

NCFA send questions to the Third District Candidates in reference to commercial fishing and below are the answers that we received back.

We received responses from the following Candidates:

GARY CERES  
PHIL SHEPARD  
MICHAEL SPECIALE  
GREG MURPHY  
PAUL BEAUMONT  
JEFF MOORE  
FRANCIS DELUCA  
SHANNON BRAY  
TIM HARRIS  
RICHARD BEW  
MICHELE NIX  
ERIC ROUSE  
CELESTE CAIRNS  
GRAHAM BOYD  
JOAN PERRY

GARY CERES

1.) Although inlets are located in state waters, the marking of those inlets for navigational purposes is done by the Coast Guard, and the maintenance by the Corps of Engineers through dredging. Are you aware of the issues of dredging and the importance of funding to assure that inlets can provide safe passage for recreational and commercial fishermen and charter and headboat operations?

Infrastructure funding has been wasteful in this nation for decades and as such crucial projects such as port dredging have been delayed or neglected completely because of entrenched bureaucratic hurdles and red tape. In addition, it is crucial that the next Congressman find for funds already appropriated to be allocated properly so that the 3rd District receives the funding for dredging projects that is necessary. I would push for oversight of regulations in place regarding dredging and hold town hall meetings with the commercial fishing industry and dredging experts to see how we can streamline the processes for port dredging to ensure safe passage for recreational and commercial fishermen.

2.) One issue that is shared by state and federal fisheries management is that of gamefish designation. Do you know what happens when a fish species is declared a gamefish? What do you think about it?

It depends on the gamefish in question. Opening certain fish to gamefishing is a good thing since it allows recreational fishing where appropriate and at the same time allows commercial fishermen the ability to harvest catches crucial to the industry. However, it is important to protect certain fish from being declared gamefish when their populations dwindle so that commercial fishermen in particular are not closed out of the fishing of these species indefinitely. A close monitoring of gamefish populations is a good way of providing crucial data to commercial fishermen and recreational fishermen.

3.) What do you think about banning commercial gear, such as nets or trawls?

I think it general this is a bad idea as it limits the ability of commercial fishermen to conduct business and drives up the cost of for fishermen of complying with rules against certain gear.

4.) Do you have a position on offshore drilling for oil and/or natural gas? What about seismic testing?

My position may not be politically correct but it is that anything with the potential for economic development and job creation should be allowed. Right now it is a moot subject since there is simply not enough oil offshore of North Carolina to make it financially profitable for companies to drill but in the future this may change and I am not opposed to it. Technology is such that environmental impact is minimal, job creation potential is large and they would be located far enough offshore to have no impact on the aesthetic of the district's coastlines.

5.) What do you think of windfarms in the ocean off our coast?

In general the amount of energy produced by windfarms is not worth the cost. They can be an eyesore as well. I do not favor government subsidies of any kind for wind farm development.

6.) Most everyone understands that we live in a globally economy and seafood is certainly no exception. The question has always been, do we have fair trade? We compete with many countries that have fisheries for competing products but without the same regard for the environment as we do. In addition, some countries "dump" their products into the United States resulting in unfair competition. Can you address these issues?

I support the Trump Administration's efforts to get US fisheries, farmers, loggers and manufacturers a fair shake with nations such as China, India, the EU that have for very long periods of time engaged in market manipulation and dumping of agricultural goods on US markets while keeping their own markets closed to US imports. While I realize free trade is beneficial for our fisheries, unilateral free trade is detrimental. We must seek bilateral trade agreements that open markets to US goods and at the same time ensure that US fisheries can compete on an even playing field. Lowering or limiting the power of the EPA to interfere in fisheries can also help our commercial fisheries to compete better as well.

7.) Seafood is a perishable product and so once brought to the dock, processing is critical. In that regard, finding labor has been an ongoing problem with our seafood packers and processors. For years, many seafood businesses have relied on the H-2B program through the US Department of Labor to hire nonimmigrants to do temporary work. What is your opinion of this program?

I believe that priority must go to US workers over nonimmigrant foreign workers at all times. That said, the program is necessary provided that it is closely monitored so that foreign workers do not overstay their visas and are not put on a track to citizenship.

8.) Finally, what is your opinion about the importance of commercial fishing in eastern North Carolina in general and specifically the Third Congressional District?

Commercial fishing is not only important to the Third Congressional District in strictly economic terms. Yes, it is a source of economic growth and job creation but just as importantly it is part of the larger cultural identity of the Third Congressional District. Commercial fishermen represent the working class of this district that I am hoping to represent and as such are crucial members of the district. The impact that commercial fishing has on our work ethic, sense of pride in our district and our culture cannot be understated.

Sincerely,

Gary Ceres

PHIL SHEPARD

1.) Although inlets are located in state waters, the marking of those inlets for navigational purposes is done by the Coast Guard, and the maintenance by the Corps of Engineers through dredging. Are you aware of the issues of dredging and the importance of funding to assure that inlets can provide safe passage for recreational and commercial fishermen and charter and head boat operations?

Yes, as the Transportation Chair, I am very aware of and supportive of inlet dredging. As a matter of fact, I support the State purchasing a dredge to be used within our waterways. As a Congressman, I will fully support funding dredging and jetties that will keep our inlets clear and open.

2.) One issue that is shared by state and federal fisheries management is that of gamefish designation. Do you know what happens when a fish species is declared a gamefish? What do you think about it?

Yes, I am aware of what happens when a fish species is declared a game fish. I do not agree with that practice if it only allows certain fishermen access to the fish or prevents the public from being able to purchase the fish. I support giving all the opportunity to access the fish recreationally and commercially, and I will work with each to reach an agreement both groups can support.

3.) What do you think about banning commercial gear, such as nets or trawls?

I do not support banning nets and trawls. However, if there is scientific evidence that these devices are being harmful, there may need to be restrictions put in place. However, many improvements have been made in the design recently to protect the turtle, reduce by catch and limitations of locations, but all changes should be based upon factual evidence.

4.) Do you have a position on offshore drilling for oil and/or natural gas? What about seismic testing?

Concerning offshore drilling for oil and natural gas, seismic testing, I would like to hear all factual information supporting the effort as well as any detrimental effects to our fishing industry, our military, and our environment. After hearing and reading all facts provided, my decision would be to support that which would not adversely affect our fisherman and military and support the betterment of North Carolina and its citizens.

5.) What do you think of windfarms in the ocean off our coast?

Regarding windfarms in the ocean off our coast, I would like to hear all factual information supporting the effort as well as any detrimental effects to our fishing industry, our military, and our environment. After hearing and reading all facts provided, my decision would be to support that which would not adversely affect our fisherman and military and support the betterment of North Carolina and its citizens.

6.) Most everyone understands that we live in a globally economy and seafood is certainly no exception. The question has always been, do we have fair trade? We compete with many countries that have fisheries for

competing products but without the same regard for the environment as we do. In addition, some countries "dump" their products into the United States resulting in unfair competition. Can you address these issues?

When foreign seafood is dumped into our country which possesses far less quality than fish caught in America, I support working with groups of the Fair Trades USA to promote and bring awareness to our American seafood, especially wild caught seafood in Eastern North Carolina, which is of far better quality than fish caught anywhere else in the world.

