



May 5, 2015

The Hon. Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senate  
506 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Shaheen:

I am writing to express continued opposition to the USDA catfish inspection program. This program, created under the pretense of food safety, is a trade barrier that will increase seafood costs for consumers across the nation. The program will have a lasting negative impact on our company, our customers, and our Portsmouth employees.

High Liner has a long storied tradition in the seafood industry. Our operations recently relocated to Portsmouth and we are proud to have over 314 Granite State workers in our family. We provide consumers with innovative seafood products so they can enjoy the health benefits of seafood. The architects of the catfish program want to implement a program that raises our costs by restricting options for sourcing safe seafood, from both the U.S. and globally. That will impact our operations.

The USDA program is not justified on a food safety basis, as even USDA regards catfish as a "low risk food." If implemented, the program will trigger an immediate ban on imported catfish, restricting the supply of whitefish and raising our costs. The program is an obvious trade barrier. That is why all the major agricultural groups that care about exports want to repeal this program; they know that they will feel the brunt of any trade retaliation against the United States.

I was disappointed that, despite these flaws, the 2014 Farm Bill did not eliminate the catfish program. But we want to look forward and get this problem corrected.

As a Senator that cares about trade and jobs, we ask for your help in eliminating a program that the President and the Government accountants say should go. Repealing the USDA program will remove a significant impediment to better serving our customers and building our New Hampshire business. I am confident that you are still the best shot we have in congress to beat this ridiculous piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

Bill DiMento  
Vice President of Quality Assurance, Sustainability, and Government Affairs

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill DiMento", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

High Liner Foods  
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