



National Association of Charterboat Operators

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Virginia Charter Boat Assn.
Westport Charterboat Association

October 3, 2007

Representative, Frank Pallone
237 Cannon Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-3006
Sent via Fax: 202-225-9665

Dear Representative Pallone,

NACO is a national association of charter boat owners and operators that was formed in 1991 and represents over 3,400 individuals across the United States. As the recognized voice for the recreational charter boat sector we are also extremely concerned about the unintended consequences of the recent reauthorization of the MSA. We are in full support of your efforts to hold congressional hearings to discuss the rebuilding targets that are part of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2007 and relevant issues.

Clearly the problem you hear about for summer flounder is also being experienced by anglers who fish for red snapper, grouper, and amberjack in the Gulf of Mexico, halibut in Alaska, ground fish off of California, and many other species across the nation. We have proposed special language for the Gulf of Mexico reef fish species, which is attached. In the many discussions we have had with fishery managers and other government officials, we have stressed that as long as a fishery is improving why do we need to severely restrict harvest and access to the resource by people. An example we use is that in order to get to the top of any tall building you have two ways to get there, one is by elevator which takes you to the top immediately, the other is to take the stairs which will get you to the top, just not as fast. As long as we take a step forward and do not fall back the resource improves and communities and people do not have to suffer severe negative social and economic impacts.

We would like to provide testimony on behalf of charter boat owners and operators regarding this issue and we feel that we can provide some valuable insight into the unintended impacts of the current regulations. We can also garner support for your efforts. Please keep us informed of the activities regarding this matter by contacting our office.

Sincerely,

Robert F. Zales, II

Capt. Robert F. Zales, II
President

cc: Members of the Subcommittee of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Oceans

attachment

Proposed Language:

“Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the reef fish fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico shall not be required to be rebuilt by a specific date provided that the annual level of fishing does not exceed the net reproduction rate for that fishery such that the fishery is rebuilding each year. If the objective set forth in this section is not met for any of the Gulf of Mexico reef fish fisheries in one year, and the Secretary of Commerce shall adjust the fishing rate in that specific fishery in subsequent years to compensate for any overage.”