7.) Seafood is a perishable product and so once brought to the dock, processing is critical. In that regard, finding labor has been an ongoing problem with our seafood packers and processors. For years, many seafood businesses have relied on the H-2B program through the US Department of Labor to hire nonimmigrants to do temporary work. What is your opinion of this program?

I believe we should continue the program until the government can find a better long-term solution to address the labor requirements of our seafood industry. I also think we need to make it a priority to find a more stable and reliable program to address our labor needs without depending on migrant labor.

8.) Finally, what is your opinion about the importance of commercial fishing in eastern North Carolina in general and specifically the Third Congressional District?

Commercial fishing is very important to Eastern North Carolina. As a person that has lived and had family to live in Eastern North Carolina since 1737, fishing has been and currently is a way of life for most of us. Whether it was to maintain an oyster garden in Stump Sound, to shrimp and fish in Carteret, Pamlico Sound, or in our North Eastern counties, commercial fishing provides jobs, provides income for families, pays taxes, and puts the best seafood on the table of people throughout not only our State of North Carolina, but throughout the USA and the world.

MICHAEL SPECIALE

- 1.) Although inlets are located in state waters, the marking of those inlets for navigational purposes is done by the Coast Guard, and the maintenance by the Corps of Engineers through dredging. Are you aware of the issues of dredging and the importance of funding to assure that inlets can provide safe passage for recreational and commercial fishermen and charter and headboat operations?

*I am aware of the issues. As a NC Legislator, I supported the funding for the purchase of a dredger. I support state and federal funding for dredging.*

- 2.) One issue that is shared by state and federal fisheries management is that of gamefish designation. Do you know what happens when a fish species is declared a gamefish? What do you think about it?

*I do know what happens when a species is designated a gamefish, and it means that it can only be caught by hook and line, and it cannot be commercially caught. It forces restaurants to either procure the specific type of fish from overseas or some other area of the country where it may not be designated as a gamefish. It is devastating to our Commercial Fishermen because of the excessive fines if the fish get caught up in their nets, and it creates a host of other problems. I do not support gamefish designation unless there is verifiable, bonafide, recent biological data indicating it is necessary, and only for the time necessary to return stocks to normal for fishing. In my seven years in the NC House, the data has never been provided nor the case made for gamefish designations.*

- 3.) What do you think about banning commercial gear, such as nets or trawls?

*Our Commercial Fishermen have been fishing this coastline for hundreds of years and they care about the fish stocks and the importance of them to their future survival as fishermen. The tools that they use are necessary and required for what they do, and I do not subscribe to limiting them unless the evidence is overwhelming that something needs to be regulated, and anecdotal evidence is insufficient.*

- 4.) Do you have a position on offshore drilling for oil and/or natural gas? What about seismic testing?

*I believe that the technology today is much better and safer than in the past, and I do not believe that the dangers of spills such as the BP spill off of the Gulf coast are credible. I do believe the question is moot, given that the price of fuel is low, and the current known availability in the US is more than we will use for the next three centuries, therefore, it is economically unfeasible to go offshore at this time.*

- 5.) What do you think of windfarms in the ocean off our coast?

*I do not believe that wind*

*farms are self-sustainable, that is, sustainable without government subsidies, and that, coupled with the environmental hazards associated with wind farms (they have been known to leak oils and they are a hazard to birds and aircraft). I do not support them at this time.*

6.) Most everyone understands that we live in a globally economy and seafood is certainly no exception. The question has always been, do we have fair trade? We compete with many countries that have fisheries for competing products but without the same regard for the environment as we do. In addition, some countries “dump” their products into the United States resulting in unfair competition. Can you address these issues?

*I believe that our Commercial fishing industry is over-regulated by both the state and federal government. I have worked over the last seven years in the NC General Assembly to reduce regulation and I will work to do the same in Congress. We are allowing dumping and we need to stop this because it hurts our home industry. Tariffs are one way to do it.*

7.) Seafood is a perishable product and so once brought to the dock, processing is critical. In that regard, finding labor has been an ongoing problem with our seafood packers and processors. For years, many seafood businesses have relied on the H-2B program through the US Department of Labor to hire nonimmigrants to do temporary work. What is your opinion of this program?

*I support the H2B program. I believe that if an industry cannot find native workers they should have access to foreign workers who will do the work. The H2B program allows foreign workers to come here legally as guest workers and I support that.*

8.) Finally, what is your opinion about the importance of commercial fishing in eastern North Carolina in general and specifically the Third Congressional District?

*I have been fighting on behalf of the commercial fishermen in North Carolina for the seven years that I have been a State Representative. It is an important industry in North Carolina and, particularly in the 3<sup>rd</sup> District, and it deserves the attention of whoever is elected to this congressional seat. I will continue to support our Commercial fishing industry and work to remove the impediments put there over the years by folks in Washington. I want to see our fishermen succeed and grow the industry here in the 3<sup>rd</sup> District because the largest part of North Carolina’s fishing industry is in this district.*

GREG MURPHY

1.) Although inlets are located in state waters, the marking of those inlets for navigational purposes is done by the Coast Guard, and the maintenance by the Corps of Engineers through dredging. Are you aware of the issues of dredging and the importance of funding to assure that inlets can provide safe passage for recreational and commercial fishermen and charter and headboat operations? Yes. I have met with Commercial Fisherman in Carteret and Dare County to educate myself on their issues. Among the biggest concerns was getting Oregon Inlet dredged and having a Jetty put in. Such would be a fantastic investment for eastern NC. The coastline and waterways are manageable resources and should be treated as such.

2.) One issue that is shared by state and federal fisheries management is that of gamefish designation. Do you know what happens when a fish species is declared a gamefish? My understanding is that the fish is no longer allowed to be caught commercially.

What do you think about it? I would like to know on what scientific basis these designations are made and how they are justified.

3.) What do you think about banning commercial gear, such as nets or trawls? They are but one avenue to catch fish and have been used responsibly to exclude turtles and by-catch. Commercial fisherman have fished responsibly and should be allowed to do so to earn a decent living.

4.) Do you have a position on offshore drilling for oil and/or natural gas? Our nation now produces more oil than Saudi Arabia. All without drilling off our coasts. I do not see the need to even discuss this possibility for 50 years. At present I see no need for it. What about seismic testing? Echoes #1. Don't see the need for it

- 5.) What do you think of windfarms in the ocean off our coast? Am ok with them as long as they do not interfere with the Military and do not receive tax breaks.
  
- 6.) Most everyone understands that we live in a globally economy and seafood is certainly no exception. The question has always been, do we have fair trade? No, I do not believe we have fair trade and that has been one of the hallmarks of the Trump administration in addressing the imbalance.

We compete with many countries that have fisheries for competing products but without the same regard for the environment as we do. In addition, some countries “dump” their products into the United States resulting in unfair competition. Can you address these issues? As best I understand SE Asia dumps shrimp into the US market where they have little environmental regulations compared to the US. These are unfair trade practices. At the very least we need to pressure these countries to even the playing field.

- 7.) Seafood is a perishable product and so once brought to the dock, processing is critical. In that regard, finding labor has been an ongoing problem with our seafood packers and processors. For years, many seafood businesses have relied on the H-2B program through the US Department of Labor to hire nonimmigrants to do temporary work. What is your opinion of this program? I toured Captain Charlie’s Crab operation in Columbia just yesterday and learned a great deal about this program. They have relied on it for many years. Unfortunately it does not allow for companies to be able to plan as they allotment is given out year to year without special provisions for workers who have worked at a facility before being allowed to come outside the allotment. I think it a good program that provides workers who are legally in the US, pay US taxes and do work that oftentimes employers cannot find workers to do.
  
