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SEPTEMBER 30, 2003

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STRAUS OPPOSES FISHERIES AMENDMENT 13

Boston: Rep. Bill Straus (D-Mattapoisett) announced today his strong opposition to Amendment 13, now under consideration by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

As part of a state legislative resolution joined in by Rep. Straus, he states that the multimillion dollar fishing industry in the New Bedford/Fairhaven waterfront is in grave danger as a result of the proposed federal fisheries Amendment.

The entire Port is at risk of losing two-million dollars a day if this Amendment is adopted. The fishing industry accounts for thousands of jobs, and the infrastructure supporting the industry are vital to the social and economic well-being of the local community. "Unfortunately, without sufficient scientific data on stock recoveries, the government is never-the-less poised to severely threaten an important local industry", said Straus.

Amendment 13 is an amendment to the fishery management plan governing the federal fishery for groundfish off the Northeastern U.S. Some of the proposed changes relate to overfishing, establishing rebuilding plans for some stock and reducing by-catch.

Critics of the plan, however, state that these regulations will put the fishing industry at risk, and have proposed a different plan which will promote conservation while minimizing the risk to the fishing industry.

"The calculated benefit from the intended regulations is relatively small compared to the economic disruption," stated Straus. "I believe that slowing down this process, changing the regulations and carefully monitoring the situation will result in conservation without risking the social welfare and employment related to the fishing communities," continued Straus.