

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 25, 2008

The Honorable Carlos M. Gutierrez
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Gutierrez:

On Monday June 16, the States of Maryland and Virginia submitted supplemental information to support their request for a disaster declaration for the Chesapeake Bay blue crab fishery. Now that the Department of Commerce has all the relevant information to make a determination, we write to you today to ask that you urgently review this request and make a speedy determination.

Chesapeake Bay blue crab stocks have declined by an estimated 70 percent since the early 1990's, imperiling the future of the Bay's most valuable commercial fishery. A declaration of a disaster would be the most effective way to provide economic assistance to our watermen and their communities.

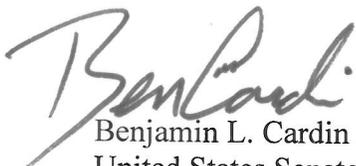
Sincerely,



Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator



John Warner
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Jim Webb
United States Senator