- 8.) Finally, what is your opinion about the importance of commercial fishing in eastern North Carolina in general and specifically the Third Congressional District? I have had the great joy of touring and meeting with commercial fisherman in Carteret and Dare Counties and learning what they do first hand and the troubles they face because of overregulation. These are hardworking men and women who are the backbone of coastal communities. We simply cannot abandon them. They need help with decreasing overregulation, increasing access to ports and being able to afford health care. I plan to advocate for each of these issues.

PAUL BEAUMONT

- 1.) Although inlets are located in state waters, the marking of those inlets for navigational purposes is done by the Coast Guard, and the maintenance by the Corps of Engineers through dredging. Are you aware of the issues of dredging and the importance of funding to assure that inlets can provide safe passage for recreational and commercial fishermen and charter and head boat operations?

I am, and have been working directly with the ACE in DC to address some of the District's concerns on channels. I also serve on the Albemarle Regional Planning Organization (ARPO) as the Vice-Chairman. The ARPO is the north eastern region of the 3<sup>rd</sup> District and serves the DOT interests of the surrounding 10 counties. We have been working with NCDOT and have been successful in supporting a dredge specifically dedicated to keep our own inlets and channels open.

- 2.) One issue that is shared by state and federal fisheries management is that of gamefish designation. Do you know what happens when a fish species is declared a gamefish? What do you think about it?

When a fish is designated gamefish, they are removed from the list of fish available to commercial fishing. I am opposed to the way fish are designated as gamefish, and am opposed to their removal from the commercial fishing available species.

- 3.) What do you think about banning commercial gear, such as nets or trawls?

I am opposed to banning nets and trawls.

- 4.) Do you have a position on offshore drilling for oil and/or natural gas? What about seismic testing?

Concerning the current energy situation thanks to President Trump's expansion of on land oil production, and the fact that we are currently a net energy exporter. There is no reason to pursue offshore oil or gas exploration. As a degreed engineer, until I have reviewed the process associated with seismic testing, and the potential impact to marine life, I do not have an opinion at this time.

- 5.) What do you think of windfarms in the ocean off our coast?

Windfarms require nearly the identical seismic testing as oil/gas platforms with identical potential risks to marine life. There is legislation in the Commerce Committee to ban wind turbines on a state level. I was asked to speak in Raleigh as to the effect on military operations in NC. Based on the impact to the ROTHR array and coastal aviation operations, I would support the ban.

6.) Most everyone understands that we live in a globally economy and seafood is certainly no exception. The question has always been, do we have fair trade? We compete with many countries that have fisheries for competing products but without the same regard for the environment as we do. In addition, some countries “dump” their products into the United States resulting in unfair competition. Can you address these issues?

We do not have fair trade in the international markets for agricultural products as well as our seafood. I have personally seen fishing operations in the Far East clearly demonstrating the difference in health standards and consumer protection. I would support holding foreign products to the same standards US products are subjected to including inspections and environmental practices.

7.) Seafood is a perishable product and so once brought to the dock, processing is critical. In that regard, finding labor has been an ongoing problem with our seafood packers and processors. For years, many seafood businesses have relied on the H-2B program through the US Department of Labor to hire nonimmigrants to do temporary work. What is your opinion of this program?

The H2B Program has been highly successful throughout Northeastern North Carolina in providing documented, legal, temporary labor of non-immigrants.

8.) Finally, what is your opinion about the importance of commercial fishing in eastern North Carolina in general and specifically the Third Congressional District?

Commercial fishing as well as agriculture are what made Northeastern North Carolina what it is today. Both industries have been performed for generations and remain a critical part of our District's heritage and economy providing fresh seafood to our District's residents, restaurants, and guests.

JEFF MOORE

1.) Although inlets are located in state waters, the marking of those inlets for navigational purposes is done by the Coast Guard, and the maintenance by the Corps of Engineers through dredging. Are you aware of the issues of dredging and the importance of funding to assure that inlets can provide safe passage for recreational and commercial fishermen and charter and headboat operations?

Yes, I am aware of the myriad issues with dredging, from the painstaking process of receiving permits to fighting environmental regulations to figure out where spoils are placed. I am aware that a handful of the communities are wholly dependent on sufficient dredging to maintain access to fishing grounds, or their vital commercial fishing industries would be suffocated with too much sand. Both Oregon Inlet and Hatteras Inlet create significant problems of navigation, safety, and access and their proper maintenance is hindered by overly burdensome regulations and a reliably short supply of dredging resources.

More than access and navigability, the filling of Oregon Inlet in particular creates problems with drainage. Storm waters and rains are having a harder time escaping to the sea and thus flood waters are remaining for longer periods. The retained freshwater run off is also reportedly affecting salinity levels in the back sounds, harming shellfish stocks and mariculture operations.

These inlets should be given the same priority as major highways. Access and safety should be of paramount importance, and funding for this standard should be as regular and expeditious as vital DOT projects.

2.) One issue that is shared by state and federal fisheries management is that of gamefish designation. Do you know what happens when a fish species is declared a gamefish? What do you think about it?

Designation as a gamefish essentially shuts off commercial fishing of that species. Even when the stated goal, or fine print is more nuanced than that, the effect is to shut the commercial fishing down.

3.) What do you think about banning commercial gear, such as nets or trawls?

I'd vote against, and campaign against the banning of commercial gear. More should be done to work with commercial fishermen to actually reduce bycatch, instead of outright bans. Further, the pushes for changing catch size limits should be understood to be essential bans on some commercial gear as well. It doesn't say that in the proposal, but it would have that effect in practice. Same for the over-regulating of fishing times, days, distance, and gear size should be understood to be effective bans on certain, and significant, commercial fishing niches.

4.) Do you have a position on offshore drilling for oil and/or natural gas? What about seismic testing?

I view it as a false choice at this point in time. The economics of US energy production are such that the value proposition for offshore OCS drilling is negative when compared to a multitude of inland and shallow water assets already prospected and prepped for extractions.

In the future, if OCS drilling is viable, the testing and approach to exploitation should be led and controlled by local stakeholders. However, the value proposition must be considerably better than it is currently. It makes no sense for eastern NC to willfully assume even minimal levels of risk as long as the US remains a net energy exporter.

5.) What do you think of windfarms in the ocean off our coast?

They'd require the same testing as for oil/gas prospecting, and should be treated with the same caution. The state, nor the federal government should ever subsidize such projects with taxpayer money, nor should they give priority to such projects in the name of the manufactured 'green energy' narrative.

6.) Most everyone understands that we live in a globally economy and seafood is certainly no exception. The question has always been, do we have fair trade? We compete with many countries that have fisheries for competing products but without the same regard for the environment as we do. In addition, some countries "dump" their products into the United States resulting in unfair competition. Can you address these issues?

My background is in absorbing and synthesizing the flow of goods and capital across the world, and how political developments within and between nations affect those flows. The trade issue is prominent among my areas of study, and to the extent countries arbitrarily restrict trade global trade in those industries suffers. That means producers, consumers, and the economy at large. We must be forceful in our calls to hold violators of international trade regulations accountable, while not falling prey to the trap that is reciprocal protectionism. Their are more effective, and frankly more aggressive, methods to punish guilty parties while not harming economic actors at home.

