

## The voice of business since 1949!

*VCEDA's Mission Statement: To advocate for policies, legislation and programs that stimulate business and a vital economy as the foundation for a vibrant quality of life in Ventura County.*

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July 7, 2016

The President

The White House

Washington, DC 20500

## RE: OPPOSE DESIGNATING CALIFORNIA OFFSHORE SEAMOUNTS, BANKS AND RIDGES AS MONUMENTS THAT PROHIBIT COMMERCIAL FISHING

Dear President Obama:

The Ventura County Economic Development Association (VCEDA) provides our members in Ventura County with education and policy guidance on issues that affect the economic climate of the greater business community. As such, after careful examination and review, we must respectfully express our opposition to the recent proposal to declare virtually all offshore seamounts, ridges, and banks off the coast of California as monuments under the Antiquities Act, and permanently close these areas to commercial fishing.

Commercial fishing operations based at the Port of Hueneme, the Oxnard Harbor, and the Ventura Marina serve as foundational elements of our local economy. Our local fishermen and fish processors rely on productive fishing grounds, such as Tanner and Cortes Banks, to produce millions of pounds of seafood, including tuna, mackerel, and market squid. Closure of these areas would inflict serious harm to the industry and community. As an example of the impacts to Ventura County of this misguided policy, the current squid landing operation at the Port of Hueneme alone supports nearly 1,400 direct, induced and indirect jobs in the local community, about \$11 million of state and local taxes revenue annually, and provides \$56 million of business revenue to local businesses dependent upon existing squid operation.

California has the most strictly regulated fisheries in the world. Precautionary policies for protecting resources in federal waters exist under the federal Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), as well as under many other bipartisan laws, such as the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act, which require science-based analysis conducted in a fully public and a transparent process.

The document "The Case for Protecting California's Seamounts, Ridges and Banks" was drafted and advanced with no science, no NEPA analysis, and virtually no public engagement nor outreach to the parties who will be most affected by this unilateral action. Therefore, we respectfully ask you to inform the White House Council on Environmental Quality as well as the Secretaries of Commerce and Interior that you oppose the creation of these monuments and



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support the resolution of the Council Coordination Committee, signed by all eight regional Fishery Management Councils, that fishery management in the US EEZ should continue to be implemented under the MSA.

Respectfully,

Sandy Smith  
Chairman

**Ventura County Economic Development Association**

CC: Congresswoman Julia Brownley (D-CA 26<sup>th</sup> District)  
Congresswoman Lois Capps (D-CA 24<sup>th</sup> District)  
Congresswoman Janice Hahn (D-CA 44<sup>th</sup> District)  
c/o Laurie Sarnoff, Chief of Staff, Congresswoman Janice Hahn  
Senator Barbara Boxer  
Senator Dianne Feinstein  
Cecilia Munoz, Assistant to the President and Director of the Domestic Policy Council  
Christy Goldfuss, Managing Director, CEQ  
Eileen Sobeck, Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NMFS  
Penny Pritzker, Secretary of Commerce  
c/o Bruce Andrews, Deputy Secretary of Commerce