



Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association

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May 15, 2025

Daniel McKiernan, Director
Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
South Coast Field Station
836 S. Rodney French Blvd.
New Bedford, MA 02744

Sent via email: marine.fish@mass.gov

Dear Director McKiernan,

On behalf of its 1800 members, the Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association (MLA) respectfully submits this letter of **SUPPORT** to repeal the Lobster Carapace Sizes and Escape Vent Rules (322 CMR). To have state regulations conform to Addendum XXXII to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster.

1. The **MLA SUPPORTS** the repeal of all pending minimum carapace size increases for commercial fishers in Lobster Conservation Management Area 1 (LCMA 1) and recreational fishers in the Gulf of Maine Recreational Area. This will maintain the existing 3 1/4" minimum carapace size.
2. The **MLA SUPPORTS** the repeal of all pending escape vent size changes for commercial fishers in LCMA 1 and recreational fishers in the Gulf of Maine Recreational Area. This will maintain existing minimum escape vent size of 1 15/16" by 5 3/4" rectangular or 2 7/16" diameter.
3. The **MLA SUPPORTS** the repeal of all pending maximum carapace size changes for commercial fishers in Lobster Conservation Management Area 3 (LCMA3) and Outer Cape Cod (OCCLCMA) and recreational fishers in the Outer Cape Recreational Area. This will maintain the existing 6 3/4" maximum carapace size for LCMA 3 and federal permit holders in OCCLCMA. For state-waters-only OCCLCMA fishers and recreational fishers in the Outer Cape Recreational Area there will be no maximum carapace size.
4. The **MLA SUPPORTS** the repeal of all pending minimum and maximum carapace size standards for seafood dealers. State-wide dealers will have no maximum carapace size and a minimum carapace size of 3 1/4". Dealers buying directly from commercial fishers are restricted to only buying those lobsters that conform to the LCMA specific minimum and maximum size standards for the commercial fisher.

Established in 1963, the MLA is a member-driven organization that accepts and supports the interdependence of species conservation and the members' collective economic interests. The membership is comprised of fishermen from Maine to Cape May and encompasses a wide variety of gear types from fixed gear and mobile gear alike. The MLA continues to work conscientiously through the management process with the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries, Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team, and the New England Fisheries Management Council to ensure the continued sustainability and profitability of the resources in which our commercial fishermen are engaged in.

Thank you for your thoughtful deliberation and continued support for the commercial lobster industry here in the Commonwealth.

Sincerely, *Beth Casoni*, Executive Director