7.) Seafood is a perishable product and so once brought to the dock, processing is critical. In that regard, finding labor has been an ongoing problem with our seafood packers and processors. For years, many seafood businesses have relied on the H-2B program through the US Department of Labor to hire nonimmigrants to do temporary work. What is your opinion of this program?

It serves a good purpose and should be maintained, if not expanded upon (especially because it prioritizes non-immigrants). Labor, as with all other areas of economic activity, should be afforded the level of liberty outlined in our constitution. The freer laborers and employers of the US are to find mutually beneficial arrangements for each of their purposes, the more efficient, effective, and beneficial that activity is to everyone. Liberty has that effect on things. More "programs" should seek to respect this fact.

8.) Finally, what is your opinion about the importance of commercial fishing in eastern North Carolina in general and specifically the Third Congressional District?

In tangible terms, commercial fishing is a vital economic life-line for multiple communities in eastern North Carolina. It represents food on their table, and ours. It represents roofs over heads, bills paid, and families taken care of. Threats to commercial fishing from natural, or man-made sources, is a threat to the very livelihoods of thousands of people, and exponentially more that rely on their services. The Third District's representatives should treat commercial fishing as a vital component of our economy, which deserves protection from overbearing government regulation and exogenous forces that would seek to end it.

More than that, commercial fishing is a heritage that is woven into the very fabric of eastern North Carolina. 'A way of life' may be a trite descriptor, but it could not be more appropriate when speaking of eastern North Carolina and fishing for a living. From colonial times, to modern day, the endeavor of exploiting the bounty of our sounds and seas is as much a part of North Carolina as anything else. It should be a source of immense pride, as both a connection to our past and a look into our future.

## FRANCIS DELUCA

1.) Although inlets are located in state waters, the marking of those inlets for navigational purposes is done by the Coast Guard, and the maintenance by the Corps of Engineers through dredging. Are you aware of the issues of dredging and the importance of funding to assure that inlets can provide safe passage for recreational and commercial fishermen and charter and headboat operations?

The federal government is responsible for interstate commerce and navigable waters. Inlets and channels obviously fall into this category and should be maintained by the Army Corps of Engineers are the money should be directed to the state with specific restrictions for its use. In a case where the state creates or opens, or improves, a new inlet, the state should take responsibility for maintaining that passage unless congress includes it in legislation.

2.) One issue that is shared by state and federal fisheries management is that of gamefish designation. Do you know what happens when a fish species is declared a gamefish? What do you think about it?

Gamefish designation severely restricts the catching of that species of fish. It usually means the end of commercial catching of that species. It is often done, not because of scientific study, but because of lobbying.

As President of Civitas we opposed every bill designating a fish in North Carolina waters as a gamefish.

3.) What do you think about banning commercial gear, such as nets or trawls?

I am against it. Again, this is a case where if there is actual, fact based, scientific evidence of harm it should be considered. Most “bans” or restrictions are political decisions driven by emotion and not science.

4.) Do you have a position on offshore drilling for oil and/or natural gas? What about seismic testing?

As President of Civitas I supported drilling on land and off the coast. As a representative of the 3<sup>rd</sup> district I would be neutral to allow myself to be included in any discussions so as to not come into negotiations with a set position. But whatever rules and laws are adopted should treat all development equally. These decisions should be a decision based on science and have safety mechanisms built in to protect those already earning a living by other means in the area.

5.) What do you think of windfarms in the ocean off our coast?

See my answer to number 4. The only additional comment is the federal and state government should not favor any one form of energy over another.

6.) Most everyone understands that we live in a globally economy and seafood is certainly no exception. The question has always been, do we have fair trade? We compete with many countries that have fisheries for competing products but without the same regard for the environment as we do. In addition, some countries “dump” their products into the United States resulting in unfair competition. Can you address these issues?

In addition to the issue of trade we have a safety issue. Many of the farm raised seafood products imported from overseas (which compete with our local products) are not held to the same safety and sanitary regulations our food production must meet. We must protect our local producers from “dumping” which is often a prelude to market dominance in whatever sector the dumping is occurring. Seafood is no exception.

7.) Seafood is a perishable product and so once brought to the dock, processing is critical. In that regard, finding labor has been an ongoing problem with our seafood packers and processors. For years, many seafood businesses have relied on the H-2B program through the US Department of Labor to hire nonimmigrants to do temporary work. What is your opinion of this program?

I have been clear on this. We must revamp our immigration system in several ways. The easiest is to seal our southern border. We must also come up with a much better way to track visitors and workers coming into our country. Many illegals here are simply VISA overstays, including many H-2B workers. If FedEx can track packages, the government can easily contract with a company to track workers. I do agree there is a need for surge workers around seasonal employment that our domestic labor market sometimes can't meet efficiently.

We also need to slow legal immigration until steps one and two are completed to allow time for assimilation and adjustment. No foreign worker should displace an American worker, that is a recipe for unrest in our country.

8.) Finally, what is your opinion about the importance of commercial fishing in eastern North Carolina in general and specifically the Third Congressional District?

Having grown up on the North Carolina coast I view commercial fishing as part of the fabric of life here. It not only produces an important product; it enriches the culture. It also allows non-fishers access to the water by helping to support small marinas and water access points. In Raleigh I saw as politicians

attempted to put commercial fishers out of business, they simultaneously wanted to spend tax dollars to buy and operate marinas to be sure the “public” had access to the water. Mostly not needed if there is a healthy commercial fishing industry.

Final Note:

In the Currituck County forum on April 9, I said if elected I would designate a staff position as a liaison to waterman. As there are many unfilled positions in the congressional staff at this time, would be a simple matter to hire someone into this role. They would be the contact point (as well as me) for people to contact with concerns and to keep interested parties informed as to the actions of regulatory bodies (Fish & Game, Marine Mammals, EPA, etc) actions that may impact the industry. They would also serve to gather needed input, and if needed, get individuals to DC or local meetings if testimony or presence was required.

SHANNON BRAY

1.) Although inlets are located in state waters, the marking of those inlets for navigational purposes is done by the Coast Guard, and the maintenance by the Corps of Engineers through dredging. Are you aware of the issues of dredging and the importance of funding to assure that inlets can provide safe passage for recreational and commercial fishermen and charter and headboat operations?

As a member of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, I am aware of an effort to aid the Coast Guard in the maintenance of navigational aids. Even though the Auxiliary is a voluntary operation, the budget is tied to the Coast Guard under the Department of Homeland Security. We need to ensure that we have the appropriate funding to assure that inlets can provide safe passage for all watercraft in our waterways.

2.) One issue that is shared by state and federal fisheries management is that of gamefish designation. Do you know what happens when a fish species is declared a gamefish? What do you think about it?

The “gamefish status” means a recreational-only fishery with no commercial sales of any kind. I am in support of doing what it takes to preserve the fish in NC waters. With the introduction of the gamefish bill in the NC General Assembly (H-353), we finally have a chance to make these species a viable recreational fishery, as well as give the coastal communities an economic stimulus in developing tourism around a world class fishery.

3.) What do you think about banning commercial gear, such as nets or trawls?

There are a number of fish in NC waters that have been classified as overfished. One of these are the Southern flounder; much of the commercial harvest is among "recruitment" stocks which means smaller juvenile fish that haven't yet spawned. Take the flounder for instance, the fishery now consists of younger fish because the larger flounder have been mostly wiped out by fishing pressure.

