

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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OFFICE OF
THE GOVERNOR

NO. _____ 19 FY 08/09
DATE _____ October 24, 2008

**AN ORDER TO CREATE THE GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE
ON THE ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY OF MAINE'S LOBSTER INDUSTRY**

WHEREAS, lobstering is an industry with long-standing cultural and economic importance to the state of Maine; and

WHEREAS, lobstering is the cornerstone of the economies of Maine's coastal communities; and

WHEREAS, the recent global economic crisis has illustrated that Maine's lobster industry is vulnerable and that traditional ways of doing business may no longer be sufficient; and

WHEREAS, Maine's Department of Marine Resources is charged with conserving and developing the fisheries of the state of Maine;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, John E. Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby establish the Governor's Task Force on the Economic Sustainability of Maine's Lobster Industry (hereinafter "Task Force").

Purpose and Duties

The purpose and duties of the Task Force shall be to develop a comprehensive strategic plan for improved marketing of Maine lobster in order to ensure the economic prosperity and long-term sustainability of the Maine lobster industry. This will include, but not be limited to:

- Identifying opportunities for expanding and diversifying both live and processed markets for Maine lobster;
- Identifying necessary improvements and expansions of the infrastructure in Maine, including processing capacity and state-of-the-art technology that maximizes the quality of lobster landed in Maine, and provides flexibility of product movement;
- Identifying opportunities for increasing the range of value added lobster products;

- Identifying possible changes to the structure of the lobster industry in terms of volume, quantity and timing of product landed;
- Identifying Best Management Practices for industry members (harvesters and dealers) to increase product quality and profitability;
- Identifying methodologies of protecting and promoting the Maine lobster brand in the global marketplace, including analysis of the value of Marine Stewardship Council certification, product substitution and food safety; and
- Identifying alternative business models.

The Task Force shall work with an independent contractor with expertise in the food industry, specifically in national and international markets and in market strategy, design, operations and implementation and technology development. The contractor shall develop a process through which members of the industry can provide information that can be used in the development of the contractor's recommendations.

Following the completion of this research, the contractor shall provide the Task Force with preliminary recommendations for their review. The Task Force shall consult with the lobster industry in its review of the preliminary recommendations. The comments of the Task Force will be used by the contractor to inform the development of a comprehensive plan for a marketing strategy for Maine lobster. The marketing strategy will present a blueprint for implementation, including timeframes, cost associated with various activities and expected outcomes.

Membership

The Governor shall appoint no more than eight (8) members to the Task Force. One member shall be the Commissioner of the Department of Marine Resources, or his designee; one member shall be the Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development, or his designee; and one member shall be the Executive Director of the Maine Lobster Promotion Council or his designee. The remaining appointments shall include diverse members who represent the interests of the lobster industry, or have expertise in business operations, finance, community development, international trade, and/or marketing.

The Governor shall appoint the Chair of the Task Force from among the members. The Chair will schedule, set the agenda for, and preside at Task Force meetings.

Staff

Staff support to the Task Force will be provided by the Department of Marine Resources. The members of the Task Force shall serve without compensation.

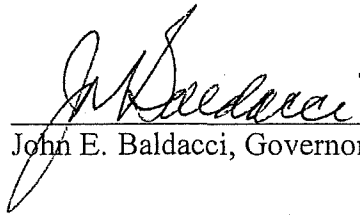
Resources

Pursuant to 12 MRSA §6465, the Commissioner of Marine Resources may authorize expenditures from the Lobster Research, Education, and Development Fund to carry out the work of the Task Force.

Report

The Task Force shall submit its recommendations to the Governor no later than April 15, 2009, after which the Task Force will dissolve.

Effective date of this Executive Order is October 24, 2008.



John E. Baldacci, Governor