



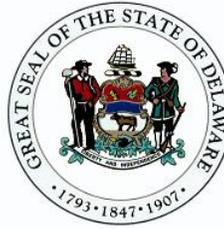
DAVID A. PATERSON

*New York*



JO N S. CORZINE

*New Jersey*



JACK MARKELL

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MARTIN J. O'MALLEY

*Maryland*



TIMOTHY M. Kaine

*Virginia*

December 23, 2009

Mr. Richard B. Robins, Jr.  
Chairman, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council  
300 South new Street  
Dover, Delaware 19904-6790

Dear Mr. Robins:

On behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO), thank you for the resolution of support from the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council). Through the Mid-Atlantic Governors' Agreement on Ocean Conservation, our States are committed to maintaining and improving the health of our ocean and coastal resources, and ensuring that they continue to contribute to the high quality of life and economic vitality of our region's communities well into the future.

We appreciate and value the strong role of the Council in managing our region's important fisheries, including the protection of essential fish habitat. Now that we have received input at the MARCO stakeholder meeting held in December, we are ready to move forward on the actions identified by the Governors. The scheduling conflict between our stakeholder meeting and the Council meeting highlights the need for closer coordination to ensure our similar priorities are met and we would welcome the establishment of a liaison to MARCO.

Our States have begun to identify opportunities to initiate, complement and support appropriate ocean habitat conservation efforts across the region, as one of four MARCO priority areas. The offshore canyons are a significant regional resource, and their protection is of special importance.

Together, MARCO and the Council can take significant strides towards the comprehensive protection of important habitats like the canyons for the long-term benefit of our region, including its fisheries. We look forward to working with you to advance our mutual goal of a sustainable ocean environment in the Mid-Atlantic region.

Best Regards,



George Stafford  
Deputy Secretary of State  
New York Department of State



Gwynne Schultz  
Senior Coastal and Ocean Policy Advisor  
Maryland Department of Natural  
Resources



Ruth Ehinger  
Coastal Program Manager  
New Jersey Department of Environmental  
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Sarah W. Cooksey  
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