Devices such as nets and trawls have a tendency to catch by-product. The massive shrimp trawling bycatch that occurs in North Carolina and the impacts that it has on the species within the bycatch. Trawls offer a negative impact to our state such as deaths of endangered sea turtles and it causes damage to our ecosystem.

Read more here: <https://www.newsobserver.com/opinion/op-ed/article25614817.html#storylink=cpy>

4.) Do you have a position on offshore drilling for oil and/or natural gas? What about seismic testing?

I am against offshore drilling and seismic testing off the coast of North Carolina. I saw first hand of the devastation of the BP oil spill in South Louisiana. Oil covered fish and birds lay dead on the surface of the Gulf for miles. It crippled all fishing; therefore it crippled the economy of South Louisiana. Seismic tests use compressed air to generate pulses of sound — excruciatingly loud sound, 250 decibels — every 10 to 15 seconds for months at a time. For whales, dolphins and sea turtles, who communicate by sound, this noisy environment is akin to people trying to converse — say, hold a business meeting, read to their children, call the fire department — over the roar of a jet engine 100 feet away.

5.) What do you think of windfarms in the ocean off our coast?

I am for the use of windfarms off our coast but the designs must be able to handle hurricane force winds. Scientific American has conducted research that has stated a forest of 78,000 turbines would have drastically reduced the winds and storm surges from hurricanes Katrina and Sandy.

6.) Most everyone understands that we live in a globally economy and seafood is certainly no exception. The question has always been, do we have fair trade? We compete with many countries that have fisheries for

competing products but without the same regard for the environment as we do. In addition, some countries “dump” their products into the United States resulting in unfair competition. Can you address these issues?

I do know that the state can only produce about 25% of the NC consumer demand; while I do not know how much of the NC catch is used in-state, we still have to import seafood from other locations. We should not have to compete with products that have origins outside of the country and I would support taxing those shipments to ensure the NC fisherman are not being undercut. The seafood produced here in NC would ultimately be fresher than those that come from across the world.

7.) Seafood is a perishable product and so once brought to the dock, processing is critical. In that regard, finding labor has been an ongoing problem with our seafood packers and processors. For years, many seafood businesses have relied on the H-2B program through the US Department of Labor to hire nonimmigrants to do temporary work. What is your opinion of this program?

The H-2B program allows U.S. employers or U.S. agents who meet specific regulatory requirements to bring foreign nationals to the United States to fill temporary nonagricultural jobs. In discussion with many folks in the district, I would opt against the H-2B program in an effort to help NC residents find jobs. My concern is that U.S. employers are able to pay non-citizens a rate much lower than NC citizens and therefore may not even look for a local workforce.

8.) Finally, what is your opinion about the importance of commercial fishing in eastern North Carolina in general and specifically the Third Congressional District?

We have a need for commercial fishing but we also need to protect our waters. Commercial fishing should not be allowed in AECs. North Carolina's coastal zone includes the 20 counties that in whole or in part are adjacent to, adjoining, intersected by or bounded by the Atlantic Ocean or any coastal sound(s). Within this boundary, there are two tiers. The first tier is comprised of Areas of Environmental Concern (AEC) and is subject to more thorough regulatory controls. AECs include: coastal wetlands, estuarine waters, public trust areas, estuarine shorelines, ocean beaches, frontal dunes, ocean erosion areas, inlet lands, small surface water supply watersheds, public water supply well-fields, and fragile natural resource areas. The second tier includes land uses which have potential to affect coastal waters even though they are not located in AECs.

TIM HARRIS

1. Although inlets are located in state waters, the marking of those inlets for navigational purposes is done by the Coast Guard, and the maintenance by the Corps of Engineers through dredging. Are you aware of the issues of dredging and the importance of funding to assure that inlets can provide safe passage for recreational and commercial fishermen and charter and headboat operations?

The Federal government took upon itself the task of regulating and managing navigable waterways almost immediately after this nation was founded and having taken the task it is incumbent on the federal government, not the States, to provide for the continued maintenance of these waterways. I support increasing the budgets necessary to ensure that maintenance/dredging are being handled as needed. I also support, however, such measures as the bill introduced by Sen. Sanderson which would allow Carteret County to ballot a tax increase for the purpose of paying for these- as the US government had dropped that ball of late and until we elect some representatives who understand this we are going to have to do it ourselves.

2. One issue that is shared by state and federal fisheries management is that of gamefish designation. Do you know what happens when a fish species is declared a gamefish? What do you think about it?

Gamefish designation is something we need to be very careful about because there is potential to radically alter the lives and incomes of commercial fishing families who may depend on taking those species.

3. What do you think about banning commercial gear, such as nets or trawls?

Most of the ban debate, at least as far as I am aware, centers around the use of the larger trawlers dragging in shallower inshore waterways. There is much debate and a lot of heated rhetoric around this issue. My tentative position is that we need to clearly understand the science of what's happening and clearly understand the ancillary effects- if we can safely reduce bycatch and know that we are not irreparably damaging the waterway ecosystems I would not oppose it in principle. Though I do see some value in potentially limiting the access to these larger craft and reserving some of the waterways to the smaller vessels who also need access to stock and market.

4. Do you have a position on offshore drilling for oil and/or natural gas? What about seismic testing?

Energy is not something we are hurting for at the moment. I would support allowing companies to assay the region for reserves so we have clear knowledge when if we need it later but I would not at this time support permitting drilling. It's a fix without a problem right now. Seismic testing is something I would not support without significant further progress and science in that field and a clear understanding of the risks to marine life and the ecosystem. Our coastal waters are vital to our commercial & sport fishing industries as well as tourism. Our coastal waters are world renowned and we have to proceed very carefully in keeping a balance. Even more importantly we are protecting the continued viability and livelihoods of our commercial fishing families who directly depend on that water.

5. What do you think of windfarms in the ocean off our coast?

As noted energy is not something we are hurting for at the moment and I would not support further energy sector expansion without clear need.

6. Most everyone understands that we live in a globally economy and seafood is certainly no exception. The question has always been, do we have fair trade? We compete with many countries that have fisheries for competing products but without the same regard for the environment as we do. In addition, some countries "dump" their products into the United States resulting in unfair competition. Can you address these issues?

On issues of trade and regulation I am almost entirely a "free-trader", operating on the principle that individual human being is the best determiner of their individual good and best interests. That free-market capitalism is the greatest strength of the United States in a global economy. But the commercial fishing industry is facing a

challenge against which they cannot compete on their own- foreign governments waging intentional economic warfare against our commercial fishing industry. This is one of the few situations where government action is absolutely necessary to in reality level the playing field. The US must act to impose reasonable quality standards on seafoods imported from foreign governments- if they want to compete with US fishermen then they have to play by the same rules. Only then can our industry operate in a truly competitive market.

7. Seafood is a perishable product and so once brought to the dock, processing is critical. In that regard, finding labor has been an ongoing problem with our seafood packers and processors. For years, many seafood businesses have relied on the H-2B program through the US Department of Labor to hire nonimmigrants to do temporary work. What is your opinion of this program?

Labor is a must in North Carolina. So many of our goods and services require direct manual action to produce, grow, process, etc. North Carolina has been devastated by the immigration policy of the last two administrations. Let's face it- migrant labor is a must both agricultural and non-ag. I support sweeping changes to our immigration system and laws as a general principle but in the interim we need to significantly strengthen and expand our "pressure valve" mechanisms such as H2B and others.

