned about the economic consequences of a fishery closure. So that state and federal resources can be brought to bear at the earliest opportunity, we urge you to dedicate adequate resources to monitor the situation closely and to stand ready to ask the Secretary of Commerce to declare a fishery disaster through NOAA Fisheries if the commercial fishery must be closed for the 2015/2016 season.

The bloom is the largest and longest-lasting in at least 15 years, and concentrations of domoic acid in seawater, some forage fish, and crab samples have been among the highest ever reported for this region. In mid-May, domoic acid concentrations in Monterey Bay, California were 10 to 30 times the level that would be considered high for a normal *Pseudo-nitzschia* bloom. We understand that state and federal agencies are monitoring the situation and are providing frequent updates and test results from samples collected off of the coasts from Santa Barbara to Crescent City.

The commercial Dungeness crab fishery is crucial to the economies of Central and North Coast communities and to the overall state economy. Last year, commercial Dungeness crab harvests in California were valued at \$60 million. A closure of this fishery would be devastating for fishermen, who have already been impacted by a poor salmon season this year, which yielded just one third of the average harvest.

We thank you for monitoring the situation and urge you to be prepared to immediately ask for the Secretary of Commerce to declare a fishery disaster in the event of continued closures so that state and federal resources can be quickly mobilized. If our offices can be of any assistance or if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Katie Westfall with Rep. Huffman at katie.westfall@mail.house.gov or Miriam Goldstein with Rep. Speier at miriam.goldstein@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,



JARED HUFFMAN
Member of Congress



JACKIE SPEIER
Member of Congress



SAM FARR
Member of Congress



LOIS CAPPS
Member of Congress