

May 27, 2015

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 201515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 201515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Leader Pelosi,

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act is one the most successful laws of its kind in the world. Just since the year 2000, it has led to the restoration of 37 depleted fish stocks and dramatically reduced overfishing. As a result, anglers are again able to experience the kind of healthy populations that give them a real opportunity to catch some fish, creating the kind of experience that makes recreational fishing much more enjoyable.

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council has successfully ended overfishing for every stock that it manages, including those recreationally-important species such as fluke (summer flounder), black sea bass, scup (porgies) and bluefish. In the case of fluke and black sea bass, we're catching more and bigger fish than we've seen in decades. In the case of scup, we may be seeing the best fishing, in terms of both size and abundance, in living memory.

Fishermen, fishing-related businesses and coastal communities had to make a real sacrifice to rebuild those fish populations. Now that we've paid that price, we don't want to go back to the kind of scarcity that we knew just a couple of decades ago. We want a federal fisheries law that ensures that our children and grandchildren, too, will be able to catch plenty of fish—along with a few really big ones--in the future.

Unfortunately, there is a bill in Congress that would leave future generations far less than we have today.

Rep. Don Young (R-AK) has introduced H.R. 1335 – a bill that would undermine the conservation and rebuilding requirements of the Act that have made the rebuilding process work in the mid-Atlantic. That bill would do away with the current, clearly defined requirements for managing fisheries in federal waters, and take us back to the days when the most critical management decisions were left to the whims of politics and fishing industry influence, rather than on science. That kind of backsliding would lead currently healthy stocks such as fluke and black sea bass down the same path of depletion that we are beginning to see with striped bass and so many other stocks managed only by the states.

Please oppose H.R. 1335 and any other efforts to undermine the conservation provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. We need Congress to keep the Magnuson-

Stevens Act strong, and allow it to continue proving why its management regime is a model for the world. Reject this bill for America's fish and fishermen.

Sincerely,

Kemp Burdette
Angler
Cape Fear Riverkeeper
Cape Fear, NC

Fred Harris
Angler
Raleigh, NC

Frank Yelverton
Angler
Executive Director, Cape Fear River Watch
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Timothy P. O'Brien, PhD
President, Tycoon Tackle, Inc.
Committee of Representatives, the International Game Fish Association
Ecosystem and Ocean Planning Advisory Panel, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management
Council
Charlottesville, VA

cc: The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Majority Leader
The Honorable Steve Scalise, Majority Whip
The Honorable Steny Hoyer, Democratic Whip
The New Jersey Congressional Delegation
The New York Congressional Delegation
The North Carolina Congressional Delegation
The Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation
The Virginia Congressional Delegation