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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205

August 21, 2015

Mr. Howard Zemsky
Commissioner
New York State Department of Economic Development
President and CEO
Empire State Development
633 3rd Avenue New York, NY 10017-6706

Dear Commissioner Zemsky,

I write in support of the application submitted by Manna Fish Farms, Inc. for funding through Empire State Development. This funding would support the farm's project to secure up to two dozen "Aquapods" designed for the environmentally-friendly farming of fish off the coast of Eastern Long Island.

Manna Fish Farms is the first offshore aquaculture company on the East Coast charting a new course in seafood production in New York State. Manna Fish Farms works in collaboration with the SUNY Stony Brook School of Marina and Atmospheric Science, the New School for Social Research Food Studies Program, and local government to explore open ocean aquaculture development, which is important to Long Island's seafood industry. This Long Island-based company hopes to produce a new generation of sustainable, well-paying jobs in the aquaculture sector, and help grow a sector of Long Island's food-processing sector.

The requested funding would be used to purchase new aquapods. These mesh cages would be used to raise hundreds of thousands of striped bass to be sold to seafood purveyors, without a depletion of the wild population. Each of these pods holds between 14,000 and 28,000 fish, acting as a floating coral reef with its own ecosystem. Fish would be placed in the cages as small adults and allowed to grow until they reach a suitable size for use as seafood. This new type of fish farm has been billed as a more environmentally-sensitive option to traditional fish farms near the shore or on land, which have been blamed for increasing water pollution and spreading diseases to wild fish.

I ask that you please give this application your full consideration. If you have any questions, or desire further information, please do not hesitate to contact my staff member Andrew Usyk, (202) 224-4451.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator