



# MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

3 October 2017

Ms. Jolie Harrison, Chief  
Permits and Conservation Division  
Office of Protected Resources  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
1315 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3225

Re: Permit Application No. 21217  
(Aaron Roberts, University of North Texas)

Dear Ms. Harrison:

The Marine Mammal Commission (the Commission), in consultation with its Committee of Scientific Advisors on Marine Mammals, has reviewed the above-referenced permit application with regard to the goals, policies, and requirements of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (the MMPA). Dr. Roberts is requesting authorization to import, receive, and possess samples from harp and hooded seals during a five-year period.

Dr. Roberts proposes to import, receive, and possess, and export blood and serum samples from up to 30 harp and 30 hooded seals. Samples would be obtained from permitted researchers in Canada. The purpose is to assess changes in molecular biomarkers, immune suppression, hormone concentrations, and overall health associated with exposure to polybrominated diphenyl ethers. The Commission believes that the proposed activities are consistent with the purposes and policies of the MMPA and therefore recommends that the National Marine Fisheries Service issue the permit, as requested.

Kindly contact me if you have any questions concerning the Commission's recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rebecca J. Lent".

Rebecca J. Lent, Ph.D.,  
Executive Director