



The Maritime Fishermen's Union L'Union des Pêcheurs des Maritimes

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MFU Local 9 welcomes the amendments to restore key protections to the Fisheries Act, introduced by Minister Dominic LeBlanc on February 6, to the House of Commons. We are very pleased to see the new Act will contain provisions to keep the full benefits of independent inshore fisheries vested in the hands of the owner operator fishermen in coastal communities throughout the Atlantic regions by giving the fleet separation and owner operator policies force of law.

These policies are meant to preserve the inshore sector in the hands of independent owner operator fishermen. And to protect their leverage in the market through the owner operators' full control of supply. The corporate sector already owns that in the mid and offshore sectors and they want it all. These policies for 40 years have been bent, twisted and even ignored, to the point that many of our inshore fishing licenses and the fishermen's right to the full benefits including the control of supply derived from those licenses, have been lost to the control of the buyers, the corporate sector and even to foreign investors.

By giving these policies force of law in the Act we hope to see that reversed, and our inshore fisheries returned to their rightful owners, the independent fishermen, and to see them continue to prosper to support all the coastal communities dotting our coast.

We applaud, and sincerely thank Minister LeBlanc for his rock-solid commitment to the habitat, to the environment, to the fish and to our inshore fishermen, which together have made up our lifeblood for hundreds of years. We also thank, and heartily congratulate our brother organizations, together representing 20,000 independent inshore harvesters within the Canadian Independent Fish Harvesters Federation (CIFHF). The Federation has worked tirelessly in solidarity to support these policies, and we will continue to work together to get these amendments through the legislative course and into law.

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