

Gulf Coast Leadership Conference

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
232 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Majority Leader
H-107 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
204 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
Democratic Whip
148 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan, Leader Pelosi, Representative McCarthy and Representative Hoyer,

On behalf of the Gulf Coast Leadership Conference, we strongly oppose any legislation, including H.R. 200 and H.R. 2023, that would undermine the conservation provisions of the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson Stevens Act). Our business promotes wise stewardship of our natural resources while working to protect coastal jobs along the Gulf Coast. Despite the fact the Magnuson Stevens Act has seen tremendous progress, we must not rest on our laurels. It is vital to the coastal economy that Congress continue the rebuilding of healthy fisheries without disruption, and any legislation that would weaken its management should not move forward.

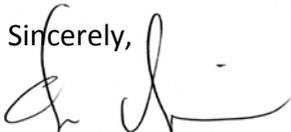
In order to sustain a robust economy, we must continue to support healthy fishing populations. Unfortunately, H.R. 200 and H.R. 2023 undermines the progress already made on rebuilding vulnerable fishing populations and increases the risk of overfishing. They would undermine years of strong science-based management that is helping stabilize fishing businesses and coastal communities.

These bills would extend the timelines for plans to rebuild vulnerable fish populations, delaying when fishermen would benefit from a fully healthy stock. They would exempt fish populations from the use of science-based annual catch limits designed to prevent overfishing. The Magnuson-Stevens Act is helping to end fishing at unsustainable rates. The signs of success for Red Snapper in the Gulf Coast are evidence that strong fisheries management can work.

It is important for Congress to protect the core conservation tenets of the existing law and strengthen the Magnuson Stevens Act – not weaken it – with measures that promote healthy, productive, and resilient marine ecosystems. By doing so, we bolster the coastal economy and create more coastal jobs. In fact, NOAA Fisheries estimated that the success of rebuilding all overfished U.S. populations will result in \$31 billion to the economy and more than 500,000 jobs.

The Gulf Coast Leadership Conference respectfully requests you to oppose H.R. 200 and H.R. 2023, and any other legislation that would undermine the conservation requirements that have been critical to the success of the Magnuson Stevens Act.

Sincerely,



Chad Wilbanks, Chairman