

To: Chairperson Tierney, Massachusetts Ocean Management Task Force

I am a private citizen and ardent salt water fisherman who fought for Stripped Bass regulations in the 1970s, and I owe deference on environmental issues to no one.

Recommendation #9 in your Draft Principles et.al. has stopped me cold. I have read the testimony of your members, Jack Clarke and Priscilla Brooks on S2043 (Freedom to Fish Act) and know of their blatant support of MPA-no fishing zones. I object to this clause in #9..."environmental agencies [should] have the statutory authority to designate and protect areas....with decisions to exercise that authority based on sound scientific information."

First, this is a wholesale usurpation of authority granted to other authorities and agencies, including towns bordering our coastal waters. Our democratic tradition calls for a balance of power that you ignore. Such broad, sweeping, statutory authority gives the environmentalist power of legislator, prosecutor, judge and jury. You will have a hard fight in the legislation and the court of public opinion.

Second, I have serious doubts about acceptance of environmental agencies to do the job with any fairness. You will note the quote in #9 talks of exercising this authority based on sound scientific information. Yet, Ms. Priscilla Brooks in her testimony on S2043 believes scientific information so cumbersome and difficult to collect that is only gets in the way of environmental goals, and should not be legislated in the Freedom to Fish Act.

Frankly Ms. Tierney, I believe the OMTF has already biased to the environmentalist lobby. On October 17, 2003, you made a statement to the effect that OMTF would not focus on fisheries management issues, yet recommendation #9 clearly contradicts that statement. It is a back door effort to realize the agenda of Ms. Brooks and Mr. Clarke and other extremists on OMTF.

PETA, ELF and others have given us good reason to be concerned about their so called good intentions. I urge you to act with the greatest caution and openness on this very delicate issue.

My right to cast a line over salt water is not to be taken lightly. Allow me to close with a quote, "...from my cold, dead hands."

Thank you,

John Pollock, Dedham,MA

cc: Gov. Mitt Romney