

To: House Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Water, Power, and Oceans

John Fleming, Chairman

From: Captain Joe McBride, Legislative Representative,

Montauk Boatmen & Captains Association (MBCA)

Date: February 2, 2016

The MBCA would like to thank Chairman John Fleming and Congressman Lee Zeldin for allowing us to present our issues to the Committee on Natural Resources. We appreciated Chairman Bishop and other members taking the time to come to Riverhead in December for a field hearing.

We have a long standing problem with the Transit Zone between Block Island, RI and Montauk Point, NY, and between Block Island and Point Judith, RI. The unintended consequence of this restriction is that New York State and Rhode Island have lost over 60% of their historical striped bass fishing areas in the Transit Zone.

This anomaly exists only in this area because of the extended distance between Montauk Point, NY to Block Island, and is the same for Point Judith to Block Island. The distance from Block Island to either Montauk Point or Point Judith is approximately 15 miles. We having been trying for many years to correct this problem with no success.

The impact of sport fishing on Long Island is very important to our economy, especially in Montauk. According to the 2001 survey Sea Grant, a branch of Cornell University, the economic impact of sport fishing is as follows:

1. At least 2 billion dollars to our economy
2. Over 1 million sport fishermen
3. 10,000 full or part time jobs on Long Island
4. The above are exclusive of the sale of boats and equipment for the industry

To correct this unintended problem we respectfully request:

1. Sport fishing for striped bass be allowed in the Transit Zone be allowed as soon as possible
2. You support H.R. 3070 to change the EEZ area to 3 miles south of Block Island and Montauk Point and the same for the area between Block Island and Port Judith, RI

Thank you for your consideration of our requests.

Respectfully,

Captain Joe McBride