



City of New Bedford  
Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor

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## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

### **Congress Considers Marine Monument Impacts on New Bedford and Fishing Communities Nationwide; Mayor Mitchell Submits Testimony**

**New Bedford, Massachusetts** –At a congressional oversight hearing this morning, the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Water, Power, and Oceans considered the issue of marine monument designations. New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell submitted testimony to the committee that he had earlier planned to deliver in person. (The Mayor’s scheduled flight into D.C. was cancelled due to yesterday’s snowstorm).

Mayor Mitchell officially represented the Port of New Bedford as well as the National Coalition for Fishing Communities an organization created by the non-profit Saving Seafood. The National Coalition for Fishing Communities is a voice for communities nationwide that depend on commercial fishing. The Coalition works to ensure policy-makers and the public hear directly from those whose lives and livelihoods are affected by commercial fishing policy and regulation. As the nation’s number one fishing port, New Bedford has played a leadership role in the Coalition and provided the seed funds which enabled the Coalition’s creation. Today the Coalition is comprised of dozens of fishing businesses and organizations in port communities across country, from New England, to the Gulf of Mexico, to California, to Hawaii.

The Port of New Bedford is America’s top-grossing commercial fishing port for the past sixteen years. The Port generates \$9 billion in economic activity annually and employs 6,000 workers.

In his written testimony (see attached), the Mayor presented the concerns of port communities across the nation regarding the federal government’s approach to marine monument designations under the Antiquities Act.

Mayor Mitchell explained his interest in the House Committee’s work on marine monuments: “Presidential marine monument designations under the federal Antiquities Act have become a major cause of concern in fishing communities. The nation’s fisheries have been managed for forty years under the federal Magnuson Act, so the recent increased use of Antiquities Act in ways that impact fisheries has understandably generated concern. Now is a good time to pause, step back, and have a healthy public discussion about how these two laws ought to be working.”

Mitchell added, “Congress has an important role to play because it has the final authority on how the two federal laws should work. My hope is that Congress will explore ways for Antiquities Act to work more in concert with the Magnuson Act, rather than as a parallel decision-making process. Today’s hearing is an important opportunity for a healthy public discussion on this issue.”

To watch the hearing online, visit:

<http://naturalresources.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=401648>

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