

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 25, 2018

**SUPPORT H.R. 200, *Strengthening Fishing Communities
and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act***

Current Sponsors and Co-Sponsors as of 6/19/2018: Reps. Young, Graves, Babin, Higgins, Green, Wittman, Zeldin, Grothman, King, Duncan, Scott, Veasey

Dear Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus Member,

As leaders of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus (CSC), we are pleased to serve as cosponsors of the Strengthening Fishing Communities and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act (H.R. 200). We worked with Representative Don Young on bipartisan changes to find common ground for moving the bill forward. With the provisions from the Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act (H.R. 2023) and the aforementioned bipartisan changes now included in H.R. 200, the bill will provide the necessary tools for NOAA Fisheries and the regional management councils to more effectively and appropriately manage our nation's important saltwater recreational fisheries. The amended bill continues to ensure the conservation and sustainability of our marine resources for which the Magnuson-Stevens Act was established.

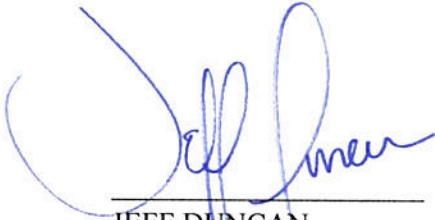
Saltwater anglers contribute \$70 billion annually to the nation's economy and support 455,000 jobs in every corner of the country from boat dealerships, marinas and tackle shops to restaurants, motels and manufacturers. Atop their economic impact, America's anglers and boaters are the foremost supporters of conservation and resource management. In 2016 alone, anglers and boaters contributed \$628 million in excise taxes for sportfish conservation and management, boating safety and infrastructure, and habitat restoration. An additional \$693 million was contributed by anglers through fishing license fees.

Commercial and recreational fisheries are fundamentally different activities and require different management strategies. However, the Magnuson-Stevens Act has lacked the necessary focus to effectively address the needs of recreational fisheries management. H.R. 200 offers alternative management approaches that implement catch limits based on metrics rooted in management currently being used by state fisheries managers on inland and coastal fisheries, by management commissions and by federal migratory bird managers. It also helps bring recreational data collection into the 21st century by promoting the consideration of modern reporting systems, including from smartphone apps and which many state agencies are implementing. In many fisheries, the current Magnuson-Stevens Act relies too heavily on the precautionary approach when managers are forced to apply limited harvest data to a management model designed to count every pound of fish landed. H.R. 200 would both improve harvest data and adapt the management system to better align with available data so that recreational anglers can have reasonable access and opportunity, and coastal and state economies can benefit as a result.

We urge your support for H.R. 200, the *Strengthening Fishing Communities and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act* when it comes to the floor for a vote. Help us to ensure we continue to have healthy, abundant fisheries resources, a robust commercial fishing industry and appropriate access through effective management for the nation's saltwater anglers.

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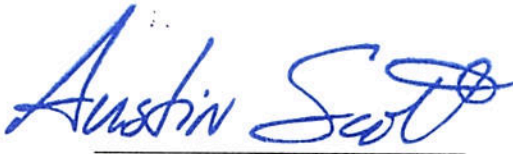
Sincerely,



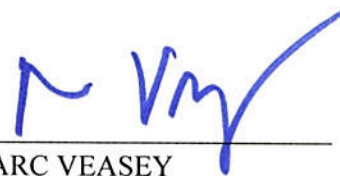
JEFF DUNCAN
Member of Congress
Co-Chair CSC



GENE GREEN
Member of Congress
Co-Chair CSC



AUSTIN SCOTT
Member of Congress
Vice-Chair CSC



MARC VEASEY
Member of Congress
Vice-Chair CSC