8. Finally, what is your opinion about the importance of commercial fishing in eastern North Carolina in general and specifically the Third Congressional District?

Fishing for local subsistence and market has always been a pillar of the local economy here in North Carolina- long before even Europeans arrived. Even the natives traded items drawn from our waters and some of those artifacts can be found scattered all over the continent. Without a fair and level playing field- both against international aggressors and against domestic opponents commercial fishing will increasingly become a non-viable way of life for families that have for generations fished these waters. This we must protect. But even more than locally protecting we need to take rational and reasonable measures to ensure the long-term viability of this way of life and the economic energy it brings to our region. We need to elect a representative that understands that trade-policy is one of the single most important aspects of the role we have given the Federal government. We need to elect representatives who will fight to keep a fair playing field for our fishermen, and who will fight to keep a free-market across the world.

RICHARD BEW

- 1.) Although inlets are located in state waters, the marking of those inlets for navigational

purposes is done by the Coast Guard, and the maintenance by the Corps of Engineers through dredging. Are you aware of the issues of dredging and the importance of funding to assure that inlets can provide safe passage for recreational and commercial fishermen and charter and headboat operations?

**Yes. I've spent most of my life on and around the water. My father was a lifeguard for 48 years, I was one for 6, my son is in the USCG at the Academy.**

2.) One issue that is shared by state and federal fisheries management is that of gamefish designation. Do you know what happens when a fish species is declared a gamefish? What do you think about it?

**Yes. Gamefish designation imposes restrictions on commercial fishermen. I think "gamefish" designation is an inappropriate surrogate for population management, disproportionately favoring one industry over another. We need to look at population management holistically, and not as a means to favor one industry over another.**

2.) What do you think about banning commercial gear, such as nets or trawls?

I have concerns on the responsible use of netting, including drift nets. That said, I am taking no corporate PAC money and will look at these issues based on expertise, and any positions I take will be based on the facts and science – not because of campaign contributions.

4.) Do you have a position on offshore drilling for oil and/or natural gas? What about seismic testing?

**I was the only candidate to come out on the first day of my campaign to oppose offshore drilling and seismic testing. Drilling for oil, or even testing for oil, can be devastating — we must protect the beautiful beaches and coastline of coastal Carolina and never drill offshore.**

5.) What do you think of windfarms in the ocean off our coast?

Like other issues, I will base my position on the facts of credible, non-partisan studies. You can be confident my positions will be developed in the interest s of Eastern NC, as I will not take money from corporate PACs who seek to influence positions with campaign donations. I am generally skeptical of offshore construction.

6.) Most everyone understands that we live in a globally economy and seafood is certainly no exception. The question has always been, do we have fair trade? We compete with many countries that have fisheries for competing products but without the same regard for the environment as we do. In addition, some countries "dump" their products into the United States resulting in unfair competition. Can you address these issues?

**"Fair" trade is too subject to misinterpretation, but generally, I would say no. Good trade starts with an educated consumer, and this is something that federal regulation can help with: people should know the facts about the origin, quality, sustainability, and production circumstances of imported products. I would support additional food labeling regulation on imported products that more clearly identifies failure to comply with**

accepted environmentally sustainable practices. “Dumping” of low quality seafood products in the US (e.g. shrimp) has been damaging to the fishing industry.

7.) Seafood is a perishable product and so once brought to the dock, processing is critical. In that regard, finding labor has been an ongoing problem with our seafood packers and processors. For years, many seafood businesses have relied on the H-2B program through the US Department of Labor to hire nonimmigrants to do temporary work. What is your opinion of this program?

I strongly support the H-2B program as a part of larger, desperately needed immigration reform.

8.) Finally, what is your opinion about the importance of commercial fishing in eastern North Carolina in general and specifically the Third Congressional District?

I conducted a session this past week at a home on the straits with families of the fishermen going back to the early 1700's. It is part of the fiber of Eastern NC. Where experts believe there will be management challenges, we need to work closely together to support preservation of the current fishing activities, and responsible and supported industry adaptation where we cannot.

## MICHELE NIX

- 1.) Although inlets are located in state waters, the marking of those inlets for navigational purposes is done by the Coast Guard, and the maintenance by the Corps of Engineers through dredging. Are you aware of the issues of dredging and the importance of funding to assure that inlets can provide safe passage for recreational and commercial fishermen and charter and headboat operations?

Proper marking of inlets and dredging are a major concern for both commercial fishermen and recreational watermen. We need to make sure that all watermen operating on open water can do so safely. As your congresswoman, I will make sure that all entities involved are held accountable to their responsibilities. I will also meet with leaders in the fishing industry to ensure their concerns are being voiced in Washington.

- 2.) One issue that is shared by state and federal fisheries management is that of gamefish designation. Do you know what happens when a fish species is declared a gamefish? What do you think about it?

Yes, I understand the term gamefish and do not agree with the government deciding what fish can be caught and sold for commercial purposes. When elected to Congress, I will work in many areas to reduce the size of government and repeal overbearing regulations.

- 3.) What do you think about banning commercial gear, such as nets or trawls?

Fishermen should be able to use the tools necessary for commercial fishing. Government regulations should be weakened in this area so fishermen are not burdened and the industry can more fully flourish.

- 4.) Do you have a position on offshore drilling for oil and/or natural gas? What about seismic testing?

I support all forms of alternative energy. What I do not support is government intervention in the free market. The best form(s) of energy will emerge from the free market. We shouldn't be afraid of exploration. We need to update our data and understand all of our options and then let the free market dictate new forms of energy.

- 5.) What do you think of windfarms in the ocean off our coast?

See answer to question 4

- 6.) Most everyone understands that we live in a globally economy and seafood is certainly no exception. The question has always been, do we have fair trade? We compete with many countries that have fisheries for competing products but without the same regard for the environment as we do. In addition, some countries "dump" their products into the United States resulting in unfair competition. Can you address these issues?

I understand that both the safety and fairness of trade are concerns with regards to the fishing industry. I support less government intervention in the market and free, fair trade. Like the president, I agree we need to have strong trade arrangements that benefit our country and our industries.

7.) Seafood is a perishable product and so once brought to the dock, processing is critical. In that regard, finding labor has been an ongoing problem with our seafood packers and processors. For years, many seafood businesses have relied on the H-2B program through the US Department of Labor to hire nonimmigrants to do temporary work. What is your opinion of this program?

I support the H-2B program as long as it is being implemented properly and everyone is following the rules outlined in the program.



8.) Finally, what is your opinion about the importance of commercial fishing in eastern North Carolina in general and specifically the Third Congressional District?

Commercial fishing is of great importance not only to the Third Congressional District but also to North Carolina as a whole. In Congress, it will be my job to represent all the interests of the Third District, and commercial fishing will be chief among them.

ERIC ROUSE

1. Although inlets are located in state waters, the marking of those inlets for navigational purposes is done by the Coast Guard, and the maintenance by the Corps of Engineers through dredging. Are you aware of the issues of dredging and the importance of funding to assure that inlets can provide safe passage for recreational and commercial fishermen and charter and headboat operations?

