



March 23, 2015

The Honorable Phil Bryant
Governor, State of Mississippi
P.O. Box 139
Jackson, MS 39205

Dear Governor Bryant:

As leaders of the bipartisan and bicameral 100-plus member Mississippi Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus, we are writing to express our support for the Gulf States Red Snapper Management Authority (GSRsMA) and their recently released red snapper management plan. It is our firm belief that state management of red snapper in the Gulf of Mexico is the best path forward for balanced management of this public resource. We also want to convey our gratitude and appreciation for Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) Director Jamie Miller, and his leadership in the development of this plan on behalf all fishermen, both recreational and commercial, that pursue red snapper off of Mississippi's coastline.

As you know, Mississippi's 260,000 recreational anglers faced the shortest red snapper season in history in federal waters last year, despite the healthiest population of red snapper on record. The short season hit Mississippians especially hard, because unlike other Gulf States, our anglers can only find red snapper in federal waters. To continue denying access for our anglers to an abundant snapper population due to inept federal management is simply unacceptable.

The states have a proven track record of managing fisheries resources for both healthy populations and consistent, appropriate public access. The MDMR has done a remarkable job of balancing commercial and recreational interests for several of the state's mixed-sector fisheries, including spotted seatrout, flounder and red drum. We are confident this same model under the GSRsMA will result in a healthier and more accessible red snapper stock for the people of Mississippi.

We ask that you please continue to support the GSRsMA plan, Director Miller's leadership and better access to red snapper for all Mississippians. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Representative Scott Bounds
House Co-Chair

Senator Russell Jolly
Senate Co-Chair

Representative Herb Frierson
National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses
Executive Council

Senator Angela Hill
Senate Co-Chair

CC: U.S. Senator Thad Cochran
U.S. Senator Roger Wicker

Congressman Bennie Thompson
Congressman Gregg Harper
Congressman Steven Palazzo