Letter Requests Meeting Between FDA, Louisiana Oyster Industry
October 29, 2009

WASHINGTON- U.S. Congressman Charlie Melancon (LA-03) today called on the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to reverse a proposed ban on the sale of fresh, live oysters from Gulf Coast states during warm-weather months unless they are processed. The ban, which would begin in 2011, would severely impact Louisiana's oyster and restaurant industries, major sectors of the state's economy.

"This restriction on Gulf oysters, proposed in the name of food safety, is like swatting a fly with a sledgehammer," said Rep. Melancon. "We all want safer food for our families, but Americans have been enjoying fresh, Louisiana-produced oysters for hundreds of years. They are not only a Louisiana delicacy, they are part of our heritage and our way of life. This new policy will strike a blow to the heart of Louisiana culture, costing our state jobs and hurting a unique industry, and I urge the FDA to reverse the ban."

Today, Rep. Melancon sent a letter to the FDA's Deputy Director for Food Safety, Donald W. Kraemer, requesting that he meet with Louisiana oyster industry representatives to further discuss the negative consequences of this new policy.

Click here to view the letter.

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