To the Senate and House of Representatives, of the United States, in Congress Assembled. —

The Petition of the Inhabitants of the Island and Town of Nantucket, Respectfully sheweth, and Requests you to take into Consideration, an Embarrassment which operates as a discouragement to the prosecution of that valuable Branch of Business, the Whale Fishery, which commenced with Vessels from Thirty to Fifty Tons burthen, upon the American Coast, and so continued until about the year 1750, since which, the Whales having left the Coast, we have been necessitated to go further in pursuit of them, and from the year 1790, we have had to follow the Spermaceti Whales to the Pacific and Indian Oceans, Voyages, from Eighteen Months to two Years, with Ships from Two to Three hundred Tons burthen, Manned with Seventeen to Twenty five Men, which makes a great Nursery for Seamen. —

Knowing the Success of the Whale Fishery would procure important advantages to our Country, are induced to Solicit your timely Interposition to remove the difficulty which threatens its destruction in this place; The Bar, which lies about two Miles from the Harbour of this Port, has been heretofore only about Nine feet Water at full Sea, and within one year has Shoaled nearly one foot, we have already sustained considerable Loss by our Vessels grounding on said Bar, and it is with much difficulty and expence, that we can get our Ships (even without Ballast) in and out of this Harbour; In this unsafe situation, we have been obliged during the inclement Seasons, to send them to a Port of a Neighbouring Island for safety, to Load and unload, in consequence of which, we have had a Survey by Men whom we deem competent Judges, who are of opinion that a Channel can be opened to about twelve feet Water: — As this cannot be accomplished without an Expence which we are unable to defray, We ask your Assistance to enable us to open said Channel, by Granting us the Revenue of this place for a short Term, or in such a manner as in your Wisdom shall appear most eligible. —

It is with diffidence we presume to say, that from the local situation of this Island, and the want of other Resources, we have been the principal Instruments of preserving to this Country, that most valuable Branch of Business, the Whale Fishery, when entirely relinquished by other parts of the Continent, and there are no People within the Union, who can more

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justly Claim your Patronage, or whose Success will be more generally participated by the People of these States, than your Petitioners, who bring from the Continent almost every Article for our Sustenance, or Necessaries in the line of our business, for which we return valuable Cargoes for exportation. —

The British Government, has for some time given a Bounty for establishing the Whale Fishery in that Kingdom, which has operated much against the Business in this place. —

The French Government has also lately decreed a large Bounty on each Ton of Shipping for every Voyage made in the Business, which Encouragements has already drawn from us several of our Skilful Whalemen, and we fear will cause many more of our valuable Citizens to Remove to foreign Countries. —

Should our Petition meet your Patronage, and the undertaking be attended with Success, it would be of important advantage to the Navigation, passing and repassing through the Sound to and from every part of the Continent, there being no Ship Harbour, from the Island of Martha's Vineyard to Cape Cod Harbour, Vessels are frequently exposed to Shipwreck. —

Apprehending, from the Liberality of the general Government, in promoting and encouraging every useful Branch, that you will Grant such Aid as shall be equal to the Object in view.

Nantucket January 15th 1803. —

Signed on, and in behalf of the Town James Coffin Town Clerk

Countersigned by Danl Coffin, Moderator