I support jetties to alleviate the issues we have with the waters of the inlet. I am familiar with the challenges we face to keep these open through dredging and the funding requirements to do so are enormous. While maintaining navigability is crucial for commercial reasons, with our military bases on the eastern North Carolina coast, navigability is also a national security issue. In my experience, jetties are frequently a more cost-efficient option than dredging, but we cannot risk losing safe passage for both commercial and military operations on our coast.

2. One issue that is shared by state and federal fisheries management is that of gamefish designation. Do you know what happens when a fish species is declared a gamefish? What do you think about it?

Gamefish designations take the fish away from commercial fishermen and would cost the state money, destroy jobs, and limit choices to consumers. Designating the fish “game fish” would force fishermen to throw back those caught accidentally, even though most would die anyway. The fish are not endangered. Each year the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries sets limits on how many can be caught based upon its assessment of the how large the stock is. Of the total allowable catch, recreational fishermen are given the rights to 80 percent, while commercial fishermen are allotted the remaining 20 percent.

3. What do you think about banning commercial gear, such as nets or trawls?

Nets and Trawls are the best and most efficient way to harvest fish. I oppose bans since there are already limits on total allowable catch that ensure the fisheries remain robust.

4. Do you have a position on offshore drilling for oil and/or natural gas? What about seismic testing?

I support offshore drilling for oil and/or natural gas. However, it must make sense for the community where it occurs. Fisherman must be at the table from the beginning for any proposed projects to make sure that the locations do not negatively impact fisheries and that proper safeguards are in place to ensure that eastern North Carolina does not experience a devastating disaster as a result.

5. What do you think of windfarms in the ocean off our coast?

I am fully supportive of cost-efficient renewable energy, however the location and arrangement of wind farms can effectively close parts of the ocean to commercial fisherman. Fisherman must be at the table from the beginning for any proposed windfarms to ensure that there is minimal impact to commercial fishermen.

6. Most everyone understands that we live in a globally economy and seafood is certainly no exception. The question has always been, do we have fair trade? We compete with many countries that have fisheries for competing products but without the same regard for the environment as we do. In addition, some countries “dump” their products into the United States resulting in unfair competition. Can you address these issues?

Currently we do not have fair trade being realized between the US and other Countries. This needs to be dollar for dollar trading so that we can compete, and our fishermen can prosper. Eastern North Carolina's fishermen can compete with anyone in the world on an even playing field and I'm committed to making sure that's the case.

7. Seafood is a perishable product and so once brought to the dock, processing is critical. In that regard, finding labor has been an ongoing problem with our seafood packers and processors. For years, many seafood businesses have relied on the H-2B program through the US Department of Labor to hire nonimmigrants to do temporary work. What is your opinion of this program?

We have an illegal immigration crisis in our country – both the lack of security at our southern border and with individuals overstaying their visas. I support President Trump's efforts to solve this crisis. However, temporary work permits are critical to eastern North Carolina's seasonal economy. Charlie's Seafood employs around 200 of these workers to help with their catch and processing. I fully support the continuation of the H-2B program, combined with efforts to ensure that those coming on H-2B visas return home at the end of their period of employment.

8. Finally, what is your opinion about the importance of commercial fishing in eastern North Carolina in general and specifically the Third Congressional District?

Commercial fishing is crucial to both eastern North Carolina and the Third Congressional District. Each one of the boats, is a small business that supports families and jobs, as well as contributing substantially to our culture and community. If elected to Congress, I'll be a proud supporter of commercial fishermen.

## CELESTE CAIRNS

1.) Although inlets are located in state waters, the marking of those inlets for navigational purposes is done by the Coast Guard, and the maintenance by the Corps of Engineers through dredging. Are you aware of the issues of dredging and the importance of funding to assure that inlets can provide safe passage for recreational and commercial fishermen and charter and headboat operations?

Yes, it is extremely important that we continue to fund these operations. Recreational and commercial fishing are critical for our local economy and traditions of our district. I will work to ensure that our commercial fishing industry is represented in DC, and that the entities that regulate it are kept accountable.

2.) One issue that is shared by state and federal fisheries management is that of gamefish designation. Do you know what happens when a fish species is declared a gamefish? What do you think about it?

I am very interested in learning more, but from my understanding, gamefish designation prohibits the sale of certain fish species from commercial sale. This type of regulation makes making ends meet in an already challenging industry even harder, and I would do all that I can to alleviate such burdens that our commercial fisherman face.

3.) What do you think about banning commercial gear, such as nets or trawls?

I am not interested in banning anything that can detrimentally impact the entire commercial fishing industry. We need to decrease the regulatory power that agencies have in instituting non-congressionally mandated bans.

4.) Do you have a position on offshore drilling for oil and/or natural gas? What about seismic testing?

Oil and gas is extremely important. We need to also protect our beaches, natural resources, and commercial fishing industry. We need to ensure that our coast is never devastated by oil spills or any other disasters. I will work to make sure that our coastal economies and our future generations have a sustainable future.

5.) What do you think of windfarms in the ocean off our coast?

They are an eyesore and we should encourage wind farms to set up in Nancy Pelosi's district and not NC03.

6.) Most everyone understands that we live in a globally economy and seafood is certainly no exception. The question has always been, do we have fair trade? We compete with many countries that have fisheries for competing products but without the same regard for the environment as we do. In addition, some countries "dump" their products into the United States resulting in unfair competition. Can you address these issues?

I certainly support free trade and want to see that continue. From my conversations with our local commercial fisherman, the quality and toxicity of products dumped into the U.S. is of concern, especially when they are priced so low. I look forward to continuing this conversation to make sure our local, superior products are competitive.

7.) Seafood is a perishable product and so once brought to the dock, processing is critical. In that regard, finding labor has been an ongoing problem with our seafood packers and processors. For years, many seafood businesses have relied on the H-2B program through the US Department of Labor to hire nonimmigrants to do temporary work. What is your opinion of this program?

I fully support legal immigration. However, the federal government has neglected to ensure that we have an adequate work force through delays, but mostly incompetence, thus promoting illegal immigration. Preventing illegal immigration at the source ought to be our top priority, in conjunction with ensuring we have a working legal immigration system for a fully operational American workforce.

8.) Finally, what is your opinion about the importance of commercial fishing in eastern North Carolina in general and specifically the Third Congressional District?

With the 3rd Congressional District's five counties of Carteret, Hyde, Dare, Pamlico, and Beaufort accounting for 80% of the state's total landings by weight and value, commercial fishing is of incredible importance to not only our district's economy, but the economy of our state and beyond. I will work to address both regulatory and workforce issues, and look forward to learning more from those in the industry so I can always be counted as a trusted friend to commercial fisherman.

GRAHAM BOYD

1.) Although inlets are located in state waters, the marking of those inlets for navigational purposes is done by the Coast Guard, and the maintenance by the Corps of Engineers through dredging. Are you aware of the issues of dredging and the importance of funding to assure that inlets can provide safe passage for recreational and commercial fishermen and charter and headboat operations?

First, dredging is an issue of personal safety; secondly its about vital commerce whether for commercial or recreational use.

It is critical that we maintain appropriately safe waterways, and I support the role of the federal government and related agencies to provide oversight and appropriations to service these needs. It will be a top priority for me to secure commitments from the responsible agents that we have necessary funding and timely results. I will engage all the members of NC's congressional delegation on what is a North Carolina issue - and members from non-coastal states.

2.) One issue that is shared by state and federal fisheries management is that of gamefish designation. Do you know what happens when a fish species is declared a gamefish? What do you think about it?

