



Florida House of Representatives

Democratic Office

Franklin Sands
Democratic Leader

Geraldine F. Thompson
Democratic Leader Pro Tempore

June 7, 2010

The Honorable Charlie Crist
Governor, State of Florida
Office of the Governor
The Capitol
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0001

Dear Governor Crist,

As oil from BP/Deepwater Horizon disaster continues gushing into the Gulf of Mexico at a staggering rate, Floridians who make their living from harvesting and selling seafood are facing a difficult deadline.

Without knowing how long they will be able to continue harvesting and selling fresh seafood from the gulf because of the threat of oil pollution to offshore fishing grounds, many commercial harvesters and retailers are delaying the renewal of saltwater products licenses, commercial retail licenses and commercial wholesale licenses. Presently, these renewals must be done by June 30.

The Florida Wildlife Conservation Commission has informed me that of the approximately 19,000 harvesters and retailers who purchased licenses for the current year, to date only about 9,000 have been renewed.

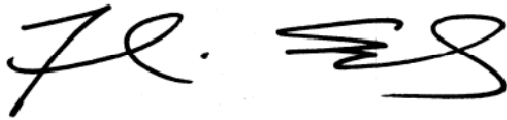
Last year, the FWCC issued Executive Order EO-09-07 extending the permit renewal deadline 90 days for commercial seafood harvesters and sellers because of glitches due to a new computer system. But today, these individuals and businesses are facing a much greater catastrophe that could threaten their livelihoods for many years. The media is reporting it may take that much time for the gulf to recover from the BP disaster.

Governor, the commercial seafood industry is as important to Florida's economy as our beaches, sunshine, agriculture and tourist attractions. I urge you to take immediate action to assist commercial seafood harvesters and retailers. You might consider using your authority to extend the existing June 30 permit renewal deadline.

By issuing a moratorium on permit fees, we might be able to allow seafood harvesters and sellers to continue working while they assess the economic uncertainties of their industry.

I appreciate your immediate attention to this request.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "F. Sands". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "F" and "S".

Franklin Sands