



May 29, 2015

The Honorable John A. Boehner
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:

The National Fisheries Institute supports H.R. 1335, the Strengthening Fishing Communities and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act, as approved by the Natural Resources Committee. This legislation would reauthorize the Magnuson-Stevens framework that has made America's fisheries the best-managed in the world.

NFI has been the leading voice for the seafood industry for nearly 70 years. NFI member companies span the entire seafood value chain – from Alaska vessel owners, Pacific processors, Midwest importers, East Coast clam harvesters, and Southern shellfish producers, to national distributors and retailers, and seafood restaurants. Responsible management of fishery resources is indispensable to these businesses and their employees, and to the food security of future generations.

U.S. fisheries management under Magnuson-Stevens – about to enter its fifth decade – is the most successful framework of its kind in the world. The Magnuson-Stevens approach, with its eight regional management councils, allows for consideration of the best and most recent science, along with the views of all stakeholders, as sustainability decisions are being made. H.R. 1335 builds on this success, balancing the need to conserve fishery resources with the needs of fishermen, coastal communities, and the tens of millions of Americans they help to feed. This legislation will help the National Marine Fisheries Service to more effectively coordinate with those councils, without disturbing the overall council structure that has been critical to the nation's success in managing fisheries along every coast.

NFI is particularly pleased that H.R. 1335, as passed by the Natural Resources Committee, does not include language that would grant five Gulf States exclusive management authority over the sustainably-managed red snapper fishery. Such language would establish a harmful precedent and could eventually lead to the dismantling of the entire council structure.

NFI is pleased to support the Strengthening Fishing Communities and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act, as passed by the Natural Resources Committee, and would oppose any amendments that would weaken the nation's successful fishery management system.

Thank you for consideration of these views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Connelly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

John Connelly

President