I oppose the hasty implementation of gamefish designations that specifically hurt commercial fishermen, and importance of the seafood in particular as an industry and job creator for families.

3.) What do you think about banning commercial gear, such as nets or trawls?

The rush to rash, and over reaching solutions are in danger of damaging our healthy and vital fishing industry, one that supports jobs and puts food on our tables, so no I oppose banning nets or trawls.

4.) Do you have a position on offshore drilling for oil and/or natural gas? What about seismic testing?

First of all our military base training flight paths are paramount and cannot be compromised. That said, nobody wants to see rigs even remotely off our shore, and until such a time as technology can totally eliminate that risk I will oppose offshore drilling.

5.) What do you think of windfarms in the ocean off our coast?

Our military bases are vital to our region, and anything that could interfere with training flight paths cannot be supported, not to mention being a hazard to fishermen. We should continue to study it only, especially at a time when our energy resources are ample.

6.) Most everyone understands that we live in a globally economy and seafood is certainly no exception. The question has always been, do we have fair trade? We compete with many countries that have fisheries for competing products but without the same regard for the environment as we do. In addition, some countries "dump" their products into the United States resulting in unfair competition. Can you address these issues?

I strongly support labeling the source of origin, so people know if products are local or not. Consumers should have that choice, particularly on prepackaged seafood. Free markets mean full disclosure on this issue. Furthermore, overseas competitors have child labor problems, inadequate standards and environmental problems. Inferior products dumped here, at a cutthroat price, puts our fisherman at an unfair, competitive disadvantage. I favor restrictions on imported seafood products, particularly disclosure of inferior safety product standards. As a consumer, I know US seafood products are superior in all of these areas, and we must protect this industry, and its jobs, which are so important to Eastern NC.

I make my living in farming, and we face many of the same harvesting and labor issues, which makes me highly prepared to defend our local food sources.

7.) Seafood is a perishable product and so once brought to the dock, processing is critical. In that regard, finding labor has been an ongoing problem with our seafood packers and processors. For years, many seafood businesses have relied on the H-2B program through the US Department of Labor to hire nonimmigrants to do temporary work. What is your opinion of this program?

I fully support the H-2B program when used properly, and I would raise the number of visas allowed above the current statutory cap of 66,000. I support expanding it in industries struggling to hire Americans, like seafood processors. We cannot allow this critical industry to disappear, and with it the jobs it creates and supports in other sectors that Americans do want - like transportation, energy, packaging, and more. I know that when it comes to hiring and retaining employees the seafood industry faces many of the same seasonality and perishability challenges as farmers. In addition, local workers frequently reject these opportunities because they don't like the pace, the smell or the climactic conditions. That is why I worked very hard to support the Goodlatte H-2C legislation last Congress, that moved seafood from H-2B over to H-2C providing for more visas. I support moving seafood processing jobs to H-2A program where there is currently no cap on the number of visas.

I understand that the seafood industry, just like farmers, faces intense international competition and so-called fair trade agreements have put our businesses at a competitive disadvantage because of burdensome government over regulation – this must stop. It would be a huge mistake to allow our seafood industry to fail and be replaced by foreign competitors.

8.) Finally, what is your opinion about the importance of commercial fishing in eastern North Carolina in general and specifically the Third Congressional District?

As the only farmer and longtime agriculture leader in the race for Congress, I've spent over 25 years directly advocating for farm interests in both Raleigh and Washington. This is my wheelhouse -- standing up for NC agriculture which very much includes commercial fishing. Evidence Steve Troxler's endorsement of my

campaign, you can count on me to support and help strengthen our commercial fishing families. When we talk about feeding and clothing our populations -- we are talking about farming, textiles and fishing. I have a wealth of friends across our district who make their living in commercial fishing. In fact, I commit to have a Commercial Fishing Advisory Group as your next Congressman, to help keep our team focused on these vital challenges.

JOAN PERRY

- 1.) Although inlets are located in state waters, the marking of those inlets for navigational purposes is done by the Coast Guard, and the maintenance by the Corps of Engineers through dredging. Are you aware of the issues of dredging and the importance of funding to assure that inlets can provide safe passage for recreational and commercial fishermen and charter and headboat operations?

Yes, I will be an advocate for funding for these vital infrastructure needs and believe that the funding mechanism should allow for recurring appropriations.

- 2.) One issue that is shared by state and federal fisheries management is that of gamefish designation. Do you know what happens when a fish species is declared a gamefish? What do you think about it?

Yes, making it illegal for fisherman to sell certain fish species which are declared as gamefish is a serious step that would harm our vital commercial fishing industry. I believe we should avoid that regulation except when absolutely necessary.

- 3.) What do you think about banning commercial gear, such as nets or trawls?

I view these types of bans as overregulation typically.

- 4.) Do you have a position on offshore drilling for oil and/or natural gas? What about seismic testing?

While I support off-shore drilling as a helpful way to provide jobs and lessen American dependence on foreign oil, I do not support it off the coast of North Carolina because it would hurt much of our existing economy secondary to the potential environmental impact—endangering delicate marine life from exposure to toxins and forces related to the drilling processes, cluttering the ocean landscape and harming tourism. From my own research, it seems that seismic testing also poses significant risk to our ocean ecosystems.

- 5.) What do you think of windfarms in the ocean off our coast?

First, I would have to better appreciate the advantages to wind energy, as it seems that the potential contribution to domestic energy production is rather limited. Second, I also have environmental concerns related to:

1. The potential danger (and of course, expense) of the use of large equipment that would be required to install the turbines in water
2. Effects of off shore wind on marine birds and sea life that is still not well understood, and,
3. The installation of high-voltage electric cables which are expensive and may themselves cause risk to marine life.

I am all about exploration of renewable energy sources but believe that we must be cautious and careful when it comes to using our coast for these purposes.

- 6.) Most everyone understands that we live in a globally economy and seafood is certainly no exception. The question has always been, do we have fair trade? We compete with many countries that have fisheries for competing products but without the same regard for the environment as we do. In addition, some countries “dump” their products into the United States resulting in unfair competition. Can you address these issues?

While free trade helps to lower the cost of goods for Americans, we should keep an eye on its impact on American families and jobs affected by our trade deals. Our trade deals should prioritize hardworking Americans and businesses. I support the President’s willingness to negotiate and achieve better deals for our country.

- 7.) Seafood is a perishable product and so once brought to the dock, processing is critical. In that regard, finding labor has been an ongoing problem with our seafood packers and processors. For years, many seafood businesses have relied on the H-2B program through the US Department of Labor to hire nonimmigrants to do temporary work. What is your opinion of this program?

President Trump is right that there is a crisis at the southern border, and as a physician I know we must “stop the bleeding” in trauma situations. That means securing the border immediately should be a national priority. But he is also right to expand the H2B visas offered this year because our economy is growing and many businesses need workers. Business owners in commercial fishing and other industries across the state need skilled workers, particularly in industries where Americans can’t, or won’t, fill the job. I support streamlining this HB2 process.

- 8.) Finally, what is your opinion about the importance of commercial fishing in eastern North Carolina in general and specifically the Third Congressional District?

Commercial fishing is a vital job provider for our community and a part of the “ocean economy” that provides nearly 50,000 jobs in our state. It’s a way of life for many families, an important part of our treasured culture here in the east and deserves a strong Congressional advocate for the hardworking people involved.