



## **Kratovil Gets Inside Look At Crabbing Industry**

By MICHELLE HINKLE -- WMDT 3/20/2009

Congressman Frank Kratovil is showing his support for the crabbing community, and he's getting his hands dirty. The Congressman joined local watermen Friday to pick crabs and ease their concerns about seasonal workers.

"I came down here today to see first hand the impact that the problem with getting these visa workers here is creating in a community like this," said Kratovil.

Watermen are voicing their concerns to Kratovil in hopes of getting new legislation through. The bill would allow workers from past seasons to return. They say every seasonal worker allows more than two Americans to stay in business. Without pickers, profit is drastically cut back.

"Without these mostly women that have been coming up for the last 12 to 15 years here in Maryland, the industry is going to be faced with a real dire consequence," said Bill Sieling, Executive Director of Chesapeake Bay Seafood Industries Association.

Kratovil's visit to Hooper's Island was a morale booster for the community. Members of the crab industry say in less than three weeks the season will be in full swing. They say they are far from ready without much needed help. Watermen are in support on legislation that would allow any workers that have picked crabs in the last three seasons to return. Kratovil warns that he is not "superman", but he is doing everything he can to keep business going.

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